

Meditations to Soothe the Mind

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1. Basic Facts of Meditation

1.1: Let us Meditate

Meditation enriches and gives more meaning to your life. Meditation is a specialized technique to improve the mind. It was the Buddha who first taught us that this mind could be developed. He developed his mind to the highest level, and taught us the way to develop our minds. We call this technique of mind development meditation. If you could practice this technique, you too could improve your mind rapidly. For this you need the capacity to think and analyse. If you are unable to do this, it is not possible to improve your mind. Only a few people in this world train and improve their minds. You too could count yourself among the select few. Learn and practice this with much commitment and attention. We can show you how to enjoy a new depth to your life.

The initial qualification for a successful meditation is your confidence in the Buddha's knowledge. It is called "shraddha". We believe that Buddha is the greatest teacher who developed the mind fully. We can only improve our minds when we follow guidelines set by a teacher who himself had improved his mind. The Buddha is the ultimate teacher for this purpose. Therefore, if you have confidence in the Buddha, learn his instructions well and conduct your life according to his guidelines, and you too can develop your mind through meditation.

When a person who has a capacity to think meets the "DDhamma", the Buddha's teachings, and is impressed by the *DDhamma*, it is called "*kshana sampaththi*" or momentous opportunity. This is very rare. The Buddha and his followers often said those who do not take advantage of this momentous opportunity suffer in hell. This life passes very quickly. We have a life that is subject to sickness. We have a life that is limited by death. Therefore, before we die, before we become terminally ill, before our faculties deteriorate, while we have mental alertness, while we have good hearing, while we still have the capacity to think and while we are able to understand, we must utilize this momentous opportunity. If you have confidence in the Buddha's teachings and conviction in following his teachings, you have already obtained this momentous opportunity.

You have now been born into the human world. You have the ability to think. Along with this ability to think you could improve the capacity to think as well. This means you listen to the Buddha's teachings, the *Dhamma*, you are impressed by this *Dhamma* and you think, I must cultivate this *Dhamma*. From that moment you have this momentous opportunity. Take advantage of this rare

opportunity. However, be aware that it is the nature of the mind to sustain anything for long. Whether we try to practice virtue or self control or mind improvement, it becomes almost impossible after a while, and before we know it we are back where we started. You must understand this nature and have the determination to internalize the *Dhamma*. Think along the *Dhamma* and improve your mind according to the *Dhamma*.

The greatest change you would notice when improving your mind is that your virtue will rise. As your mind improves you develop a certain personality, which gives rise to a certain noble quality called “dignity”. This quality can only enhance your life. It leads you away from jealousy and envy, and away from anger and revengefulness. You can be happy for the wellbeing of others as well as for yourself. These are the indicators of an improving mind. They can only be achieved through an improving mind. This is called a developed mind. Again, as your mind improves, you become a person with noble qualities. That means that you take pleasure in the wellbeing and good fortune of others and do not envy them. You take pleasure others’ successes. You are genuinely pleased with others’ skills. These are the characteristics of a mind on the way to improvement, and they become evident within you. When it starts happening to you, you should understand that inside you there is a mind that is capable of being improved.

There are methods of meditation by which such a mind can be improved. These are the methods the Buddha taught. Meditation is a cause of action conducting the mind. Conducting our minds in a certain orderly fashion is called mediation. This orderly fashion of conducting our mind leads to purification of our inner lives. That alone can lead to our lives becoming gradually contented. You become increasingly more courageous as well as diligent. You prefer to be happy and contented. All this will be a result of improving mind.

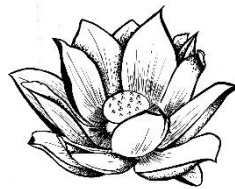
We have lived a considerable time but our minds have yet to be improved. This is a huge failure in our lives. This opportunity we have found to avoid such a failure and improve our mind is one we must nurture and protect with our lives.

The ability to think freely is a very special and precious skill. You must have confidence that the Buddha’s method is a tried and true way of achieving an improved mind. You must have the confidence that this method is one you can do and that it would benefit you. Even if someone tries to discourage you from meditating, saying “No... no... you don’t have to meditate. There’s nothing you can gain from it. We don’t need any realization of life. You are a lay person. Meditation doesn’t belong to you,” you will immediately identify it as “wrong view”. You should be convinced that you are doing the right thing. Therefore, do not let the opinion of an outsider ruin your mind. You should

have a strong confidence about the fact that you can realize this Dhamma. This requires unwavering dedication if you are to reap the benefits of the method. Based on this confidence, you will gradually arrive into the Gautama Buddha's way.

As a result, your life will become strong gradually. You will be spiritually strong. You will develop a dignified character, which comprised of an ability to investigate details in a prudent manner, without being misled by wrong opinions. Meditation will provide you such a rare opportunity.

In the next section we will present the methods of meditation and the hindrances to meditation, which, a serious meditator must learn to recognize and overcome.



1.2 Let us Identify the Basic Types of Meditation

In the last section we presented the basic qualifications you need to have in order to practice meditation. These are:

1. The ability to think freely.
2. Understanding the needs to and the benefits of improving your mind.
3. The conviction that you must make use of this rare opportunity you got as a human being by hastening to improve your mind before your life is over.
4. The confidence that all the help you need to improve your mind is contained in the guidelines the Buddha taught.

Taking into account these factors we will now learn the two basic methods of meditation. The first one is "*samatha bhavana*" or "*calming meditation*" and the second is "*vipassana bhavana*" or "*insight meditation*". The Buddha very clearly emphasized that both these methods are equally helpful to the understanding of life. The Buddha said, "*samtho bhikkave bhava thabbo*", monks this calming meditation should be developed; "*vipassana bhikkave bhava thabbo*", monks this insight meditation should be developed.

By practicing calming meditation you settle and strengthen your mind. By practicing *insight meditation* wisdom is developed. When you practice calming meditation and improve your mind you

lose weaknesses in your mind, and reduce the tendency for mind to digress. You strengthen your mind and you are then able to comprehend issues as they really are. This means that through calming meditation, your mind becomes profoundly workable. Such a mind can be used to analyse and understand issues.

Insight meditation is the investigating of the truth of something. Wisdom is the ability to see the truth as it is. Again, insight meditation helps you understand the nature of life. This understanding comes through wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to see the truth as it is (repetitive?). These two methods cannot be separated (**which two methods?**).

A person who is attempting to understand life through the Buddha's teachings (the *Dhamma*) first practices calming meditation and then turns it into *insight meditation*. Alternatively, some start with insight meditation and then calming meditation. Also, there are some who practice both calming meditation and insight meditation simultaneously. Those who start with calming meditation and then do insight meditation are called "*samatha pubbangama vipassana*". Those who start with insight meditation and do calming meditation are called "*vipassana pubbangama samatho*". Those who develop both methods simultaneously are called "*yuganaddha*".

There are no records of any persons who have entered the path to enlightenment by focusing on just one of these two methods of meditation. In another words, it does not seem possible to enter the path to enlightenment without practicing both these meditations. Thus, it is important to understand calming meditation and insight meditation in greater detail.

Calming meditation prepares the mind by improving and strengthening it. During this method we overcome *neevarana* or hindrances and calm the mind. The word *samatha* means resolving or exceptions, the total absence of conflict in your own mind. When we experience problems in our lives, we resolve it. *Samatha* is like that. *Samatha* is a resolution of all conflict in the mind and settling the mind. We are then able to calm the mind and come to a resolution of all conflict of the mind. Calming meditation gives us this ability.

The Buddha taught us that there are five factors or hindrances that cause confusion in our minds. In Pali, the five hindrances are called *pancha*, (five) and *neevarana*, (hindrances). These *hindrances* are mental obstacles that impede improvement of the mind and kill wisdom, prevent wisdom and distract us from improving our minds as well as divert us from the path to freedom. The five hindrances are:

1. *Kamachchanda*: the nature of our minds, which is constantly attracted by pleasing forms, pleasant sounds, pleasant smells, pleasant tastes and pleasant tactile sensations.

2. *Vyapada*: that nature of our minds which is constantly recalling and in conflict with unpleasing forms seen, unpleasing sounds heard, unpleasing smells, unpleasant tastes and unpleasant tactile sensations felt. This nature of our minds is *vyapada*.
3. *Thinamiddha*: laziness and sleepiness.
4. *Uddachha kukkuchcha*: remorse, which means regretting the past and reliving past mistakes over and over again. This tends to diffuse the mind.
5. *Vichikichcha* :doubt. Doubting your course of action in the *Dhamma*. “Is this the correct path? Can I succeed by following this path? Will I fail by following this path?” And giving into such doubt and losing confidence.

These are the constant forces at work to prevent us from improving our minds. Calming meditation has the ability to subdue these hindrances and focus our minds. So, it is imperative that we spend time on calming meditation.

The other method is *vipassana*, or insight. This is a must too. Insight meditation is the way to see the basic nature of all things or their fundamental characteristics. As an example, the Buddha said that anything that arises as a result of a cause is impermanent. What then is the most fundamental nature of all things? It is of course impermanence. If this impermanence is common to all things, we too have this characteristic called impermanence. Impermanence is evident throughout our lives. Although we are fascinated by ourselves, although we ignore this impermanence, there is no way we can prevent impermanence from occurring. Until we understand this true nature we grieve when things we believe last forever suddenly show signs of impermanence. All things we base our pleasures on are impermanent. Not understanding this impermanent nature causes us strife and suffering. But, when things go wrong, if we can stay calm because we understand that this impermanence and change is the true nature of things, then we have developed the wisdom which enables us to see things as they really are. We cannot control this impermanent nature. We cannot sustain our bodies in a state of constant youthfulness and good health. We have no control over that. Therefore, we cannot claim ownership of our bodies. Thus, there is nothing that is ours.

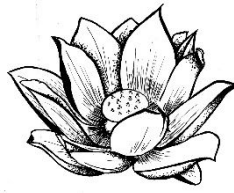
Not having true control over change and impermanent things, not truly owning anything is called “*anatta*” or non-self. Seeing impermanent things as impermanent, seeing suffering as suffering, and seeing non-self as non-self is called “*seeing the reality*”. When investigating things mindfully and wisely, we will gradually begin to see impermanence, suffering and non-self inside our selves. We will be able to see through most things. This ability to see things in their true light is wisdom. The method of developing this ability to see things in their true light or wisdom is *vipassana*.

We must think intelligently here. We could be warned that as lay people having a home life, *vipassana* is detrimental to our lives. We must be able to think independently and realize that the Buddha would never teach us anything that could be detrimental to our lives. Detrimental things to our lives are taught by ordinary, unwise people. The Buddha is not an ordinary person, he's an enlightened one who eradicated all defilements and taught the Dhamma to ordinary people to overcome the ordinary state of life. **The noble community of monks is the only community that is heading towards enlightenment, overcoming ordinary states** (*unclear if this may give a sense that those who are not part of this community are not heading towards enlightenment*). I have gone for refuge to this Triple Gem: Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha. The doctrine of impermanence, suffering, and non-self belongs to the Triple Gem, in which I took refuge. Therefore, if someone says that this doctrine of impermanence is not important to our lives, that person doesn't belong to the triple gem. He is an ordinary person who holds wrong view. You must identify that person clearly in this manner, and act with a complete knowledge of mind. The Buddha had infinite compassion towards the world and acted only for the benefit of people. This is where our confidence in the Buddha's words comes in.

In summary, calming meditation is a process that settles the mind, subdues the five hindrances and improves profound concentration. When this settled state of mind, which arises through calming meditation can be sustained for a long period of time it is called *jhana*. *Jhana* can be developed through first, second and third *jhana* to a fourth *jhana*.

In summary, insight meditation is a method of developing wisdom. As our wisdom develops, the unnecessary attachments we have are dropped. As our wisdom develops, irrelevant complications we create in lives are eliminated. As our wisdom develops, super natural concepts that rule our lives are recognized as such. Without these unnecessary complications our vision is cleared to see reality. The mind that becomes settled through calming meditation is open to developing wisdom through *insight* mediation.

There is a meditation taught by the Buddha, which includes both these methods: the mind building *samatha* and the wisdom building *vipassana*. That is the *satipatthana* or establishment of mindfulness. In the chapters to come, you will learn how to develop meditation methods found within in the establishment of mindfulness.



1.3 What is Right Mindfulness?

We have now talked about the qualities one should have to successfully practice meditation. We have also learned two basic meditation methods, *samatha* and *vipassana*. Calming meditation strengthens your mind while *insight* meditation helps increase your understanding of the way things are. We learned that these two methods can be developed in each of us. In this section we will discuss the Buddha's discourse which was aimed at this.

The Buddha has taught ways in which we could develop and improve each aspect of our lives. We say the Buddha's teachings are *akalika* or timeless. This means that even today with no Buddha present, we could still follow his guidelines successfully. His instructions are as practical as they were 2500 years ago and should be so in the future as well.

The *Dhamma* unlike other subjects does not have to be modified according to a specific time. The fundamental problems and issues faced by mankind are still the same as they were 2500 years ago. The weaknesses of people that existed then also exist today. The strengths and skills of people that existed then are also evident today. Therefore, these strategies, which improve skills and diminish weaknesses, are still relevant today. These teachings, the *Dhamma*, help us to look at life openly and freely. The *Dhamma* also gives us a broad view of life. What gives us the necessary basis for this broad view is called *satipatthana*. *Sati* is mindfulness; *Patthana* is establishment.

Establishing mindfulness is a way of looking at life in a clear and profound way. In general, we need mindfulness to do our daily chores. We walk on the edge of the street so that we can avoid being hit by vehicles. We cross the road after checking for oncoming traffic. All these we do with awareness and care. This is our usual mundane mindfulness. If we become absent minded and lose mindfulness, we lose track of what we are doing. What meditation does is improve this normal mundane mindfulness to a higher plane where we become aware of our inner selves. This improvement to a higher plane is called *samma sati* or right mindfulness. The four establishments of mindfulness or *cattaro satipatthana* taught by the Buddha raise our mindfulness to a higher plane. That is called *samma sati*, or right mindfulness. Again, you must realize that our day-to-day mindfulness is somewhat different from *samma sati*. No matter how much of our daily tasks we do

with mindfulness, unless we develop that mindfulness to the level of *samma sati*, it will not help us understand life. The *satipatthana* or the establishments of mindfulness are entirely composed of *samma sati* or right mindfulness.

Right mindfulness cannot be established without right view or right understanding “*samma ditthi*”. Therefore, right understanding is an essential aspect of a successful life. The Buddha described right understanding thus, there is deep darkness at night. Towards morning this darkness is ended by a pale light that arises in the Eastern sky. This pale light is called dawn. When we see this light we are very certain that the sun will follow it. The Buddha said life without understanding is pitch darkness. The sun can only shine on this darkness through *samma ditthi* or right understanding. If we acquire right understanding, we can then meditate on the establishments of mindfulness.

The terms right view and right understanding are commonly used to mean *samma ditthi* but are not strictly accurate. The Buddha explained *samma ditthi* as the knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. This life is based on the law of cause and effect. Its nature is that in order to eliminate the effect the cause has to be eliminated. The impermanent nature of this world is founded on the law of cause and effect. To go beyond this impermanence, in order to reach ultimate bliss, one has to follow the Noble Eight Fold Path. If someone understands this law of cause and effect, if someone who understands the need to go beyond and reach the ultimate bliss following the Noble Eight Fold Path, that person can conduct their mindfulness very skilfully. Such a person possesses right mindfulness.

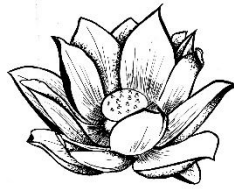
We cannot achieve anything without commitment and dedication. Meditation is the same. It is essential that we understand why we meditate, why it is necessary, and how it benefits us. In general, our lives are limited to what we experience externally. So many people think that meditation helps to maintain good health, improve memory, lessen stress, and helps us lead an organized life. While they are correct in the surmise these should be secondary benefits. The number one goal of meditation is to understand the reality of life. The person focused on understanding of the reality of life through meditation thus experiences a healthy mind. The person, who focuses on understanding the reality of life through meditation thus experiences enhanced memory skills. The person who focuses on understanding reality of life through meditation thus experiences lower stress levels. The person who focuses on understanding reality of life through meditation thus experiences a more organized life. The person who focuses on understanding the reality of life through meditation thus becomes unshaken by the ups and downs of life. So, if you expect such worldly benefits from meditation you will get them as by products. as you focus on understanding the reality of life. Therefore, our aim of meditation should be, understanding the reality of life. This

understanding can be achieved through the Four Establishments of Mindfulness. You now know that right mindfulness is developed through the Four Establishments of Mindfulness.

We have an ordinary mindfulness, which really is no help at all when we want to stop pain or sorrow. This mundane mindfulness cannot carry us to an understanding of life or eradicate sorrow. It cannot calm or collect our restless minds. But right mindfulness or *samma sati* can do this. This *right mindfulness* is developed within the establishments of mindfulness. The Buddha taught that there are four systems through which mindfulness can be developed. These are called the Four Establishments of Mindfulness.

1. *Kayanupassana*, which is establishing mindfulness of the body.
2. *Vedanupassana*, which is establishing mindfulness of feelings.
3. *Chittanupassana*, which is establishing mindfulness of thought.
4. *Dhammanupassana*, which is establishing mindfulness of facts that contribute to understanding the reality of life.

These four establishments of mindfulness lead to understanding the reality of life. In the preceding chapters, we will discuss in detail the Four Establishments of Mindfulness, which target the understanding of the reality of life.



2. Breathing Meditation Under Four Establishments of Mindfulness

2.1 From Breath to Nibbana

In the last section we talked about *satipatthana* or being based on mindfulness. We now know that right mindfulness can only be established through *samma ditthi*, or right understanding, which derives from initial knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. Inversely, knowledge of the Four Noble Truths gives us *samma ditthi*, which is necessary for right mindfulness in realizing the true nature of life. The Buddha, with great compassion, clearly shows in Maha Sattipatana Sutta that for all of us the *Establishment of Mindfulness* will result in purification of the mind, the eradication of grief,

sorrow and lamentation, the expulsion of physical and mental pain, and profound understanding of life leading to ultimate bliss, Nibbana.

Since the Buddha taught the results of practicing *sattipatana* at the very beginning of the discourse, we should have no doubts about the *sattipatana* or its results. It is clear that we will be able to gain tremendous amounts of benefit if we cultivate the Dhamma and cultivate our minds. The first *satipatthana* we develop is *kayanupassana* or mindfulness of the body. In *kayanupassana* meditation the first method is “*anapanasati*” or mindfulness of breathing. From the moment we were born we have been inhaling and exhaling. But most of us are not aware that we can use this breathing to establish mindfulness and purify our minds. But the Buddha discovered this over 2500 years ago. Since then, millions of people have benefited from this method. So, this is a tried and tested way that yields results. His teachings of the Four Noble Truths, are as follows:

1. There is suffering in this life
2. There is a cause for this suffering
3. This suffering can be overcome and that state is called “*nibbana*”
4. There is a process to overcoming this suffering, which is the Noble Eight Fold Path.

We need to keep this at the forefront of our minds as we learn about meditation.

When beginning meditation of mindfulness of breathing, we must first find an appropriate spot for to be seated. Acquire a spot under a shady tree, or an empty space, solitary spot where we won't be disturbed, is best suited for this. Any spot where you will not be disturbed would be suitable. If one plans to meditate with others in a room, and everyone is planning to close their eyes and sit quietly, they will each be isolating themselves. This is suitable as it is in accordance with empty space.

Then the Buddha instructs that when practicing the mindfulness of breathing meditation, the meditator should sit. The meditator should sit with folded legs, cross-legged with a straight back. For most people this is a very difficult thing to do. There are solutions to this problem. You can make yourself a solid cushion or a little seat about 10 centimetres high. We should not become accustomed to leaning against the wall. We should not be discouraged if others can sit for a long period with cross legged and straight back but we cannot do it. It takes a little practice and we will be able to do it in the end. It is very important to have a balanced and stable body posture so we can sit for a long period without being distracted by our posture. This way, the first requirement to breathing meditation is fulfilled.

Now, we have to focus on our breathing and meditate. Our breathing is the subject or *nimitta* of this meditation. We don't need to attempt to focus on any other *nimittas* or subjects. Here the Buddha explains that the subject of breathing is very clearly. Buddha advised us to be aware that we breathe in, and breathe out.

However, you can contemplate the great qualities of the Buddha as the initial step before starting breathing meditation. Think about the Buddha's great qualities in your own language for a few minutes, recollecting the meaning of each quality: The Buddha is liberated, fully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and virtue, well gone, knower of all worlds, incomparable teacher of those to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, the Buddha, the Blessed One. In this way, create a pleasant mind by recollecting these great qualities of the Buddha.

When you think about the Buddha, your mind clears and settles down as suspended particles in a murky pond settle on the bottom and leave the water clear. You begin to feel content and happy. This becomes a great aid in the development of meditation and your mind. So now, you inhale with mindfulness and you exhale with mindfulness. This is all you need to do at this stage. This introductory step is not difficult. You can see for yourself how simple this sounds.

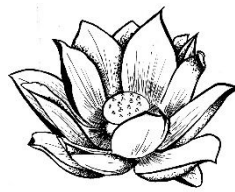
However, once you try to stay aware of the breath entering and leaving your body, you should soon realize how disobedient your ordinary mindfulness is. You will realize that it is not that easy to sustain mindfulness on a single subject. This too is then *anatta* or non-self because it is not something within your control. You will realize how your thoughts leap from one attraction to another. One moment you are aware of your breath, the next moment your thoughts roll along memory lane, and the next moment building future dreams or your thoughts attach on to external sounds. You will soon understand the nature of this mind. So, what do you do now? The answer is *viriyā* or effort. When your mind starts to wander bring it back gently to the breath. You have to keep in mind that the Buddha taught the meditator to shed both attachments and aversions while developing mindfulness. Avoid having conflict with such mind states.

There are three skills to sustain mindfulness of breathing. These are:

1. *Atapi*: improving through perseverance the skill of subduing the accumulated weaknesses of your mind.
2. *Sampajana*: using your intelligence skillfully.
3. *Satima*: the skill of staying totally aware and mindful.

In summary, the way to build up the establishments of mindfulness is through perseverance with intelligence and profound awareness. When you grasp the importance of these three skills, you

are no longer the casual meditator. You are the meditator who understands that if your mind splits from an attraction to attraction or if your mind splits from aversion to aversion, then you are not ready to meditate. So, you create an atmosphere where you can focus on meditating. You can isolate yourself, sit with folded legs and a straight spine and be mindful of your breathing. Even if your mind wanders to the past or to the future, you persevere and gently draw it back to your breath. The mind must be totally free of anxiety in order to be successful at this. You must not be discouraged if your thoughts keep splitting to different focus points. You persevere and gently draw it back to your breath. Mindfully you will inhale; mindfully you will exhale. This practice should enhance your life immensely.



2.2 The way to cultivate Kayanupassana in Aanapanasati meditation

So far, we discussed where to sit for mindfulness of breathing meditation, how to sit with folded legs and erect spine, and how to sustain our mindfulness on breathing in and breathing out. We will now teach you how you must not let your mind dwell on things that attract us or repel us but very gently bring our thoughts back to the breath.

Samma sati or right mindfulness is what leads us to understanding our life. Right mindfulness is essential for this. Sometimes you hear people say that in order to meditate you need to find a teacher, tell them your personal details and ask them to recommend a meditation method for you, as it could be dangerous to meditate without a teacher. This is not the Buddha's advice. In Buddhist meditation, the teachings or the *Dhamma* is the instructor, not a person. So, we will take instruction from the *Dhamma* the Buddha taught, and the *vinaya* or the behavioural cord he set. The Buddha himself said to venerable Ananda, who was his personal attendant and who later recited all the *suttas* at the First Council, that when the Buddha was no more his teachings and the behavioural cord for the *sangha* should be considered the great instructor. If we go to a teacher, we can soon discover if they teach in the same manner as the Buddha. Instructions from the *suttas* can be easily verified. If, in addition to the instructions from the *suttas*, there are personal instructions or secret instructions, there is reason to doubt that instructor. The Buddha has stated that the teachings of the Buddha shine when open, not when hidden in mystery. The facet of the Buddha's *Dhamma* is that

it invites people to approach and discover the Dhamma for themselves. So, by definition there cannot be any secrets in the Buddha's teachings.

You could have another question: if we are to reveal our personal opinions and personal achievements in public, isn't that going to be an obstacle for others? If that is the case, the Buddha should have mentioned it first. In the Dhamma, there are no incidents where the Buddha secretly advised a person to meditate and secretly sent him away. All the advice the Buddha gave have been told to Venerable Ananda and recorded, and all the monks and nuns have heard them. Therefore, there is no secret teaching in the Buddha's Dhamma. There are no secret advices in the teaching that invites one to 'come and see.' If secret advices for mediation are given, you should indeed suspect it.

One day, Venerable Ananda asked the Buddha, 'what are factors that would help the Buddha's path to liberation sustain for a long time? Buddha replied that practicing the Four Establishments of Mindfulness for a long time, talking about them, and following them would sustain the Buddha's path to liberation for long time. The Buddha preached that the path to liberation will vanish if these things are ignored or not followed... we are in fact learning about the Four Establishments of Mindfulness here.

In the mindfulness of breathing meditation, we learned how to be aware of in breath and out breath. Gradually, our mindfulness tends to remain on the breath. This means that without being distracted we are able to sustain our attention on our breath. This is the first step of the mindfulness of breathing meditation.

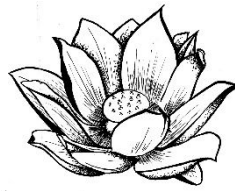
In the next step of Aanapanasati meditation, you will be able to distinguish differences in your breath. Sometimes, you will feel a long inhaling, which means you are having a stretched breathing. Since you were mindful about your breath, you realize that you are taking a lengthy breath in. Other times, there will be lengthy exhales. You will recognize those lengthy exhalations since you are mindful of your breath. Suddenly, breath could be short. Since you are aware of your breath, you will realize that your inhalation is short. When you are breathing out short exhalations, you will realize them since you are mindful of your breathing out is short. You notice this because of your sustained attention on the breath.

The Buddha taught a beautiful simile for this awareness of long and short breaths. There is a clever carpenter planning to carve a piece of wood. He takes the piece of wood in hand and sometimes uses long stokes and sometimes uses short strokes to smoothen the wood. When the stroke is longer, he knows it is long. When the stroke is shorter, he knows that it is short. Likewise, you are mindful and aware if your breath is long or short. Now you can sustain your mindfulness on

your breath without external distractions. However, this depends on your perseverance, intelligence and mindfulness. That is if you stop persevering your mind can drop back to the state where it was before you started meditation.

Then as the third step, you need to direct your attention to the complete breath. That is, you observe when an in breath starts, continues and ends. You observe the start of the out breath, the continuation of the out breath and the end of the out breath. So, with improving the sensitivity, you observe in breath and out breath as a certain entity of the body. This entity of entire breath is referred to as *kaya sankara* or a fabrication of the body as breath is associated with the body. When your mind becomes settled in this way, your breath becomes lighter. As the fourth step, with improving tranquility, you experience this lightening of your breath.

Again, in mindfulness of breathing meditation you first practice sustaining your awareness on your breath, then you observe differences in length of your breath, next you follow the complete breath, and then you observe the in breath and out breath as one entity as it becomes light, calm and tranquil.



2.3 The way to cultivate the Vedananupassana and Chittanupassana in Anapanasati meditation

So far you have learned various stages progressing through mindfulness of breathing meditation towards the stage where the breath becomes very light. As the breath gradually becomes lighter, you could begin to feel a profound happiness or joy. This is called *pīti*. You might be distracted by this joy to the extent that you forget to be mindful of the breath and latch on to the joy instead. This would result in the interruption of our tranquil concentration. Instead of losing that opportunity to develop mindfulness of breathing meditation by latching on to the joy you experienced, you should understand the joy and while experiencing it, continue to focus on your in breath and out breath.

One of the main problems meditators face is assuming that the state of tranquil concentration or *samadhi* happens by chance. Actually, this state of tranquil concentration occurs because the causes for it to occur were in place.- *atapi* or profound perseverance on purifying our minds,

sampajano or profound intellect, and *satima* or profound mindfulness. This state of tranquil concentration is a result of these causes. You need to be aware that this state ends when you rise from this meditation sitting.

Another problem meditators face is the urge to rush through the initial stage in order to reach the previously acquired tranquil concentrated state and remain there longer. They pay less attention to the mindfulness of the breath and expect *samadhi* or tranquil concentration stage to come to them. They forget that tranquil concentration stage is a result of causes, which are the initial hard work stages or the mindfulness of the breath. This causes a downward spiral. When they cannot experience the *Samadhi* or tranquil concentration stage the second time, they feel disappointment, thinking, "I used to be able to experience *Samadhi*, but now I am a failure at this." This sometimes causes diffusion of the mind. Due to this diffusion, the mind cannot settle and the mind becomes restless. Because of this restlessness we cannot keep our minds on the breath. When we cannot keep our mind on the breath we cannot sustain awareness on the breath. This means we cannot focus our minds on the breath. Therefore, we are unable to achieve the stage of profound concentration. Then we feel disappointment and the cycle starts again. So, we must keep in mind that the stage of tranquil concentration is a result of causes and that the causes must be in place for it to occur. This means you need to start from the beginning at each meditation sitting.

When our minds become accustomed to mindfulness of breathing meditation, and our minds become settled we experience profound joy. This profound joy is not the sort of ordinary pleasure we get from listening to good music, watching a movie or sharing a delicious meal with loved ones. Those are very coarse pleasures. The joy from tranquil concentration is more refined. It is a kind of light and profound joy that comes from utter contentment, resolution and freedom from worries. When we start to experience this profound joy and continue to watch our breath, we feel a sense of exultation, which slowly settles and we then start to feel a sense of profound well being, or *sukha*. This sense of wellbeing is both physical and mental.

We talked about the breath becoming very light. This does not mean that it disappears. If we cannot feel the breath we cannot sustain our attention on it. Sometimes when meditators are meditating with mindfulness of their breaths, after sometime they stop being mindful and simply watch their breaths. Then, when the breath becomes very light they tend to forget what they were doing and become confused. Because of this, we must always stay mindful and aware of the breath. We need to remember that the breath will not disappear just yet. If we are like this we need to make an affirmation to ourselves as we sit to meditate that we will not let the breath disappear. We will

stay aware of the breath and keep our mindfulness on the breath. If we still cannot feel the breath, at that point we can investigate with awareness and we should be able to find the breath and redirect our awareness towards it. When we continue to sustain our attention on the breath in this manner we realize the *sukha* or profound joy through the breathing. We recognize the breath well as this is an in breath and this is an out breath. We breathe in and breathe out while feeling this profound joy and with cognition of each in breath and out breath. This feeling and perception are called “*chitta sankara*”. The term *chitta sankara* is used because this is associated with the mind.

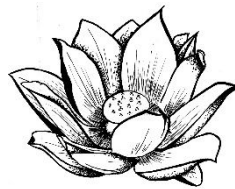
So, when we continue to breathe in and breathe out with profound understanding of this feeling and cognition associated with the mind, even this feeling and recognition become very light. We should prevent our selves from being distracted by this lightness. We need to understand this but keep our attention and mindfulness on the breath. In the Buddha’s teachings, the word used for this understanding in the preliminary stages of meditation is *pajanathi*. *Pajanathi* means understanding with mindfulness. This leads to a greater understanding of way things are. Later, He uses the word *sikkhathi*, which means practice or training. This means that we must train ourselves to prevent the mind from wondering here and there and develop the skill of being mindful on our breath. In other words, understand the lightening of the breath and skilfully maintain mindfulness on it. Gradually, the *chitta sankara* becomes subdued, and we feel joy, or *peethi*. Knowing and understanding this *peethi*, we maintain mindfulness on the breath. Then we feel physical and mental lightness. Experiencing this lightness we continue to maintain mindfulness on the breath, which enables us to have a feeling of intense comfort or *sukha*. Experiencing and knowing this *sukha* we continue to focus our mindfulness on the breath. We must practice this.

As you increase your skills on being mindful on the breath through these stages your mind will understand clearly how *kaya sankara* and *chitta sankara* become subdued while you still keep your mindfulness on the breath. Your mind then achieves a spiritual rapture. You have a sense of clarity, which you use to maintain mindfulness on the breath. The five hindrances are totally subdued now. Your mind is now at the stage of the first *jhana*. The first *jhana* is relatively easy to achieve through *anapana sati*. When you have practiced the first *jhana* skilfully, you can achieve a state of *samadhi* without chatter or *vithakka*. This is the second *jhana*. When you have practiced the second *jhana* well, you can achieve the third *jhana*. When you practice the third *jhana* well, you can achieve the fourth *jhana*.

When you hear the word *jhana*, you may become somewhat scared or reluctant to strive for it. You may think, I am a house holder, I have responsibilities, sohow can I practice *jhana*? This happens,

when around us there are those who do not understand the pure Dhamma and your confidence in Dhamma is not strong enough and you have no experience of how practical the Dhamma is. It is not a short coming of the Dhamma. There are many people around the world who practice this method and experience *jhana* and who benefit greatly from it. Therefore you should place a strong confidence in the Buddha's words and without any fear, continue with your practice of concentration and improve it.

We are still talking about *samatha* meditation. If you develop your mind in the way we described to this point, you will be able to develop the calming meditation/ But there are various methods to follow in this world when the concentration is not cultivated. Be careful not to get trapped in those ideas. Some people may tell you that it is a simple thing for them and that they could put you in a *jhana* just within 10 minutes. Some would also say that if you can stay in concentration for 30 minutes, they would push you to the first *jhana*. They tell these things to see how bad you want it. But it just shows their state of lacking proper knowledge. The very important thing you must be aware of here is that there are no short cuts to *jhana*. Until you can subdue and eradicate the five hindrances, which take time and effort, you cannot achieve sustained mindfulness on the breath, which leads to *jhana*. Once the five hindrances are subdued, concentration is naturally achieved.



2.4 The way to cultivate the Dhammanupassana in Anapanasati meditation

We are now progressing through the mindfulness of breathing meditation. We find a peaceful spot, sit with erect spine and keep our mind on the point of focus that is our breathing. The breath is also called the object of meditation. We improve our mindfulness totally within the in and out breath. The breath is the object of our meditation. We should not look for or not expect other objects or “*nimitta*”. Other than the *Satipatthana sutta*, further information on mindfulness of breathing meditation can be found in the *Girimananda sutta*, which is in the chapter of tens in the *Anguttara nikaya* or the Numerical discourses, and also in the *satipatthana samyutta* as well as the *anapanasati samyutta* of the 5th book of the *Samyutta nikaya* or Connected discourses. We can get a

comprehensive understanding of breathing meditation from these. This is not a personal opinion. It is directly the Buddha's words.

We must have total confidence in the Buddha's teachings throughout this meditation as it was he who originally attained enlightenment through developing mindfulness of breathing meditation. It was he who discovered this method and instructed his followers to attain supreme freedom through this method. It was highly successful then and it will work today too. If there were a method by which someone could end all suffering and attained *arahantship*, it was explained very clearly by the Buddha in the discourses. He had a total understanding on this subject and if anyone had an equal understanding that person would be a Buddha too. There is no need to edit or modify this method by saying you can try to meditate by this way or that way. If someone tries to modify it, it is just showing his lack of confidence in the Buddha and the foolish attempt to go beyond the Buddha's unsurpassed knowledge. We must practice this Dhamma not as teachers but as followers of the Buddha.

We learned that there are two methods of meditation explained in the *Satipatthana sutta* by the Buddha namely, *samatha* and *vipassana*. We are now learning *samatha-calming* meditation. Now we will explore calming meditation in greater depth as taught by the Buddha. "*Iti ajjhattam va kaye kayanupssi viharathi*", one sustains the mind in the in breath and out breath, one understands the nature of the breath and understands how to sustain the mind on the breath. "*Bahiddhava kaye kayanupassi viharathi*", as one understands the nature of the breath inside oneself, one understands that in others too, the breath is of the same nature. This means that in any country, in any area every breathing being shares this nature. So we understand that within ourselves and outside ourselves this is the nature of the breath.

Then the Buddha taught "*samudayaDhammanupassi va kayasmin viharathi*", when we sustain our mind on the breath, it is *kayanupassana*. When we see the origination of the breath it is the *samudayaDhammanupassi va*. To explain this, this body is made of nutrients or the elements of food. Everything in the cycle of rebirth needs a nutrient element. If this feeding life line is eliminated for someone they can escape from this cycle of rebirth. In this instance we are considering our bodies. Our bodies exist because of nutriment. Therefore, respiration is composed of the elements of nutriment. Respiration arises due to causes. Therefore, respiration too is impermanent. Realizing the phenomenon that things arise due to causes is *samudayaDhammanupassi va*.

"*VayaDhammanu passi va kayasmin viharathi*", the nature of the breath is that it ceases as well. So the breath arises and it fades away. The nature of the breath is that it arises and ceases.

“*SamudayavayaDhammanupassi va kayasmin viharathi*”, means seen profoundly this arising and cessation. At this point our meditation turns from *samatha* to *vipassana-calming to insight*. This is clear example of how both *calming* and *insight* are included in the *Satipatthana sutta*. When we see the arising and cessation of each breath aware and mindfully, we have moved to *insight* meditation from the previous *calming* meditation. To progress through this *insight* meditation we must have practiced *insight* before hand through learning the Dhamma well.

Insight is the ability to realize impermanent things as impermanent, suffering as suffering, and non-self as non-self. We learned in a previous section that *insight* is necessary for cultivating wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to realize certain things. Wisdom is not gained by chance.

The Buddha explained how the wisdom is gained. Once the Buddha was asked “*Kathansu labhatē Paññā*” how to gain wisdom? The Buddha preached “*Saddāhano arahatō Nibbānapattiyā*” that the Buddhas teach the Dhamma that leads to Nibbana, extinguishing (*Sussusā labhatē paññā appamattā vicakkana*) the one who listens to that Dhamma very attentively placing confidence in the teachings and investigates it with diligence, gains wisdom. According to the Buddha, it is very obvious that one should listen to the Buddha’s teachings in order to gain wisdom. There is a school of thought that if you continue to meditate you will automatically gain wisdom. If this were true, there would have been no need for the Buddhas to expound the *Dhamma*.

The Buddha once said to his liberated disciples, “two monks should not go along in one road. Teach the Dhamma clearly to everyone you meet along the way. (*Assavantō Dhamman parihāyanti*) If the Dhamma is not heard, they will decline. (*Bhavissanti Dhammassa aññātārō*) There will be people who would realize the Dhamma if it is preached for them.” This clearly shows us that this Dhamma can be realized. This clearly shows that learning the Dhamma is necessary to realize the true nature of things. So, we need to understand well that we must cultivate wisdom.

When one develops insight realizing impermanence as impermanence, which leads to the realization of suffering, which in turn leads to the realization of non-self. This realization does not come automatically. While maintaining a total mindfulness, you must contemplate impermanence and only then will you be able to realize impermanent things as impermanent. If you can practice contemplation of impermanence through mindfulness of breathing, Buddha teaches that you will be able to refrain from being attached to anything (*na cha kinchi lōke upādiyati.*) That means the mediator will not grasp a view of I, mine or myself in terms of breathing and will have a mind of total

freedom. This will help us further develop wisdom, further develop awareness and attain a complete understanding of life.

In the Buddha's teachings, there are no inferior goals. We do not meditate as a memory aid or for health reasons, although they are by products of meditation. Meditating for health and memory skills is very much a worldly concept. The Buddha's way of meditation is a revolution for freedom of thought. So, if you want to follow this method, we must understand our goal, learn and practice the teachings and meditate. Only then can we achieve a true and honest effort, a genuine need align with our conscience and a real desire to understand life.

Now you have learned how to attain concentration or *samadhi* through *anapanasati* or mindfulness of breathing meditation and how to cultivate insight through *anapanasati*. In developing wisdom, you must keep in mind that this is a contemplation of impermanence. In and out breath is impermanent; Then you feel the breath; the feeling of breath is impermanent. You perceive the breath, that perception is impermanent. In the breath you create a thought, and forms volition. These volitions too are impermanent. You are conscious of the breath, that consciousness too is impermanent. When you continue to contemplate impermanent things as impermanent with wisdom, you will be able to see impermanence as impermanent.

3: Satisampajañña (awareness) meditation in the Four Establishments of Mindfulness

3.1 Living in awareness

Now you have some knowledge about mindfulness of breathing meditation, *anapanasati*. You have gained this knowledge through the Buddha's teachings. When you practice this meditation according to the great teachings, you will be feeling a natural respect coming from your heart for the Buddha. This respect will help you further develop this Dhamma.

Now you will learn another method of meditation. This is called *satisampajanna*. It is about living with clear mindfulness and awareness. The Buddha has introduced us 'Sampajānakārii Hōtii.' What is the advantage of living with clear mindfulness and awareness? One is that when we are conscious of every moment we can prevent unwholesome mental states creeping into our life and just let in wholesome mental states. A person who is ready to meditate should already be living a good moral conduct by observing the five precepts. The unwholesome mental states we mean here

are the five hindrances or *pancha neevarana*. Now we will explore how to recognize them in order to avoid or overcome these hindrances. The hindrances are,

1. “*Kamachchanda*” that is the mind being attracted to form, sound, smell, taste and tactile sensations.
2. “*Vyapada*”, which is the mind being repelled by and in conflict with such objects.
3. “*Thinamiddha*” is laziness or sleepiness or being discouraged from meditation.
4. “*Uddacca kukkucca*”, which is regret, remorse and diffusion of the mind.
5. “*Vicikichca*”, which is lack of confidence in this process.

These hindrances are always with us in our daily life. the meditator should be fully aware of these to avoid being distracted by the hindrances. The Buddha taught that when the meditator goes forth and when he return, he must always do so with mindfulness avoiding the hindrances. When he look around himself, he must do so with mindfulness. Taking care not to let hindrances creep into his mind, he must safe guard his mind from being attached to form, sound, smell, taste and tactile sensation. He must safe guard his mind from all conflict. He must safe guard his mind from laziness and sleepiness. He must safe guard his life from remorse and diffusion of the mind and he must have confidence in this process.

This vigilance when look around is called “*alokithe vilokithe sampajana kari hoti*”. Even when moving the limbs the skillful meditator does it with mindfulness. He must know why and when he move his limbs and do it with awareness. This awareness should run through his daily routines. Let us consider dress for instance. When we dress, we have to be aware about the purpose of the dress. The usual purposes of the dress are protection of privacy, protection from insects, and protection from extreme environmental conditions. When we dress, we must be conscious of these purposes and dress accordingly and with awareness.

Now let us consider our intake of nutrition. When eating, the Buddha has taught us a reflection. It is called “*paccavekkana*”. *Paccavekkana* means reflecting something to mind over and over again. Buddha taught Dhamma practitioners shouldn't be followers of food nor servants of food. Dhamma practitioners use food only as a means of sustaining this body. Buddha instruct us to reflect on food thus, “this food is eaten not for power, not for strength, not to build up our physical strength, not to beautify this body but to terminate feelings of hunger in order to meditate without distraction.

The Buddha further instructs even when defecating, we must maintain this awareness. We need to realize that our lives are composed of series of postures and stances. Even when we use the

toilet, we should safeguard our minds from being distracted. The Buddha asked us to maintain our awareness when we are walking, standing, sitting, when we are awake and also when we are keeping vigil, which in *Pali* is called “*jagarithei*”. This constant awareness, not letting the hindrances creep into our minds will protect us from much harm. The Buddha explained a beautiful story in “*Sakunaggi sutta*” about awareness. A hawk was flying overhead, when it spotted a little brush bird flying in the air below it. The hawk caught the little bird. The little bird screamed out, “Oh this calamity befell me because I tried to fly in an unfamiliar territory. There is a habitat I inherited from my forefathers. If I had only remained there this hawk would never have caught me”. This awakened the hawk’s interests and hawk asked the little bird “what is the habitat you inherited from your forefathers”. The little bird said, “when this field is ploughed and the earth is turned, under a sod there is a little cave like place. That is the habitat I inherited from my forefathers”. The hawk found this quite amusing. He said to the little bird, “I will let you go now; you can go and hide in the little habitat you inherited that you are so proud of. I will still catch you”. The little bird flew directly down to stand on a turned sod of earth and shouted to the hawk “come and catch me now”. The hawk drove directly down to the sod of earth but the little bird crept into the little cave like space under the sod; and the hawk hit his chest hard on the sod of earth. In this story, the Buddha shows us that awareness is the habitat we inherit from our forefathers. The Buddha said, “monks, the *Thathagatha* is your father. Your inheritance from the *Thathagatha* is based in your awareness on the four establishments of mindfulness.”

This *Dhamma* we have received is complete and fertile. This means it gets results. If anyone says they do not get the results from following this *Dhamma* that means that they are not following the profound way. This *Dhamma* when followed truly thus yields results.

To recap in *satisampajanna*, the meditator sustains mindfulness when looking around, when moving his limbs, when coming and going, when dressing, when eating, and when going to the toilet. He practice this constantly in order to stay vigilant, so the hindrances do not overcome him. When he is mindful, he needs an object to focus his minds on. That object of mindfulness should be impermanence and this gives him a good opportunity to reflect on impermanence.

Now, this may be interpreted like this or misinterpreted like this. When we are doing some chores, we could be wholly aware of what we are doing and expect the same benefits. For example, while cutting vegetables one could think, I am cutting, cutting, cutting... and expect their wisdom to grow. The awareness while carrying out mundane chores is like this and would help us complete the chores with care but would not necessarily lead us to the cultivation of wisdom. The way to cultivate

wisdom is through mindfully contemplating the impermanence of things and through profound vigilance, which prevent the hindrances taking control of our minds. Through this, the meditator can improve his wisdom, his awareness, skill and effort.

4. Mindfulness of Postures in Four Establishments of Mindfulness

In this chapter we will explore mindfulness on postures or “*iriyapatha*” meditation. There are four main postures identified by the Buddha, namely, standing, walking, sitting and lying down. We can use any of these postures for meditation.

Walking is a common posture used for meditation. Walking meditation is particularly useful to many meditators as they find they come to realize *Dhamma* points most often while practicing walking meditation. Therefore, even if at the start we are hampered by the hindrances, we should take care not to be discouraged. We should persevere in this.

At the time of the Buddha, there was a monk who tried to meditate; he was very sleepy. Now think what we would do if we felt sleepy. We would most probably put off meditating and go to bed thinking it would be no use meditating as we would waste time sleeping anyway. This monk was very persevering and did not give up. He decided to try walking meditation. He was walking in the walking meditation area when tiredness overcame him and he fell down. Still he did not give up. He got up, brushed the sand off himself and resumed his task and was soon able to control his mind. So, we can see that is the nature of our mind. At one moment it is sleepy, tired and lazy. However, with skilful effort and mindfulness it can be overcome and our goal of profound awareness can be achieved. This shows that the nature of our mind is such that it follows our inputs. It can be so in walking meditation too.

Now, in walking meditation you may hear of some meditators saying as you lift your left foot think left, as you lift your right foot think right or you may be told as you lift your foot think lifting. As you set your foot down think setting down. We must be aware that the Buddha’s instructions say nothing of the sort. The Buddha’s instructions are thus, when walking stay profoundly aware that you are walking. When sitting stay profoundly aware that you are sitting. When standing stay profoundly aware that you are standing. When lying down be profoundly aware that you are lying down. In this manner we should be totally mindful of each posture our body adopts. This profound

awareness is not limited to walking meditation. It is true that we can prevent being distracted if we keep our mind on left, right etc. as we raise each foot. However, this was not what our supreme teacher taught. His instruction was to keep our attention on this body while it is moving. We just need to sustain our awareness that this is the posture of our body at the moment, which is walking. There is no need to pay special attention to whether we are lifting our foot or setting it down. We need to keep in mind that the aim of this meditation is to develop wisdom. That is to understand things as they really are.

There was one *arahant* named Parasariya who said that when the posture is maintained in this manner and the mind is well based on the four establishments of mindfulness physical movement and posture become very smooth, like a stream of fine oil. This means that the meditator's movements and the posture become superbly refined and fluid. So, if we stand with the intention of walking meditation, we look at the path ahead of us and determined a spot in front of us. Then we affirmed to ourselves that we will walk to that spot with mindfulness. We lift the left foot, we carry the left foot forward, we lower the left foot. We do not label these actions as such but carry them out with awareness. Then we follow through with the right foot until we get to the predetermined spot. Then we stop. When we stopped we are aware that we have stopped. Then we turn around with awareness, predetermine the next spot to go to and resume walking meditation with our minds on the movements of our limbs. The whole process is done with total awareness.

Let us say we are going somewhere or returning home on foot or just going out for a walk. This is a good time for walking meditation. When our minds are fully focused on the movements of our limbs, there is no room for unwholesome thoughts to pervade our mind. In fact, the awareness of our movements could be so profound that our mindfulness could develop within this meditation and improve. The Buddha has described walking meditation as a method by which we could sustain our concentration for a long period. Therefore, if we find it difficult to develop our concentration, walking meditation may be a way for us to develop concentration.

We can landscape our backyards to create a path for walking meditation. If there is a stretch of land 70-100 centimeters wide and about 7-10 meters long, we can pave it with sand and use it for walking meditation. It would have to be kept clear of obstructions and clutter. Such a feature would enhance our backyards and our homes.

This close awareness of our posture and movements has many benefits. The most important one is that when we are paying attention to how our bodies move and act, there is no room in our minds for idle thoughts, which could lead us astray. Under ordinary circumstances we waste a lot of

energy on letting our minds dwell on the past or the future. But if we act with mindfulness all the time our minds are bent on cultivating wisdom and that leaves no opportunity to think of mundane things.

Now, most of us are familiar with the story of Ananda *thero*, who was the personal assistant of the Buddha for 25 years. He had a superior memory and was acknowledged by the Buddha as such; and also retained and recited all of the *suttas* first told by the Buddha. He had only attained the state of stream enterer or *sotapanna* during the Buddha's life time. He wanted to attain *liberation* before the first *Dhamma council*, where the entire teachings of the Buddha were to be recited by *liberated ones*. The night before the council of the *sangha*, he was doing mindfulness of the body or *kayanupassana* meditation using walking as the posture. It was said that when he was about to change the posture from walking to lying down, when he had lifted his feet off the floor but his head had not quite hit the pillow and his body was semi reclined he attained enlightenment. This means he was not in any one of the four postures. However, he has been practicing *kayanupassana* meditation developing mindfulness of the body. This is another instance where walking meditation helps someone attain the supreme goal.

Now, we understand the value of the *walking meditation*. Let us develop this meditation in order to make our lives successful.

5. Mindfulness of Impurities of Body in the Four Establishments of Mindfulness

You are now getting basic things that you need for your life step by step. That is the way to develop your mindfulness, effort, and wisdom. You gain such knowledge from the teachings of the Buddha. Therefore, I am teaching you what the Buddha disclosed and not something that I discovered. I teach you these as a follower of the Buddha. This method is wholly attributed to the Buddha who discovered it.

One day someone asked Arahant Uttara Thero, "Venerable Sir, you preach the Dhamma beautifully. Is this Dhamma originated within you? Or do you preach this Dhamma by learning from someone else?" Then Arahant Uttara Thero answered, "Dear friend, if there's anything that's well-said, all of it belongs to the words of the Supreme Buddha. We just abstract those words when we speak." Furthermore, an example was presented to realize the Buddha's Dhamma. "Let's say there is a heap of grains, and anyone could get as much as grains one wants from that pile of grains. Thus,

each person takes as much as grains that fits in their containers. Likewise, a person learns the Dhamma according to one's talent." In the same way, you will penetrate this Dhamma that you are learning now according to your own skill.

The meditation method you are about to learn may be somewhat unpleasant to you. It is called *asubha bhavana* or mindfulness of impurities of body. It is all about our bodies and individual body parts inside and out. Even though, this is an unpleasant subject if we think about it a bit we would gain a lot of insight from this meditation. However, before we get into it, it would be prudent to talk about a couple of myths surrounding it. There is a common belief that lay people should not meditate on *asubha* or the impurities of body that such meditation would destroy family life and life as a lay person. If that were true, consider what doctors and nurses do for a living. They see this repulsive side day in and day out and still manage to have good family lives. It seems the people who have been intoxicated and infatuated by sense pleasures feel revulsion towards the subject and reject the Buddha's teachings on it. Such people decline in all noble qualities. The lovers of Dhamma never decline in noble qualities. We must keep in mind that if we lean towards the teachings we cannot go wrong.

But what is important is to see if you are ready to realize the truth of this life. For this, you must first gain some knowledge about the meditation before you actually start it. *Asubha* meditation is the contemplation of 32 impure parts of the body in their true nature.

Let us take hair for example. Let us imagine someone with long hair. They love their hair and stroke it with much affection. When brushing it if a hair comes off they preserve it with care. Let us take another person who loves their nails. They file them into shape, buff or polish them and admire them. Then, let us consider someone who loves their teeth. They worry about keeping their teeth in top condition; brush constantly and grim at themselves in the mirror to admire their teeth. Then consider someone who spends a lot of time on the care of their skin. To someone who has such a lifestyle, this contemplation of the impurities is indeed something very strange.

But, let us consider the Buddha's words here. If our hair would always remain thick, smooth and lustrous, if our nails would always remain attractive, if we can maintain this beautiful life, then, we have no problem. But it is time for a reality check. Our bodies are always deteriorating. There comes a time when we have to face that fact and at that time we will need to accept this truth. This meditation will help us immensely when that time comes.

The Buddha said that skillful contemplation of the impurities of body is like burning a chicken feather. When you hold a chicken feather to a candle it shrivels on itself. It can never be unfolded

again. The person who contemplates the impurities, according to his guidelines, develops a very realistic mind where attachments have shrivelled to never return to their previous states, through a clear and comprehensive understanding of the way things really are. This meditation is every helpful for developing Samadhi, concentration. Therefore, we must remain fully aware of the validity of concentration gained through this meditation as well. But keep in mind that if we feel revulsion at any point while meditating we have not truly practiced the contemplations of the impurities of body. If we are repulsed, we have really been contemplating body parts in just an attractive manner.

The Buddha said think of a sac containing mixed seeds, which has openings at both ends. A person with good eye sight takes this sac and unties the openings, carefully acknowledging the seeds by type as: this is rice, this is chickpeas, this is mung, this is lentils, this is barley, this is corn etc. In this manner, the wise meditator begins to look at his body part by part from head to toe.

How does he contemplate? He goes to a calm place and silently thinks about the impure parts of this body. He sees these impure body parts separately, one by one. There is hair in this body. There are nails in this body. There are teeth in this body. There is a skin in this body. There is flesh in this body. There are veins in this body. There are bones in this body. There is bone marrow in this body. There is a kidney in this body. There is a heart in this body. There is a uterus in this body. There are lungs in this body. There is a liver in this body. There are small intestines in this body. There are large intestines in this body. There is feces in this body... In this manner, that person contemplates the impure parts of this body.

He also sees that there is gall in this body. There is phlegm in this body. There is pus in this body. There is blood in this body. There is sweat in this body. There is a liquid that flows with sweat in this body and it is called blubber. There are tears in this body. There is synovia fluid in this body. There is saliva in this body. Also, there is mucus in this body. There is marrow in this body. There is urine in this body. He contemplates on these impure body parts one by one separately. It's like looking at a sack of grains that has openings in both sides.

Now you can imagine how profoundly and realistically the Buddha contemplated this life and achieved liberation. We should be able to see, how looking at life this way can give us freedom. This helps us realize that true happiness and freedom does not lie with attractions. It is freedom from bonds and ties through comprehensive understanding that makes our lives truly beautiful. Therefore, contemplation of these body parts that are subject to deterioration helps beautify our lives. We envision these body parts through our imagination. This should not lead to family break

ups. If that were the case, going to the toilet should result in family break ups. This method of meditation helps us understand that the nature of all things exists in our bodies too. We see this truth; we realize it and understand it well. We need to practice this gradually and absorb it into our lives. Even for someone who finds it difficult to concentrate, practicing contemplation of the impurities should prepare them for *anapanasati* or mindfulness of breathing meditation, by reducing attachment to sensual pleasures.

The Buddha didn't instruct that everyone should do mindfulness of breathing meditation, which is more appropriate for people who are naturally skilled in developing mindfulness. Practicing the contemplation of impurities of body for at least 20-30 minutes a day would help us enhance our lives as well as prepare us for other meditation methods like mindfulness of breathing meditation.

Mindfulness of the Impurities of Body

1. Since head hairs on this body are rotting away, smelling, living on a filthy body, and deteriorating, head hairs are disgusting to see and touch.
2. Since body hairs...
3. nails
4. teeth
5. skin
6. flesh
7. sinews
8. bones
9. bone-marrow
10. kidneys
11. heart
12. liver
13. diaphragm
14. spleen
15. lungs

16. bowels
17. small intestines
18. contents of the stomach
19. excrement
20. the brain
21. bile
22. phlegm
23. pus
24. blood
25. sweat
26. fat
27. tears
28. grease
29. saliva
30. snot
31. fluid of the joints
32. urine

6. Mindfulness of Elements in the Four Establishments of Mindfulness

You have now learned about several methods of meditation and are becoming familiar with the four establishments of mindfulness meditation. These methods include mindfulness of breathing meditation or *anapanasati*, walking meditation, and *satisampajanna* or sustained awareness meditation. We have also learned about *asubha bhavana* or the meditation of the impurities of body.

There is another meditation method within the four establishments of mindfulness meditations; that is “*dhathu manasikara*” meditation or ‘mindfulness of elements.’ If we consider the different meditation methods, loving kindness meditation is one we should be doing all the time but mindfulness of breathing meditation can be somewhat difficult for us initially. If that is the case, mindfulness of the impurities of body or mindfulness of the elements would be very beneficial to you as a precursor to mindfulness of breathing meditation.

Once, the little monk Rahula was instructed by the great *arahant* Sariputta to practice mindfulness of breathing meditation. At that point, the monk Rahula did not know how to go about the mindfulness of breathing meditation. He went to the Buddha and asked him for instructions on practicing mindfulness of breathing meditation. It was at that point that the Buddha told him to start with the mindfulness of the elements. Contemplation of the elements is an accelerated and effective path to understanding life. The elements or *dhathu* is the basic or the fundamental nature of things. The term contemplation here refers to skilful investigation of four fundamental or basic natures of things: “*patavi*” or solidity, “*apo*” or fluidity. “*thejo*” or the heat and “*vayo*” or air. *Patavi* is associated with earth, *apo* is associated with water, *thejo* is associated with fire and *vayo* is associated with wind.

In this meditation method, it is crucial that we understand the fact that these words are used to contemplate our bodies and not the outside world. The Buddha preached to consider by wisdom *Pathavi Dhātu* like the earth; see it as something that is similar to earth. The Buddha further preached us to consider *Āpō Dhātu* like water, *Tējō Dhātu* like fire, and *Vāyō Dhātu* like the wind.

From all these methods, the great teacher’s intention was always the understanding life not the gain of temporary kudos or gratification. The Buddha gave an example here. A butcher kills a cow, separates cuts of meat and sets up a stall at a cross roads. This butcher does not have a sense of selling a cow. The buyers of meat have no sense that they are buying a cow. At this point the

usage of the term cow has been transcended and is referred to as meat or in this case beef. This is how we contemplate the elements, which make up our bodies. We can use this example to understand how to separate our body's composition of the basic natures of solidity, liquidity, heat and air. That which decomposes to become earth is the element of solidity or *patavi*. That which flows or runs is the element of liquidity or *apo*; that which is warm is the element of heat or *thejo*; that which moves like the air is the gaseous element or *vayo*. In us we can recognize parts, which are solid and would eventually become earth. In us we can recognize components which are liquids. In us we can recognize components, which have warmth. In us we can recognize movement of gas or air.

Your task now is to see these elements separately as the separate cuts of meat in a butcher's stall. You should consider these as follows: you can find a tranquil spot and contemplate separately those parts of your body, which are of the earth element. The hair is of the earth element. You can consider the hair thus, up to now how much hair that have removed from my head. What has happened to that hair? Most of it had already become earth. A part of your life has become earth while you are still living. What has happened to other body hairs and nails that you have removed from your body? Consider teeth. As you listen to this you may not have even one tooth in your mouth; all of us have lost at least our baby teeth. What happened to the teeth that you lost? They have all become earth. Your skin is constantly regenerating itself. When you scrub your body, you can feel and see the dead skin leave your body to instantly become earth. You consider your flesh as becoming earth. You consider your blood vessels as becoming earth. You consider your bones as the earth element. You consider your bone marrow as becoming earth. You consider your kidneys as turning into earth. You consider your heart as becoming earth. You consider your liver as being of the earth element. You consider your diaphragm as becoming earth. You consider your as becoming earth. You consider your lungs as becoming earth. You consider your large intestine as being of the earth element. You consider your small intestine as the earth element. You consider your undigested food in the stomach as becoming earth. You consider your fecal matter in the intestine as becoming earth. These body parts are all of the element of the earth.

It is crucial for us to recall for the reason to doing this. The Buddha gave these guidelines not for the investigation of the nature of the earth or other universes. They were given to us because we suffer internally, both physically and mentally. And we try to find comfort through comfortable things, which actually takes us deeper into suffering. The Buddha's instructions were that if we want eternal happiness we must find the point where suffering or un-satisfactoriness arises. That is what

we are trying to do. When you consider these things that become earth, your humility becomes enhanced. Think of the lords or kings who lived in the early days who killed for the thrones or for power or for other gains. All these people became earth in the end. This shows us that there is nothing in this world to seize. Everything we have eventually becomes earth. Those who understand this live with immense freedom, a mind free of meanness, a mind full of compassion and *mettha*. Such a person does not envy; does not seek revenge; does not indulge in eye for eye retaliation. Such a person knows that this life is made up of parts, which become earth in the end. Now we can see how worthwhile it would be to practice this meditation of contemplation of the elements.

In a similar fashion, you need to consider the parts of the body, which flow, which are ones with water. The body has fluids such as bile which has a nature similar to water, therefore, are of the water element. Bile is of the water element. Then you consider the phlegm. This is the frothy liquid, which flows and is of the water element. This body has pus. The body creates pus when there are infections. Pus is of the water element. This body makes blood. Blood flows and is of the water element. This body creates perspiration, this is of the water element and it flows. Along with the perspiration this body has the stickiness, which is the body fat. This is of the water element too. This body creates tears, which is of the water element. This body has lymph fluids, which are also of the water element. The saliva produced by this body is also of the water element. This body produces mucus, which is of the water element. This body has synovial fluids, which lubricate joints which can be moved. This fluid is also of the water element. This body creates urine, which is of the water element or *apo dhathu*.

Similarly, this body has a warm nature. This is made up of the heat element or *thejo dhathu*. There are fluctuations of this warm nature, which is also of the heat element. Then, the food we consume is digested by this heat from the food. That is also the *thejo dhathu*. The aging process of the body is also because of the *thejo dhathu*.

Similarly, this body has components belonging to the wind or gaseous element, which is called *vayo dhathu*. There is gas created inside the stomach. This sometimes comes up through the gullet and is called “*uddhangamaneeya*” or upward wind. The gas created in the intestines escapes from our bottom end, and it is called “*adhogamaneeya*” or the downward wind. Then, this body has gaseous element that circulates throughout the body, which is called “*angamanganusari*” or circulatory wind. Then, there is the air we breathe in and out. All these components are of the wind element or *vayo dhathu*.

If you understand this correctly, as you mature in age, you would become somebody who understands life very well indeed. These instructions have been given by the Buddha. So, it is beneficial to practice the contemplation of elements. We can be totally confident that we are on the right track to understanding life.

Mindfulness of Elements meditation

Pay close attention to your body. In the head, we have **hairs** and they are like leaves on a tree. They fall when they are ripe. If all of your hair is detached, it will drop on to the earth. Let's say all of this hair came out from our head and on to our hands. We will not keep it. We will throw it away, and it will gradually decay and transform into soil in the earth. Therefore, hair is something that transforms into soil, and it is pathavi dhātu.

Body-hairs in this body is also like head hairs. they get detached from this body. When all these body hairs are detached from the body, they fall onto earth and decay until they transform into soil. It is like those ripe leaves on a tree falling onto the ground and changing into soil after their deterioration.

Nails of this body grow. They get cut at some point. Nails that were cut were thrown away onto the ground. These transform into soil with time, and we don't even notice it. In this way, nails on these fingers and toes mix with soil in earth and vanish forever.

Teeth are also something that transforms into soil. Teeth get decayed when they are still inside our mouths. Teeth rot, decay, and get crushed. Teeth that break from the mouth fall into the ground and decay until they transform into soil. How many teeth of countless people may have fallen onto the ground and transformed into soil? Teeth are something that transforms into soil. They are pathavi dhātu.

This **skin** is also like that. The skin gets scratched. This skin suffers from various things such as injuries, scabies, and eczema. This skin contracts, wrinkles and when we grow old, it rubs off. Someday when this skin falls onto the ground, it will disappear into the soil.

Tendons are also like that. These tendons also fall onto the ground and decay, transform into soil, and vanish someday.

We all have **bones** in our bodies. We all have a skeleton. How many countless skeletons we may have had in our past lives? In each life, we thought the skeleton like what have now is *ours*. There is a

skull inside this head. There are neck-bones inside the neck. There are collar-bones. There are bones inside hands, elbows, and wrists. There are chest-bones, back-bones, waist-bones, thigh-bones, knee-bones, and calf-bones. There are lots of bones inside this body. One day, all these bones will fall onto the ground and decay, transform into soil, and completely vanish.

There is **bone-marrow** inside our bones. This bone-marrow also decays, transform into soil, and vanish together with bones.

There will be a day that **kidneys** also fall into the ground. Then they will decay and transform into the soil.

The **heart** will also decay and mix with the soil.

The **liver** will also fall onto the ground. It will also decay and transform into soil.

The **lungs** expand when we breathe in. They shrink when we breathe out. These also fall onto the earth, decay, and transform into soil.

Then, there is the **small-intestine** in this body. It is like a large, coiled rope. There is also a **large-intestine**. All of these rot and mix with soil in the earth. They transform into soil by decaying.

What we ate leaves our bodies as **feces**, which also transforms into soil after some time.

In this way, all these things have the nature of transforming into soil. They are pathavi dhātu. There are also things in this body that dissolve.

Bile in this body dissolves in water and vanishes. It is āpō dhātu.

There is also **phlegm** in this body. It is a foamy liquid. It also dissolves in water and vanishes. It is āpō dhātu.

Pus in this body forms when blood has rotted. It is a yellowish liquid. That pus also dissolves in water and disappears. Pus is also āpō dhātu.

There is also **blood** in this body. Blood also dissolves in water and disappears. Blood is āpō dhātu.

In this body, there is a liquid that forms throughout this body, from the head to the soles of the feet. It is called sweat. It also dissolves in water and disappears. Sweat belongs to āpō dhātu.

Fat is a sticky thing that comes out with sweat. It also dissolves in water.

There are also **tears** in this body. Tears come out from the eyes and also dissolve in water. Tears are āpō dhātu.

In this body, **mucus** also flows and come out from the nose. Sometimes it comes out suddenly. Mucus also get dissolved.

We have **saliva** in this body which flows. Right now, it doesn't come out from our mouths because we swallow it and close our mouths. If we do not swallow saliva that flows in the mouth, it will come out. If that is the case, we will have to either wipe it off or wash it away.

Also, there is **urine** in this body. Urine also dissolves in water and vanishes. It is āpō dhātu.

These are the things that belong to āpō dhātu. They dissolve in water. All these can be found in this body.

There is also **heat** in this body. This body is created with that heat.

When that heat increases, we sweat and get fever.

When food and drink goes inside this body, that heat digests them and helps the body to absorb its nutrient. This happens by tējō dhātu.

It is also this tējō dhātu that ages this body. It also deteriorates this body until it get destroyed completely. All these are impermanent things.

Next, this body has things that blow with wind. Air that comes to the throat blows away with wind.

Air that comes out from the back also mixes with wind and blows away.

Air we breathe in also blows away with wind. Air that we breathe out is of the same nature. This air that we inhale and exhale also blows away with wind.

There is also air that moves here and there inside this body. This belongs to vāyō dhātu.

So, you can see that these are the things that we have in our body. The things that transform into soil are pathavi dhātu. Things that dissolve are āpō dhātu. Things with the nature of warmth are tējō dhātu. Things that blow are vāyō dhātu. This is what we have. The Buddha taught us to contemplate well the fact that these kinds of things are in this body. He taught us to divide up this body like a butcher that sells cow-meat after he killed a cow and cut its flesh into pieces. That is when we can see the truth of this body. Then the attachment we have will become weakened and disappear.

7. Nine Cemetery Contemplations

In the last chapter, we learned about *dhathu manasikara* meditation or the contemplation of elemental nature of things. In that meditation we learned about things that are of the nature of becoming earth. That was the element of solidity or *patavi dhathu*. We learned about the things of the nature of water or the element of fluidity or *apo dhathu*. We learned about the things of heat or *thejo dhathu*. We learned about things that have the nature of air or the element of wind or *vayo dhathu*. For the contemplation of these four great elements too, you should find a secluded spot and with closed eyes, contemplate the parts of your body, which becomes earth. You contemplate your hair, which will become earth; your body hair, which will become earth; your nails that will become earth; and in this manner you should be able to see clearly those parts of your body, which will become earth in the end. In the same way, you should try to understand fluid things, which flow or dissolve away. You must also understand the heat of your body as well as the wind elements of your body. When you contemplate the four great elements, your mindfulness improves and your understanding increases. Your life becomes organized in such a way that you can understand life through calming and insight meditations.

Now we will learn about a new method of meditation. This is called “*navaseevathika*”. This means relating the nine stages of deterioration of a dead body. This too is a way of realizing the way things are with greater depth. The truth may be unpleasant until we realize it for what it is.

In the time of the Buddha, the common practice was that when a person died the body would be taken away and thrown into a charnel ground, which was usually located some distance away from human habitation. No one went there at other times. The bodies of the dead would slowly

deteriorate. In this meditation, the Buddha teaches us the way to contemplate about the nine stages of the deterioration of a dead body.

The first stage of the deterioration of the dead body is that within a day or two after death. It will bloat, discolour become blue and ooze. The first contemplation of the 9 *cemetery contemplations* is to investigate such a dead body with wisdom and with mindfulness relate it to our lives in this way. This body of mine too will become like this. The dead body on the charnel ground has undergone a massive change in this short period of time. This body too has not transcended such a fate. When one contemplates this, one's mind becomes less obsessed by defilements and easier to calm and settle. This contemplation help's the meditator to develop concentration easily.

The second stage of the deterioration of a dead body, which lasts for about a week after the first stage, is that a stench will emanate from it and attract animals. Vultures, dogs, crows, foxes and other carrion eaters will tear the dead body from limbs and eat it. Then the body becomes food for animals and changes drastically from what it looked like before. The second contemplation of the 9 *cemetery contemplations* is to investigate this stage with wisdom and with mindfulness relate it to our lives this way. This body of mine too will become like this. The dead body on the charnel ground has undergone a massive change in this short period of time. This body too has not transcended such a fate.

Something to realize here is that this is the side of life we are reluctant to think about and if we dream about it we call it a nightmare. There is a valid reason for meditating on these subjects. It helps us accept reality more readily. We may feel this is difficult or unpleasant. We may feel that this meditation method is a big ask and unfair. Why are we being instructed to contemplate such gruesome objects? The thing is, looking at life with rose tinted glasses gets us nowhere. The jealousy, anger, revengefulness and other emotions we are used to will not expel by continuing to look at life the old way. We should understand that living in a world of make believe beauty does not really rid us of jealousy and anger etc. Therefore, what Buddha teaches here must be true. His instructions directly lead to the realization of life. When we are on the track to understand the life it is a natural result that we become virtuous. We become patient, we do not experience jealousy, we do not get angry and we do not seek revenge. These are characteristics of a virtuous life. These virtues are cultivated when we practice this meditation method. We can see for ourselves if this meditation works for us by gaging the enhancement of virtues within ourselves.

Now, we move to the third stage of the deterioration of the dead body. It would now be unrecognizable and would be in pieces and parts of bone would be visible. There would be bits of

flesh strewn about and dry pools of blood around the remains. Now, you should investigate such a stage. The third contemplation of the 9 *cemetery contemplations* is to investigate this stage with wisdom and with mindfulness and relate it to our lives this way. This body of mine too will become like this. The dead body on the charnel ground has undergone a massive change in this short period of time. This body too has not transcended such a fate. When you contemplate this with wisdom, gradually your mind becomes oriented towards understanding life. When contemplating a dead body on a charnel ground, you must have *atapi*, *sampajanna*, and *satima*. We learned about these in a previous chapter and remind ourselves, *atapi* is improving through perseverance, the skill of subduing the accumulated weaknesses of our minds. *Sampajanna* is using our intelligence skilfully and *satima* is the skill of staying totally aware and mindful.

As you are aware the nature of human kind is to be easily startled. The nature of humanness is immature. If we dream of a dead body we are startled awake and frightened. We should not confuse ourselves here about relating to our lives something we do not like even to dream about. All we need to do is realize that this is reality and that contemplating on this gives us strength to face any calamity that could befall us. There is a name for *liberated ones* who have understood life. It is “*thadhi*”. *Thadhi* is imperturbability in gain and loss, fame and defame, praise and insult, and wellbeing and suffering, the eight natures - ups and downs of the world. The *liberated ones* have cultivated imperturbability by contemplating these realities of life.

Let us return to the dead body, in the fourth of the nine stages of deterioration in the charnel ground. There would be no flesh now and there would be traces of dried blood on bones that are now visible. There are no flies, no worms, no carrion eaters; it is just the skeleton without flesh. Now you should investigate such a stage. The fourth contemplation of the 9 *cemetery contemplations* is to investigate this stage with wisdom and mindfulness, relate it to our lives in this manner. This body of mine too will become like this. The dead body on the charnel ground has undergone a massive change in this short period of time. This body too has not transcended such a fate. While you contemplate the deteriorating body in the charnel ground your mind has no room for thinking unwholesome thoughts. This is a benefit we expect from this meditation. This is how our minds prepare to become free of fetters.

Let us investigate the dead body now in its fifth stage. The traces of blood have disappeared now. It is just the partial skeleton with dried sinews here and there. Now, we should investigate such a stage. The fifth contemplation of the 9 *cemetery contemplations* is to investigate this stage with wisdom and with mindfulness relate it to our lives in this way. This body of mine too will become like

this. The dead body on the charnel ground has undergone a massive change in this short period of time. This body too has not transcended such a fate. When you practice this, your mindfulness and wisdom are further developed.

In the sixth stage of the deterioration of a dead body on the charnel ground, the mediator contemplates on the scattered skeleton thus; the skull is in one place, the ribs are strewn about, the clavicles are elsewhere, and the bones of arms and fingers are strewn about too. The pelvic bones are to one side and the bones of the legs and feet are in other places. Now, the dead body is reduced to a jumble of bones strewn about. The sixth contemplation of the 9 *cemetary contemplations* is to investigate this stage with wisdom and with mindfulness, relate it to your life in this way. This body of mine too will become like this. The dead body on the charnel ground has undergone a massive change in this short period of time. This body too has not transcended such a fate.

In the seventh stage of the deterioration of a dead body on the charnel ground, the meditator contemplates on the scattered bones thus; the bones strewn about become bleached to the colour of a conch shell. The seventh contemplation of the 9 *cemetary contemplations* is to investigate this stage with wisdom and with mindfulness relate it to your life in this manner. This body of mine too will become like this. The dead body on the charnel ground has undergone a massive change in this short period of time. This body too has not transcended such a fate. The meditator start thinking, “is this life I have taken as me, mine and myself?” When the meditator start to think like this with mindfulness, his attachments are loosened, his mind becomes settled and tends towards understanding of life. This is a huge gain in his life.

In the eighth stage of deterioration of the dead body on the charnel ground, which is a few years after death, the bones are broken into little pieces and loose any identity. The eighth contemplation of the 9 *cemetary contemplations* is to investigate this stage with wisdom and with mindfulness relate it to your life in this manner. This body of mine too will become like this. The dead body on the charnel ground has undergone a massive change in this brief period of time. This body too has not transcended such a fate.

The Buddha once said that in an eon or “*kalpa*”, if the skeletons of one person did not deteriorate and piled on top of another after each death they would form a huge mount. This shows us how far we have travelled in this cycle of birth and death. During this very short period of 50-60 years of this life, we struggle to maintain this body because we have no understanding of it. A wise person decides to live this life with understanding.

The ninth stage of deterioration of a dead body on the charnel ground is where the bones are just fragments and have become dust and are inseparable from the earth. The ninth contemplation of the 9 cemetery contemplations is to investigate this stage with wisdom and with mindfulness relate it to your life in this way. This body of mine too will become like this. The dead body on the charnel ground has undergone a massive change in this short period of time. This body too has not transcended such a fate. The meditator investigates his body through these nine stages of deterioration. Then he must realize that all other bodies too have not transcended this fate. So, he contemplates the fact that nobody has transcended this fate. He relates the nine stages of deterioration of the dead body on the charnel ground to his life in this manner. Everybody will become like this. The dead body on the charnel ground has undergone a massive change in this short period of time. Nobody has transcended such a fate. With the nine stages of deterioration of the dead body on a charnel ground, the Buddha's teachings on *kayanupassana* meditation or the contemplation of the body within the four establishments of mindfulness is complete.

Kayanupassana meditation has fourteen methods. In summary they are,

1. *Anapanasati*, or the mindfulness of breathing meditation
2. *Satisampajanna* or mindfulness of actions meditation
3. *Iriyapatha* or mindfulness of posture meditation
4. *Asubha bhavana* or the mindfulness of the impurities of the body
5. *Dhathumanasikara* or the meditation of the four great elements
- 6 -14. Nine stages of deterioration of a dead body

We started with mindfulness of in breath and out breath, which is closely connected with the body. We have progressed to a much wider outlook of life. Now, you will understand that this *Dhamma* is not one that can be found through prayer or wishing. A life free from deterioration and death is just not possible. This means that there is a reality in this life, which we cannot evade. This *Dhamma* taught by the Buddha helps us see this reality and gives us the wisdom to face it. The person who realizes that this is the path to see the reality wills for themselves a worry free life. That is what this *kayanupassana* is for. We see now that there is a course of action that we must undertake to a worry free life. We must realize too, that it is through courses of actions we undertake that our lives become cluttered as well. But this *kayanupassana* is a course of actions that purifies and unclutters our lives.

Therefore, you can see how practical the *Dhamma* of the Buddha is. When we learn the *Dhamma* in a language we could understand, we can realize how important it is to our lives. We will

see the Dhamma's Akālika quality (it can be realized at any time period) when we truly try to make an effort to practice that Dhamma little by little. So, you have this rare moment at your fingertips. Don't throw away the Dhamma that you are learning. Practice this Dhamma as you can. You will witness the development of your life when you practice the Dhamma. You will then understand that this Dhamma is well preached by the Buddha. That means the Dhamma is Swakkhāta (well-preached). The Dhamma preached by the Buddha is something that needs to be realized in this life. That is what is called Sanditthika (needs to be realized in this life). The Buddha's Dhamma can be realized at any time period (Akālika). There are no hidden things in the Buddha's Dhamma. It can be spoken out openly. One can invite wise people to 'come and see the Dhamma'. This quality of the Dhamma is known as Ēhipassika. The Buddha's Dhamma needs to be applied to oneself. That is why the Dhamma is called Ōpanaika. The Buddha's Dhamma is realized by the wise, each for himself. Therefore, the Dhamma is called Paccattan Vēditabba Viññūhi.

These qualities are in the Dhamma we discussed. We learned about breathing meditation, awareness meditation, postural meditation, impurities of the body meditation, meditation on contemplating elements, and meditation on the nine cemetery contemplations. All these are included in Kāyānupassanā – contemplations on the body.

In the four establishments of mindfulness there are three other sections; *vedananupassana* or contemplation of feeling, *chittanupassana* or contemplation of thoughts and *Dhammanupassana*, which is the contemplation of nature of things. We will learn these methods of meditation too. While doing *kayanupassana* meditation, it is advisable to practice just the *kayanupassana* for a long period. Within *kayanupassana* we can improve our awareness, wisdom and effort greatly.

Nine Cemetery Contemplations Meditation.

First, imagine a corpse before starting the *nava sīvathika* meditation. Take a look at the corpse a few times from head to toe in your mind. Now think about how it's left in an empty cemetery. Think about the corpse left in an empty cemetery for some time.

1. Next, two days have gone by. The corpse is swollen. Its lips are swollen. It has a darker color. Now, three days are gone. The corpse is swollen more than before. Its lips are swollen. Its face is swollen and distorted. The mouth is open. Its color is darker than earlier. Now, it has been a few days. The whole corpse is swollen. The lips are swollen. The face is swollen and distorted. The mouth is open. The eyes are open. The legs and hands are also swollen. The stomach is swollen. Now, the corpse is dark blue and pus is coming out from its mouth. Pus is coming out from its nose, ears, eyes, and all the openings of the body. The corpse's skin has cracked, and pus is coming out from those cracks.

My body is also like this. Someday, this will happen to my body too. The bodies of others will also reach this state of flowing pus. Everyone's bodies will become like this at one point. (Contemplate in this manner repeatedly and get that perception established well in your mind.)

2. Next, the corpse in the cemetery is eaten by animals. Crows have landed on the corpse and pecked out the flesh and eaten it. They dug out the corpse's eyes. Wolves have come and eaten the corpse's flesh, dragging it by its hands and legs. Dogs have eaten the corpse's flesh, dragging it here and there. There are pieces of flesh around the corpse. Its hands and legs are twisted. Intestines are dragged out from the dead body. Birds drag and eat those intestines.

This will happen to my body too. One day, my body will also become like this. Others' bodies will also be eaten by animals like this. Everyone's bodies will be eaten by animals like this. (Contemplate in this manner repeatedly and get that perception established well in your mind.)

3. Next, the corpse's bones can be seen scattered here and there. Some flesh that is left after being eaten by animals can be seen on some parts of the dead body. The whole skeleton is wrapped in tendons. It is smeared with blood.

This will happen to my body too. One day, my body will also become like this. Others' bodies also will be reduced to skeletons like this. Everyone's bodies will become like this. (Contemplate in this manner repeatedly and get that perception established well in your mind.)

4. Next, the skeleton of that corpse is completely open. There is no flesh at all. The entire skeleton is coiled with tendons and smeared with blood.

This will happen to my body as well. One day, my body will also become just a skeleton smeared with blood without any flesh. Others' bodies also have the same nature. Everyone's bodies will become like this. (Contemplate in this manner repeatedly and get that perception established well in your mind.)

5. Next, the corpse only has a skeleton. The skeleton is coiled with tendons, but no flesh is present. Blood and pus is gone. Only the skeleton with tendons is left.

This will happen to my body as well. One day, my body will become like this. Others' bodies will also become like this. Everyone's bodies will become like this. (Contemplate in this manner repeatedly and get that perception established well in your mind.)

6. Next, that corpse's skeleton is scattered here and there. The skull is in one place. The neck bones are in another. Collar bones, shoulder bones, finger bones, back bones, hip bones, thigh bones, calf bones, leg bones, and foot bones are scattered in all other directions. The entire skeleton is now scattered.

This will happen to my body too. The skeleton of my body will also be scattered like this. Others' skeleton will also be scattered like this. Everyone's skeleton will be scattered like this. (Contemplate in this manner repeatedly and get that perception established well in your mind.)

7. Next, the color of the skeleton is white, like that of a conch shell. All the bones that have been scattered here and there now have this white color.

The skeleton of my body will also turn this white color. The color of skeletons of others' bodies will also transform into this white color, like that of a conch shell. Everyone's skeletons will change to a white

color and decay. (Contemplate in this manner repeatedly and get that perception established well in your mind.)

8. There are now bones heaped up here and there. These bones have been aged for a long time now. These bones cannot be identified now as one thing or another. It is only a heap of decayed white bones gathered together.

This will happen to the skeleton of my body as well. Someday, this body's skeleton will also get decayed and heaped up. Other's bodies are also like this. The skeletons of everyone's bodies will decay like this. (Contemplate in this manner repeatedly and get that perception established well in your mind.)

9. Next, a skeleton cannot be seen. Pieces of bones have deteriorated completely. It has transformed into a white powder. It has become soil in the earth. Those bones have deteriorated entirely.

My body will also decay and transform into soil in the earth. Bodies of others will also decay and transform into soil in the earth. Everyone's bodies will also decay and transform into soil in the earth like this. (Contemplate in this manner repeatedly and get that perception established well in your mind.)

8. Mindfulness on Feelings in Four Establishments of Mindfulness

By now, you should be familiar with the *kayanupassana* meditation or contemplation of the body within the four establishments of mindfulness as taught by the Buddha. In this chapter we will learn "*vedananupassana*" or the contemplation of feelings within the four establishments of mindfulness as taught by the Buddha.

The Buddha describes the term "*vedana*" as a feeling, which could be either painful or pleasurable or a feeling that is neither painful nor pleasurable. This feeling arises due to *contact*, which is a result of the six sense bases, which are eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. Feeling arises when any of these sense bases are stimulated. Thus, pain, pleasure and neutral feelings are all associated with these six sense bases. *Contact* is defined as a union of three factors: an internal sense base, the object external to it and the consciousness. For example, when there is a sound we hear it because we have the ear, the sound exists and the consciousness. *Contact* is the union of these three factors: the internal sense base, which is the ear, the external object, which is the sound, and the consciousness. We have to be aware that *contact* exists as long as those three conditions exist together. When the *contact* is pleasant the feeling is pleasant. When the *contact* is unpleasant the feeling is unpleasant. When the *contact* is neutral the feeling is neutral. In *sattipathana sutta*, the Buddha divided these feelings into two further categories, "*samisa vedana – worldly feelings*" and "*niramisa vedana – spiritual feelings*". Some people practice noticing aches in the body during

meditation and reflect on them. But the Buddha hasn't given such instruction. *Sāmisa vedana* are feelings that arise through reacting to sights, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile sensations, which can be pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. *Nirāmisa vedana* are feelings that arise apart from sense pleasures. *Nirāmisa vedana* too can be pleasant, unpleasant or neutral.

Let us say that when we are performing a meditation, that meditation does not get cultivated in us as we expected. Then, we feel a suffering/sadness. That suffering did not form based on the five sensual pleasure. It is a feeling that formed based on something *Nirāmisa*. Such feeling is called *Nirāmisa* feeling. The feeling we took as an example is a disagreeable *Nirāmisa* feeling.

Let us say that your mind concentrates when you are performing the meditation. Then, you feel a pleasure and is an agreeable *Nirāmisa* feeling. Next, you will have times at which you perform mental advertences that do not have agreeable feelings. Let us say that there is a meditation objective that neither agreeable nor disagreeable feelings are formed in you. That feeling is called a neutral *Nirāmisa* feeling.

The Buddha described feeling in the simile of the air bubble in the water. When a rain drop falls into a river it creates an air bubble. As soon as another rain drop falls on near the bubble it bursts and a new air bubble is created. Likewise, when a particular *contact* exists, a feeling exists, and the moment a new *contact* arises a new feeling arises. *Vedanānupassana* is the contemplation of feeling. Knowing with mindfulness whether each feeling is pleasant, unpleasant or neutral based on sense pleasures or whether each feeling is pleasant, unpleasant or neutral result of *nirāmisa vedana*.

The Buddha preached to us to focus our mindfulness on feeling. One should be mindful about feeling when he focuses on it. That is, he should be aware of whether it is a pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral feeling formed based on the five sense pleasures (*Sāmisa* feeling). He contemplates the feeling by his wisdom and establishing his mindfulness on it.

Then, he will realize that this unpleasant feeling he is feeling is based on the five sense pleasures. When he feels an pleasant feeling, he realizes that this pleasant feeling he is feeling is based on the five sense pleasures. Likewise, when he feels a neutral feeling, he realizes that it is based on the five sense pleasures. He establishes his mindfulness on *Sāmisa* feelings in this manner.

Next, it is the *Nirāmisa* feeling. When a person who meditates could not cultivate the meditation and concentration, he could feel a sadness (an unpleasant feeling). Then, he should understand that he is feeling an unpleasant *Nirāmisa* feeling. When he continues his meditation, he feels pleasure. Then, he should understand that he is feeling a pleasant *Nirāmisa* feeling. When he

further cultivates his meditation, he starts to feel neutral feelings that are not pleasant or unpleasant. He sees/realizes it as neutral Nirāmisā feeling.

When cultivating this mindfulness of feelings, the meditator becomes proficient at understanding that others too have these nine feelings and he realizes that this has the same nature within all beings. When he meditates this way, he sees with mindfulness that feeling changes when *contact* changes. The Buddha taught, *contact* is the coming together of three things: the union of the eye, the form and the eye consciousness is *eye-contact*. The union of the ear, the sound and ear consciousness is the *ear-contact*. The union of the nose, the smell and the nose consciousness is *nose-contact*. The union of the tongue, the taste and the tongue consciousness is *tongue-contact*. The union of the body, the tactile sensations and the body consciousness is the *body-contact*. The union of the mind, the mind-object and mind consciousness is *mind contact*.

We need to understand the mind is one thing, the mind-object is another and mind consciousness is yet another. These three together make up the *mind contact*. To understand this, when a mind object arises the mind knows this. This knowing is the mind consciousness. The mind and the mind-objects or thoughts are not one and the same. We can see this because let us say the mind remembers something. When we remember this, the mind consciousness will know that thing. The mind can choose to retain or replace that thing. We can do that only because, the mind and the mind object are two different entities.

When the meditator contemplates this manner, he realizes that when *contact* exists, feeling exists. When *contact* change, feeling changes and when *contact* cease, the feeling ceases. When we meditate on *vedananupassana* we realize that these occurrences have no controller, they are non-self. They are the result of conditions that are in place and that when the conditions no longer exist the result is eliminated. This is a natural order, which the meditator understands. Thinking of this feeling as me, thinking I am the feeling, thinking I own this feeling or thinking that this feeling owns me, the meditator will realize that thinking is faulty and correct himself. He avoids identifying with feeling as me, mine and under my control. This contemplation helps him to improve his mindfulness and wisdom further. He is heading towards the realization of life. That is how *vedananupassana* becomes complete in him.

According to contemplations of feeling sections in *sattipathana sutta*, it is very clear that contemplations of feeling means not reflecting on aches of the body, but being mindful of worldly and spiritual feelings.

Contemplation on Feelings Meditation

Worldly pleasant feeling that arose based on sense pleasures in the past arose due to contact and ceased when the contact ceased. Therefore, it was impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Worldly pleasant feeling* that arose based on sense pleasures in the past was not me, not mine, not my self.

Worldly pleasant feeling that has arisen based on sense pleasures in the present has arisen due to contact and cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Worldly pleasant feeling* that has arisen based on sense pleasures in the present is not me, not mine, not my self.

Worldly pleasant feeling that will arise based on sense pleasures in the future will arise due to contact and will cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Worldly pleasant feeling* that will arise based on sense pleasures in the future is not me, not mine, not my self.

Worldly unpleasant feeling that arose based on sense pleasures in the past arose due to contact and ceased when the contact ceased. Therefore, it was impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Worldly unpleasant feeling* that arose based on sense pleasures in the past was not me, not mine, not my self.

Worldly unpleasant feeling that has arisen based on sense pleasures in the present has arisen due to contact and cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Worldly unpleasant feeling* that has arisen based on sense pleasures in the present is not me, not mine, not my self.

Worldly unpleasant feeling that will arise based on sense pleasures in the future will arise due to contact and will cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Worldly pleasant feeling* that will arise based on sense pleasures in the future is not me, not mine, not my self.

Worldly neutral feeling that arose based on sense pleasures in the past arose due to contact and ceased when the contact ceased. Therefore, it was impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Worldly neutral feeling* that arose based on sense pleasures in the past was not me, not mine, not my self.

Worldly neutral feeling that has arisen based on sense pleasures in the present has arisen due to contact and cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Worldly neutral feeling* that has arisen based on sense pleasures in the present is not me, not mine, not my self.

Worldly neutral feeling that will arise based on sense pleasures in the future will arise due to contact and will cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Worldly neutral feeling* that will arise based on sense pleasures in the future is not me, not mine, not my self.

Spiritual pleasant feeling in the past arose due to contact and ceased when the contact ceased. Therefore, it was impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Spiritual pleasant feeling* that arose was not me, not mine, not my self.

Spiritual pleasant feeling that has arisen in the present has arisen due to contact and cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Spiritual pleasant feeling* that has arisen in the present is not me, not mine, not my self.

Spiritual pleasant feeling that will arise in the future will arise due to contact and will cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Spiritual pleasant feelings* that will arise in the future is not me, not mine, not my self.

Spiritual unpleasant feeling that arose in the past arose due to contact and ceased when the contact ceased. Therefore, it was impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Spiritual unpleasant feeling* that arose in the past was not me, not mine, not my self.

Spiritual unpleasant feeling that has arisen in the present has arisen due to contact and cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Spiritual unpleasant feeling* that has arisen in the present is not me, not mine, not my self.

Spiritual unpleasant feeling that will arise in the future will arise due to contact and will cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Spiritual unpleasant feeling* that will arise in the future is not me, not mine, not my self.

Spiritual neutral feeling that arose in the past arose due to contact and ceased when the contact ceased. Therefore, it was impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Spiritual neutral feeling* that arose in the past was not me, not mine, not my self.

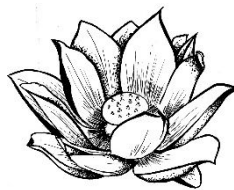
Spiritual neutral feeling that has arisen in the present has arisen due to contact and cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Spiritual neutral feeling* that has arisen in the present is not me, not mine, not my self.

Spiritual neutral feeling that will arise in the future will arise due to contact and will cease when the contact ceases. Therefore, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *Spiritual neutral feeling* that will arise in the future is not me, not mine, not my self.

All unpleasant feelings that arise due to causes are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *All unpleasant feelings* that arise due to causes are not me, not mine, not my self.

All pleasant feelings that arise due to causes are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *All pleasant feelings* that arise due to causes are not me, not mine, not my self.

All neutral feelings that arise due to causes are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. *All neutral feelings* that arise due to causes are not me, not mine, not my self.



9. Contemplation on Mind in the Four Establishments of Mindfulness

By now, you know lots of details about the Dhamma that the Buddha taught us. It is from the Buddha's Dhamma that one can learn how to conduct one's life to establish mindfulness. Any wise person can understand that the inner life is something that needs to be purified. The Buddha's

Dhamma can be used to help purify that inner life. One who has that realization will be able to do it. This is why we need to establish our mindfulness.

For that, we have learned the Kāyānupassanā-contemplation of body meditation and Vēdanānupassanā-contemplation of feeling meditation to this point. There is also something special in our inner life. It is the mind. You are now going to learn about the Chittānupassanā-contemplation of mind meditation. This meditation focuses on contemplating mind by establishing mindfulness on it. The Buddha preached the Chittānupassanā meditation as the third section in the Satipatthāna sutta. First and second parts were the Kāyānupassanā meditation and Vēdanānupassanā meditation, respectively. The third part was the Chittānupassanā meditation.

Mind is something that arises due to a cause. It ceases with the cessation of cause. Also, mind is something that can follow evil paths when it is led astray. It follows good paths when it is directed properly. Mind is something that follows whichever the path that it is directed. Therefore, the Buddha preached that the mind is something that needs to be tamed. He also preached that a tamed mind brings pleasure (Chittān dantan sukhā vahan). The Buddha clearly preached about it because He has already tamed His mind.

Like a tamed animal is useful in different ways, a tamed mind is also useful. So, the Chittānupassanā is the meditation that helps us to tame the mind and establish mindfulness on it. In the Chittānupassanā meditation, the Buddha taught us to contemplate mind in sixteen different ways.

Those are, the Buddha preached us to contemplate passionate mind as a mind that is passionate. A mind gets passionate because of causes and not without such causes. These causes help one to identify a passionate mind in the process of acquiring a profound realization about life. One gets to know about it because he is mindful about it.

A mind gets dispassionate also because of causes (Vītarāgan vā chittān vītarāgan chittānti pajānāti). A mind also gets tainted or purified due to certain causes. So, one mindfully knows about a dispassionate mind when it is dispassionate.

Next, if the mind is angry, one mindfully knows about it as an angry mind. He also mindfully knows the reasons why the mind became angry.

When the mind is free of anger, he knows that the mind is now free of anger due to reasons that made it free of anger. He understands that this mind is free of anger now.

When the mind is of suspicion, delusion, and has been deceived, he also understands that nature of the mind. He understands that this is a mind of delusion.

If the delusion of the mind is gone and attained realization, he is mindful about that nature. He now knows that this mind is free of delusion.

Next, if this mind is contracted, he also knows about the contracted nature of the mind from his wisdom. (A contracted mind means, it is not awakened, lazy to do anything, and it is unable to see the mind's nature.)

If the mind is in a scattered state, he understands that the mind is now scattered (mind is contracted inward and dispersed outward). With a good mindfulness, he understands both these natures of the mind.

Also, when the mind is concentrated, he knows that it is concentrated.

If the mind is not concentrated, he understands that it is not concentrated.

If the mind is developed into a state of jhana, he understands that as well.

If a concentration is not cultivated into a state of jhana, he also knows about it.

If the mind is free of defilements and has reached liberation, he also understands about that as being freed from defilements.

If the mind is not freed from defilements, he understands about that as well.

In this manner, the Buddha has taught us the way to cultivate mindfulness, so that one could see the changes that happen in his mind when it transforms from a passionate one to a defilement-free mind. Here, one does not think as passion... passion... passion... when a passion comes into the mind or thinks as anger... anger... anger... when anger comes into mind. The Buddha hasn't asked the meditators to recollect like that.

In the Supreme Buddha's preaching, it says one should investigate as to what caused the mind to be in such state and establish mindfulness by realizing it as an effect that resulted due to a cause.

Now, you can understand that a disciple of the Buddha does not see his life carelessly. He does not practice a meditation that has been done through an influence of a feeling, or without a realization and understanding of life. It is not a mere meditation that has been practiced without a clear aim. Here, the Buddha is describing a contemplation of mind by one's wisdom and with a properly established mindfulness.

When one is wisely considering the mind in this manner, he realizes his mind's nature very well. He also understands that everyone else's minds are also of this similar nature. He further realizes that this mind is something that arises due to causes (Samudaya dhammānupassivā chittasmin viharati).

What is the cause for the arising of the mind? The Buddha preached clearly that this mind arises dependent on mentality and materiality. There is a discourse named Satipatthāna Samudaya Sutta in the Satipatthana chapter of the book of the Connected Discourses. In that discourse, the Buddha clearly taught that with the arising of mentality and materiality, mind arises (Nāmarūpa samudayā chitta samudayō).

Don't get confused about the word Nāmarūpa; it is clearly described in the discourses of the Buddha. There are five factors in the 'mentality'. Those are, Vēdanā (feeling), saññā (perception), chētanā (volitions), phassa (contact), and manasikāra (attentiveness). Materiality is the four great elements (earth, water, fire, wind) and things made up of the four great elements. Thus, if the four great elements or something that is made up of it is present together with a feeling, a perception, a volition, a contact, and attentiveness, then the mind arises there. Thus, minds of both mine and yours are formed as a result of mentality and materiality. All the above mentioned states arise in this mind. The state of being passionate, dispassionate, anger, free of anger, in delusion, free of delusion, contracted, scattered, concentrated, not concentrated, in a jhana state, not in a jhana state, with defilements, and free of defilements all arise in a mind that is formed due to that mentality and materiality. See, how much realization we could gain from what we learned here.

Therefore, we must understand that those who tamed their minds were the ones who won this world. People who realized this mind were the ones who freed themselves from these physical and

mental sufferings. They were the ones who were released from the wrong notion I, mine, and myself.

If one really needs to take something as me, mine, and myself, the Buddha preached to consider this body (as me, mine, and myself). That is because one can see this body being present for some time, let us say for one year, for ten years, for twenty years, for eighty or ninety years, and it dies after that. Thus, he sees this body existing at least for a short period of time.

The Buddha preached that this mind is not like that. He showed us that this mind is like a monkey who jumps from one tree branch to another. A mind jumps from one objective into another. The Buddha told us not to take the mind with such character as me, mine, or myself.

When we have the opportunity to achieve such a remarkable realization of the mind, why don't we take this Dhamma practice seriously? Please do not miss this esteemed opportunity. It is you who will have to be born in hell and suffer if you miss this rare chance. It is you who have to carry your own Karma with you. Moreover, what is important for us is the Dhamma that the Buddha preached us with His great compassion and not something that is told by someone else. Place confidence in the Buddha. Place confidence in the Dhamma preached by the Buddha. Place confidence in the Liberated Ones, who followed the Dhamma and attained Nibbāna. Then only, you will be able to cultivate this mindfulness practice in your mind as well. You can contemplate on your mind mindfully and attain the realization of life.

10. Mindfulness on Five Hindrances

You have been learning things that would help you place confidence in the Dhamma, taught by the Buddha. It is not either from a statue or from pictures of the Buddha that one should try to identify Him. The Buddha indeed needs to be identified through the Dhamma He preached. When the Buddha was alive, the monk named “Vakkali” was constantly staring at the Buddha. Then the Buddha told him, “Dear Vakkali, realize the Dhamma. Then through the Dhamma, you will see me.” This clearly shows that one can see the Buddha only through the Dhamma.

If it was possible to see the Buddha from a statue, it would have been the great disciples (Liberated Disciples) who would have built the statues of the Buddha first. If that was the case, they would have come to a decision to build Buddha statues for future people to see Him, even before the

first Dhamma council was carried out. But, the Liberated Ones did what was actually needed to be done; they protected the Noble Dhamma. They did a Dhamma council, which means they arranged the discourses of the Buddha methodically. So, the Dhamma that is available for us now was handed down by those Liberated Ones.

To this point, you have been learning about the first set of meditations described in the Sattipatthāna Sutta, which is in the Noble Dhamma preached by the Buddha. You now know a great deal of the Satipatthanā Sutta. You should have an understanding about how much knowledge you have now about the Dhamma preached by the Buddha. This is a rare knowledge.

What we need now is to discuss the truth of this life and not something that is untruthful. According to the Buddha, this life does not end with this death. It is an endless trajectory through births and deaths. This journey is fraught with much pain and suffering in plane of misery. And it very rarely that one would come across the teachings of a Buddha on this passage. Therefore, one should place his confidence in the Dhamma, and develop his confidence to an unshakable state.

Therefore, do not miss this rare opportunity. To achieve this end we need *kalyana mittas* or noble friends who help us understand the great teachings in its purest form without alternating it with their own view points or sully it in any other way. The Buddha once said to an *arahant* named Upali, if a *Dhamma* you hear talks about non-adherence, if it talks about eradication of lust and greed, if it talks about freedom from suffering, Upali, understand that it is the teaching of the *Buddha*. If any *teaching* you hear does not promote non-adherence, if it does not talk about the eradication of the lust and greed, if it does not talk about the freedom from suffering, that is not the teaching of the Buddha. So, we must understand that the teachings of the Buddha are guidelines for gaining freedom from the cycle of birth and death, not for extending the cycle of rebirth.

You are now going to learn the final section of the Four Establishments of Mindfulness. It starts with the explanation of the five hindrances. The Buddha preached that one needs to establish his mindfulness in the true nature of the five hindrances properly. If sense desire has arisen in him, he should be mindful that the sense desire is present in him. The purpose of mindfulness here is to terminate that sense desire here, and not to reflect on it, thinking, “sense desire... sense desire...” The meditator understands that the sense desire arises because of 2 factors: pleasant object and unwise consideration. One who cultivates the Dhammānupassanā meditation starts to establish

himself in the Dhamma by focusing his mind in getting rid of distorted perception on that pleasant object. Once the sense desire is gone, he realizes that the sense desire is not present in him.

Also when anger arises in his mind, he understands his mind using his wisdom. But here, reflecting on anger thinking “Anger... anger...” is not what one should do here. What he needs to be done here is to be mindful that, ‘This anger has arisen due to the Patigha Nimitta or the mental image that caused our anger and unwise consideration. Now he is mindful to remove the mental image that caused and develop loving kindness instead through wise consideration. Thus, he realizes the change that occurred in him. The ill will hindrance that he had is no longer in him now.

Then, when drowsiness, laziness, and dislike and discontent in practicing the Dhamma have arisen in him, he realizes that thīnamiddha has arisen in him. When thīnamiddha arises in him, he understands that it arises as a result of unwise consideration and heedlessness. He further thinks that he should get rid of the laziness and sleepiness. ‘I need to overcome this thīnamiddha.’ He then gets rid of the laziness and sleepiness based on wise consideration and heedfulness.

He establishes his mind on mindfulness of death thinking ‘I could die right now. Who knows if I am going to die today? I could be in an accident today. Who could say what kind of tragedy would come to this life. Therefore, I should practice this Dhamma before something like that happens to me.’ In this manner, he establishes his mindfulness and continues it promptly. Thus, he gets rid of laziness and sleepiness and handles his life free of drowsiness and laziness with a great effort.

Now, he’s mindful to see if there is any remorse, that is regretting past incidents and distractions. If there is any, he understands they have arisen due to unwise consideration. He further investigates these past incidents that causes regret and remorse by thinking ‘These are impermanent. There’s no need to think about these things again. What happened in the past is now in the past. I am a new person now. I am someone who has come to the Dhamma. I am a person who tries to control/cultivate the mind. Therefore, it is a hindrance for me to have these things in my effort of developing my mind in this path of the Dhamma.’ In this manner, he gets rid of being sad about what has happened in the past. Then when the mind is distracted, he understands this mind is distracted due to unwise consideration. He abandons this unwise consideration and instead of hard effort, he patiently continues to establish mindfulness with an investigation of mind.

Next, a doubt forms in him about this Dhamma. ‘Is this meditation I am doing correct? Is this method I am practicing correct? Would I be able to cultivate my mind in this manner? Would I be able to obtain results?’ When he keeps thinking like that, a doubt arises in him. As long as this doubt is present, he could not focus his mind in practicing the Dhamma. His mind starts to establish in other useless things. This could happen because of the doubt. One needs to acquire a proper realization of the Dhamma in order to free from that doubt. The Buddha preached that a person who is in a doubt all the time thinking, ‘how this goes and how that goes’ should discipline himself in a path that helps attaining wisdom (Kathan kati ñāyapathāya sikkhē). Then he will develop a faith toward the Buddha. It is indeed by developing a faith that one could free himself from doubt.

Faith means placing confidence in the enlightenment of the Supreme Buddha; Most people just state their own views and prevent people from realizing the Dhamma. That just shows their unfaithfulness towards the Buddha.

So, it is not what we should do. One should think that, ‘This is the Buddha’s Dhamma. Most people freed themselves by practicing this Dhamma. Oh! This Dhamma is also for my refuge, for my liberation!’ And, he should thus develop his confidence and free his mind from the five hindrances.

When he continues to discipline his mind, himself in this manner, he realizes that these five hindrances act in others in a similar manner. He thus sees this change by seeing it acting similarly even in the internal life. Afterwards, he uses the knowledge to realize this life. Then he understands that these five hindrances arise due to causes and cease with the cessation of those causes. He then gets to understand both arising and cessation of these five hindrances. Therefore when they arise in him, he does not take the five hindrances as me, mine, or my self. He becomes mindful about not getting attached to any of those since the five hindrances have the nature of arising and ceasing. That mindfulness helps him to cultivate wisdom, mindfulness, and effort further.

11. Mindfulness on the Five Aggregates of Clinging

Now you have learned many techniques of developing mindfulness. In the previous chapters you learned how to develop (1) mindfulness of breathing meditation, (2) mindfulness of actions meditations, (3) mindfulness of postures meditations, (4) meditation on the impurities of body, (5) meditation on the four great elements, (6 -14) meditation on the nine stages of the deterioration of a dead body. These fourteen methods are *kayanupassana* or mindfulness of the body within the four establishments of mindfulness. In the method for *vedananupassana* or mindfulness of feeling within the four establishments of mindfulness, you learned about the nine categories of feelings. In the method for *chittanupassana* or mindfulness of the state of mind within the four establishments of mindfulness, you learned 16 states of mind you experienced when developing your mind. In the last chapter, you learned about the five hindrances under *Dhammanupassana* or mindfulness of the factors of insight within the four establishments of mindfulness.

The Buddha gives a vast realization of life to His disciples. It was the Buddha who showed the path in realizing the Nibbāna. The Buddha introduced Himself as, the arouser of the unarisen path (*Asanjātassa maggassa sanjanētā*), the proclaimer the unproclaimed path to Nibbāna (*Anakkātassa maggassa akkhātā*), the One who perfectly realized the Path (*Maggaññū*), the One who perfectly knows that Path (*Maggavidū*), and the skilled leader who of shows the Path (*Maggakōvidō*). All these names are used to introduce the Buddha. It was the Buddha who showed the path to develop the mind. Therefore, you should place confidence in the Buddha.

There is no one who could show us the path to Nibbāna other than the Buddha. He can show us how to develop this mind. This is in fact what is called 'showing the path'. Our parents showed us a path to get a good education, and we followed that path and get educated. Likewise, the Buddha showed us the path to acquire pleasure in this life by freeing ourselves from suffering. If we follow that path, we will be able to be free from suffering by realizing life.

Now you will learn the meditation on the five aggregates of clinging within the establishment of mind insight factors. In the very first sermon the Buddha gave, the *Dhammachakkapavaththana sutta* or the discourse on the turning of the wheel of the *Dhamma*, he disclosed the noble truth of suffering as follows. Birth is suffering. Aging is suffering. Sickness is suffering. Death is suffering. Separation from loved ones and desirable things is suffering. Association with undesirable people

and things is suffering. Not to gain what one desires is suffering. In brief, the five aggregates of clinging are suffering. Understanding the five aggregates of clinging is understanding the suffering. The Buddha said, the noble disciple understands this is form, this is how the form arises and this is how the form ceases; this is feeling, this is how feeling arises and this is how feeling ceases; this is perception, this is how perception arises and this is how perception ceases; this is volitional formations, this how volitional formations arise and this how volitional formation cease; this is consciousness, this is how consciousness arises, and this is how consciousness ceases.

This meditation is contemplating on the five aggregates of clinging as, what are the five aggregates of clinging, how do the five aggregates of clinging come into existence repeatedly, and how are the five aggregates of clinging fully ceased. It is important to know comprehensively about the five aggregates of clinging. The Buddha teaches that the aggregates are form or *rupa*, feeling or *vedana*, perception or *sanna*, volitional formations or *sankara* and consciousness or *vinnana*. These five aggregates of clinging define a living being. The definition of a being is one who clings to these five aggregates. Should the beings free themselves of clinging to these aggregates through wisdom, they become enlightened and they do not have five aggregates of clinging. They only have five aggregates without clinging. They are liberated ones.

When there is desire and clinging towards the five aggregates, these aggregates are called clinging aggregates. However, when desire and clinging are released from the aggregates, they are called just aggregates.

As meditators, you first recognize the clinging aggregate of form or *rupa*. The term form is used to things that are subject to destruction. What is this form? Form is those things, which are made up of the four great elements of earth, water, fire and air. These forms deteriorate due to cold. They deteriorate due to heat. They deteriorate due to hunger. They deteriorate due to thirst. They deteriorate due to accidents and disasters. They deteriorate due to sickness. According to this, *rupa* is another name for this body that is made of the four great elements.

There is a discourse named *Mahapunnama Sutta*. On one full-moon day, while the Buddha was sitting outside in meditational posture in Pūrvārāma Temple with lots of Arahants, a certain monk asked the Buddha, “Bhante, may I ask you a question?” The Buddha said, “Monk, be seated and ask your question. I will answer it.”

Then that monk asked, “Bhante aggregates, aggregates is called what is the meaning of aggregate? Then the Buddha answered, “Monk, any form past future present, whether internal or external, whether gross or subtle, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, this is called the

aggregate of form.

Therefore, the word 'aggregates' does not mean a heap or pile of things. The word 'aggregates' means the existence of something within time and space. This is the extent of form. Past future, and present is the time dimension. Internal, external, gross, subtle, inferior, superior, far, near is the space dimension. Therefore this is called the form aggregate.

The same definition applies to the aggregate of feeling. Any feeling past, future or present, whether internal or external, whether gross or subtle, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, that is called the aggregate of feeling.

Similarly, the same definition applies to the aggregate of perception. Any perception past, future or present, whether internal or external, whether gross or subtle, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, that is called the aggregate of perception.

The same definition applies to the aggregate of volitional formations. Any mental fabrication past, present or future, whether internal or external, whether gross or subtle, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, that is called the aggregate of volitional formation.

The same definition applies to the aggregate of consciousness. Any consciousness past, present or future, whether internal or external, whether gross or subtle, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, that is called the aggregate of consciousness.

These aggregates exist within time and space. The four great elements are the conditions, which designate the aggregate of form. *Phassa* or contact is the condition that designates the aggregate of feeling. *Phassa* or contact is the condition that designates the aggregate of perception. *Phassa* or contact is the condition that designates the aggregate of volitional formation. *Nama-rupa* or mentality and materiality is the condition that designates the aggregate of consciousness. Understanding the five aggregates of clinging through your own life and contemplating it is the meditation on the five aggregates of clinging within the four establishments of mindfulness.

You are listening to something that a human being gets to listen to very rarely. You might have read many newspaper in your life. You might have watched television programs a lot. But, you get something that helps realizing life in seldom. In fact, we do not get such a rare chance at most of the times. Also, you get to learn the pure Dhamma of the Buddha without addition of any personal opinions. That is why you are fortunate. In the last section you learnt the meditation of five aggregates of clinging within the four establishments of mindfulness. This is the *Dhammanupassana* meditation. In this section we will further elaborate on our understanding of the meditation of five aggregates of clinging within the four establishments of mindfulness.

Rupa or form is composed of the four great elements. “*Kandha*” or aggregate is that which exists in the time and space continuum. *Vedana* or feeling also exists within the time and space continuum. *Sanna* or the perception is the same. Volitional formations are the same and consciousness is also the same. All of these comprise suffering, which must be realized.

Vedana upadanaskandha or the aggregate of feeling arises when there is contact or *phassa* associated with the six sense bases. The sense bases are eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. Feeling arises when there is contact or *phassa*. Where there is contact, there we find feeling. When that contact ceases the feeling ceases.

Sanna or perception arises where there is contact or *phassa*. Where there is contact you will find *sanna*. When that contact ceases the *sanna* ceases. What do you perceive? With your eyes you perceive sights. Through your ears you perceive sounds. Through your nose you perceive smells. Through your tongue you perceive taste. Through your body you perceive tactile sensations. Through your mind you perceive mental objects. How do you perceive these?

1. There is an object, it comes to the eye and the eye consciousness arises. The union of these three is eye-contact. When this eye contact arises, perception of form arises.
2. Similarly, there is a sound, it comes to the ear, and the ear consciousness arises. The union of these three is ear contact. When this ear contact arises, perception of sound arises.
3. There is an odour that comes to the nose and the nose consciousness arises. The union of these three is nose contact. When this nose contact arises, perception of smell arises.
4. There is a taste. It comes to the tongue and the tongue consciousness arises. The union of these three is tongue contact. When this tongue contact arises, perception of taste arises.
5. There is a tactile sensation, it comes to the body and the body consciousness arises. The union of these three is body contact. When this body contact arises, perception of tangibles arises.

6. There is a mind object, it comes to the mind and the mind consciousness arises. The union of these three is mind contact. When this mind contact arises, perception of thought arises. Thus, when these six kinds of *phassa* or contact arise, the six kinds of perception too arise.

Now, we look at volitional formations. These are thoughts or volitions. Thoughts or volition arise when we see objects. We react with the mind, with word or deed. Thoughts or volitions arise when we hear sounds. Then we react with mind, word or deed. Thoughts or volitions arise when we smell odours. Then we react with mind, word or deed. Thoughts or volition arise when we taste. Then we react with mind, word or deed. Thoughts or volitions arise when we feel a tactile sensation. Then we react with mind, word or deed. Thoughts or volitions arise when mind objects arise. Then we react with mind, word or deed. What then is thought or volition? It is “karma” or that which forms a result. Then, every time we see an object with the eye, form a volitional formation, react with mind, word or deed, karma is generated, which will culminate in a result. This is thought or volition or “*chetana*” and is also known as volitional formations. Thus, volitional formations too are formed by *phassa* or contact. If the eye, eye consciousness and forms do not align, eye contact will not happen. If eye contact does not occur, neither will volitional formation.

What then is consciousness? Consciousness arises, dependant on *mentality and materiality*. If we are asked where consciousness arises, here is the answer. Consciousness arises in the six sense base. The Buddha taught that dependent on eye and form, eye consciousness arises. The reason for that is because consciousness arises dependent on mentality and materiality. *Mentality* is feeling, perception, volitional formations, contact and attentiveness. *Materiality* is that, which is made of four great elements and the four great elements themselves. The eye is made of feeling, perception, volitional formations, contact, attentiveness and the four great elements. Similarly, the other five sense bases, the ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are also made of feeling, perception, volitional formations, contact, attentiveness and the four great elements. Consciousness too is made of mentality and materiality.

The Buddha taught that this consciousness is not solitary. (*Ahamaññatarē rūpāya, aññatarē vēdanāya, aññatarē saññāya, aññatarē sankārēhi viññānhassa āgatin vā gatin vā chutin vā upapattin vā paññāpessāmīti, nētan thānan vijjati*) “Monks, though someone might say: ‘apart from form, apart from feeling, apart from perception, apart from volitional formations, I will make known the coming and going of consciousness, it’s passing away and rebirth, it’s growth, increase, and expansion’ – that is impossible.

Now, it's very clear that the consciousness, while standing, might stand engaged with form, engaged with feeling, engaged with perception, and engaged with volitional formations. The disciple of the Buddha is very clear on this because he has placed confidence on the knowledge of the Buddha. Based on this confidence, he starts to contemplate on the five aggregates of clinging. You need to contemplate how these five aggregates of clinging arise. This happens according to the phenomenon of cause and effect. The form, which arises from the four great elements, becomes the clinging aggregate of form. The feeling, which arises from contact, becomes the clinging aggregate of feeling. The perception, which arises from contact, becomes the clinging aggregate of perception. The volitional formations that arise from contact become the clinging aggregate of volitional formations. The consciousness that arises from *mentality and materiality* becomes the clinging aggregate of consciousness.

Now it is obvious that all of these happen through the phenomenon of dependant co-arising of "*patichhasamuppada*". So, we understand that as long as this phenomenon of dependant co-arising is formed within one's life, the five aggregates of clinging exist. Therefore, the five aggregates of clinging are impermanent. Thus, form, feeling, perception, volitional formations and consciousness are all impermanent.

As a simple example, let us take the traditional twelve-month oil lamp found in some places of worship, which burns all year around. In January when you look at it, it is a light. When you look at it in mid-year it is still a light. In December when you look at it, it is still burning. It may give the impression that the flame is a permanent thing. However, it is fuelled by impermanent oil, fed through impermanent wicks, and burns with an impermanent flame. If someone thinks, "I saw this flame in January, I saw this flame in July and I still can see it in December, it is a permanent thing"; they are deluded. If the oil and the wicks are not replenished at timely intervals, the flame would be extinguished. Similarly, this consciousness, which co-exists with five aggregates of clinging setting in motion the process for continuous existence, is not something permanent. Due to the continuous formation of dependent co-arising, the five aggregates of clinging continuously came into existence. Once the dependent co-arising is ceased, the continued existence of the five aggregates of clinging is stopped. In other words, the moment ignorance is totally eradicated, when the Four Noble Truths are fully realized, the dependant co-arising is completely eradicated.

Thus, we see the Buddha's followers are serious practitioners of *Dhammanupassana* or the contemplation of the nature of things. They see how the five aggregates of clinging arise through the phenomenon of dependant co-arising. They see how the five aggregates of clinging cease too.

This cessation happens when the disciple fully comprehends the workings of the five aggregates of clinging and eradicates clinging.

If one has understood forms made of the four great elements as froth, feeling that arise from *contact* as a water bubble, perceptions born of *contact* as a mirage, volitional formations born of *contact* as peeling layers of a banana tree trunk when one wants heartwood, and if one has understood consciousness born of mentality and materiality is as illusory as a magician's trick. The five aggregates of clinging are left alone without the notion of me, mine, and myself as one realizes how they truly are. Because one leaves the aggregates alone, there is no clinging. Because there is no clinging, passion is eliminated. When passion is eliminated, arranging of kamma to be ripened is ceased. That means that rebirth is stopped. Dependant co-arising is destroyed, and the disciple becomes liberated.

This is how the Buddha described about the contemplation of the five aggregates of clinging. The disciple of the Buddha finds a solitary spot and while he contemplates this profoundly, he realizes that the formation of the five aggregates of clinging is non-self or beyond his control. Forms comprising the four great elements will change when the four great elements change. Feeling arising from *contact* will change when contact changes. Perceptions arising from contact will change when *contact* changes. Volitional formations arising from contact will change when contact changes. Consciousness arising from mentality and materiality will change when mentality and materiality changes. Thus, these results that arise due to causes change or cease when the causes are changed.

Through this realization, he understands non-self nature as well. Understanding this non-self nature, he doesn't consider the five aggregates of clinging as "I am, mine, and myself." He becomes liberated from them. Establishing one's mind on the four establishments of mindfulness is remarkable that how much freedom can one experience.

Contemplation on the five aggregates of clinging meditation

Form aggregate:

Forms that were *in the past*, formed from the four elements and have changed: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Forms that are *in the present*, formed from the four elements and are changing: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Forms that will be *in the future* will be formed from the four elements and will change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Internal forms formed from the four elements and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

External forms formed from the four elements and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Gross forms formed from the four elements and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Subtle forms formed from the four elements and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Inferior forms formed from the four elements and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Superior forms formed from the four elements and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Forms that are *far away*, formed from the four elements and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Forms that are *nearby*, formed from the four elements and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Feeling aggregate

Feelings that were *in the past* that arose from contact and have changed: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Feelings that are *in the present* that arise from contact and are changing: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Feelings that will be *in the future* that will arise from contact and will change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Internal feeling that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

External feelings that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Gross feelings that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Subtle feelings that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Inferior feelings that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Superior feelings that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Feelings that are *far away* that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Feelings that are *nearby* that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Perception aggregate

Perceptions that were *in the past* that arose from contact and have changed: they are impermanent,

impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Perceptions that are *in the present* that arise from contact and are changing: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Perceptions that will be *in the future* that will arise from contact and will change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Internal perceptions that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

External perceptions that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Gross perceptions that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Subtle perceptions that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Inferior perceptions that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Superior perceptions that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Perceptions that are *far away* that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Perceptions that are *nearby* that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Volitional formations aggregate

Volitional formations that were *in the past* that arose from contact and have changed: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Volitional formations that are *in the present* that arise from contact and are changing: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Volitional formations that will be *in the future* that will arise from contact and will change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Internal volitional formations that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

External volitional formations that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Gross volitional formations that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Subtle volitional formations that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Inferior volitional formations that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Superior volitional formations that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent,

impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Volitional formations that are *far away* that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Volitional formations that are *nearby* that arise from contact and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Consciousness aggregate

Consciousness that was *in the past* that arose from mentality and materiality and have changed: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Consciousness that is *in the present* that arise from mentality and materiality and are changing: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Consciousness that will be *in the future* that will arise from contact and will change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Internal consciousness that arises from mentality and materiality and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

External consciousness that arises from mentality and materiality and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Gross consciousness that arises from mentality and materiality and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Subtle consciousness that arises from mentality and materiality and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Inferior consciousness that arises from mentality and materiality and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Superior consciousness that arises from mentality and materiality and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Consciousness that is *far away* that arises from mentality and materiality and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

Consciousness that is *nearby* that arises from mentality and materiality and are subject to change: they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. They are not me, not mine, not myself.

12. Contemplation on six sense bases

In the last section, you learned the meditation on the five aggregates of clinging within the four establishments of mindfulness. This is a *dhammanupassana* meditation. While contemplating on the impermanence of the five aggregates of clinging, you should know that any comfortable posture could be held.

The clinging aggregates are form, feeling, perception, volitional formations and consciousness. Each aggregate can be contemplated as past, future or present; as internal or external; as gross or subtle; as inferior or superior; as far or near. This contemplation is done through observing of their impermanence, suffering and non-self nature. You need to remember here that non-self denotes here something that is beyond ones control. The great benefit of this mediation is that the person who practices this meditation also cultivates the wisdom needed to recognize impermanence as impermanent, suffering as suffering, and non-self as beyond one's control. This contemplation is done thus, these are the five aggregates of clinging, this is how they arise, and this is how they cease.

Next, the Buddha taught about the meditation on the six sense bases. The six sense bases are eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and the mind. It is through these six sense bases that the entire five aggregates of clinging and the phenomenon of dependant co-arising are formed. The meditations mentioned above have been practiced and many people have achieved the results throughout a long history. The Buddha teaches the obtaining of an eye, an ear, a nose, a tongue, a body or a mind is the obtaining of suffering. That is the existence of diseases. That is the appearance of aging and death. Therefore, the Buddha taught that these six sense bases are suffering and must be realized as such.

The Buddha taught in the Sattipatana sutta that the meditator clearly understands the eye. The meditator clearly understands the visible object or form. The meditator clearly understands the bondage of passion and desire owing to the visual objects. This bondage arises, dependant on the eye and the visual object. The meditator clearly understands how a bondage that had not arisen has arise. Such bondage arises due to unwise consideration or *ayonisomanasikara*. The meditator clearly understands how bondage that has now arisen is eradicated. Such bondage is eradicated by seeing things as they truly are through wise consideration or *yonisomanasikara*. The meditator clearly understands how bondage that has now being eradicated through right understanding will in future never arise.

In order to understand the meditation on the sense bases, you need to gain a better understanding of the workings of these sense bases. Once, there was a discussion between the great *arahants* Sariputta and Mahakotthita. The *arahant* Kottthita asked the great Sariputta is the eye fettered by the form or is the form fettered by the eye. Is the ear fettered by sound or is the sound fettered by ear? Is the nose fettered by smell or is the smell fettered by nose? Is the tongue fettered by taste or is the taste fettered by tongue? Is the body fettered by tangible or is the tangible fettered by body? Is the mind fettered by thought or is the thought fettered by mind?

The reason for this question is that it usually seems like the eye and the form are bound together, the ear and sound are bound together, the nose and smell are bound together, the tongue and taste are bound together, the body and tangible are bound together, the mind and thought are bound together. But the truth is different. These internal objects and external objects are completely separate and independent from each other. The great *arahant* Sariputta answered, the eye is not bound to the form. Neither is the form bound to the eye. The ear is not bound to the sound, neither is the sound bound to the ear. The nose is not bound to the smell, neither is the smell bound to the nose. The tongue is not bound to the taste, neither is the taste bound to the tongue. The body is not bound to the tangible, neither is the tangible bound to the body. The mind is not bound to the thought, neither is the thought bound to the mind. The great *arahant* Sariputta then said had they been bonded, *nibbana* would not be possible through this noble eight-fold path. He then presented a wonderful explanation thus, if there is a length of rope with a white cow at one end and a black cow at the other end. The black cow and the white cow are still quite separate and distinguishable from each other. Where the white cow goes, the black cow goes. Where the black cow goes, the white cow goes. One may say, the white cow goes because of the black cow or one may say the black cow goes because of the white cow. The truth is they both go because of the rope.

What you need to understand from this story is, when the rope is broken both cows go free. Likewise the Buddha teaches it is the bondage of desire that holds the internal sense base and the external object together. The person who has such bonds, looks at the working of his sense bases with clear mindfulness. Then he sees the impermanence of the organ that is called eye. He also sees the impermanence of the form. He realizes that the eye exists dependant on *nama-rupa* or mentality and materiality. Some believe that the eye is composed of just the four great elements. If this were so, it would be possible to create an artificial eye and create a consciousness within that artificial eye. That is impossible. As the eye arises dependant on mentality and materiality, it is also based on all the characteristics of mentality and materiality. This is true for all the other five sense bases as well. That

is why in the explanation of the dependant co-arising, the Buddha taught that with the arising of mentality and materiality, six sense bases arise.

When contemplating with clear mindfulness, the eye that arises dependant on mentality and materiality, the meditator sees the impermanence of the eye. When contemplating with clear mindfulness, the ear that arises dependant on mentality and materiality, he sees the impermanence of the ear. When contemplating with clear mindfulness, the nose that arises dependant on mentality and materiality, he sees the impermanence of the nose. When contemplating with clear mindfulness, the tongue that arises dependant on mentality and materiality, he sees the impermanence of the tongue. When contemplating with clear mindfulness, the body that arises dependant on mentality and materiality, he sees the impermanence of the body. When contemplating with clear mindfulness, the mind that arises dependant on mentality and materiality, he sees the impermanence of the mind. He understands that as the mentality and materiality are impermanent, the six sense bases too are impermanent.

In the same way, he understands that forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangibles, and thoughts are all impermanent. When contemplating in this manner, if there arises a fetter due to the impermanent eye and the impermanent form, he realizes the nature of the fetter, how it arises and how it ceases. In this manner, he understands the impermanent nature of the six sense bases.

You are now aware that these six sense bases are impermanent. Why are they impermanent? They are impermanent because as they arise dependant on mentality and materiality, which too are impermanent.

In the *Samyutta nikaya* or the connected discourses of the Buddha, there is a *chapter* named *Okkanthi chapter*. *Okkanthi* means being emerged. Here the emergence is in the *dhamma* or the phenomenon of the nature. If you want to be emerged in the path to the ultimate freedom, the Noble Eight Fold Path, you first need *saddha* or confidence. Without *saddha*, this ultimate freedom is not possible.

When you understand that this teaching about reality was taught by the Buddha, you develop confidence in that Dhamma as follows: The eye, which arises dependant on mentality and materiality is impermanent; the ear, which arises dependant on mentality and materiality is impermanent; the nose, which arises dependant on mentality and materiality is impermanent; the tongue, which arises dependant on mentality and materiality is impermanent; the body, which arises dependant on mentality and materiality is impermanent; and the mind, which arises dependant on mentality and materiality is impermanent.

Similarly, you place confidence in the Dhamma as follows: Forms, sounds, odours, tastes, tangibles and thoughts are impermanent. You also place confidence in the Dhamma as follows: the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness and mind consciousness are also impermanent.

Similarly, you place confidence in the Dhamma as follows: The eye contact, which is the union of the eye, form and the eye consciousness, is impermanent. Likewise, the ear contact, nose contact, tongue contact, body contact and mind contact are also impermanent. You establish your confidence in this manner and investigate further with wise consideration.

Then you place confidence in the Dhamma as follows: the feelings born of these six types contact are impermanent too. You also place confidence in the Dhamma as follows: the perception of the form, the sound, the odour, the taste, the tangible and thought are all impermanent too.

You place confidence in the Dhamma as follows: volitions based on the perceived forms are impermanent, volitions based on the perceived sounds are impermanent, volitions based on the perceived smells are impermanent, volitions based on the perceived tastes are impermanent, volitions based on the perceived tangibles are impermanent, volitions based on the perceived thoughts are impermanent.

You place confidence in the Dhamma as follows: the desires caused by this process within you are also impermanent. If you think of something you liked very much a few years ago, which you are quite indifferent to now, you can see the truth of this. Similarly, things you dislike as children could be highly priced now. Who knows what your preferences will be in the future. In the future, you will have to relinquish many things you treasure now. So, you know that desires are very transient and impermanent.

The moment you establish confidence within yourself about the impermanence of the impermanent factors, you have emerged to the Noble Eight Fold Path. A disciple who has emerged into the Noble Eight Fold Path is known as “*saddhanusari*” or the disciple with confidence. The Buddha teaches that the *saddhanusari* disciple uses his confidence as a foundation to investigate this process further. Then, he is known as “*dhammanusari*” or a disciple who has partially realized the nature of things but has not yet attained the state of stream enterer. Both *saddhanusari* disciples and *dhammanusari* disciples are on the fruit of stream entry. If one continues to tread this path further with diligence, he will become a stream enterer. At some point on his journey, such a person will realize all things that arise due to causes will cease to be, once the causes cease to exist, thereby realizing the impermanent nature of things. This realization arises with the direct goal of realizing the four noble truths. Such a disciple has the *sammadhitti* or right view. Such a disciple has recognized the Noble Eight Fold Path and is immersed in the path. He is called a noble disciple who is accomplished in view, accomplished in vision, who has arrived at this perfect Dhamma, who sees this perfect Dhamma, who possesses a trainee’s knowledge, a trainee’s true knowledge, who has entered the stream of the Dhamma, a noble one with penetrative wisdom, one who stands squarely before the door to Nibbana.

When the disciple is mindful of the six sense bases in this meditation, he involuntarily becomes more in command on his senses. That is how he remains unbound to external objects. The moment a fetter is created, the *patichchasaṃuppāda* or dependant co-arising comes into effect. When the six sense bases arise, contact arises. When contact arises, feeling arises. When feeling arises, desire arises. When desire arises, craving arises. When craving arises, clinging arises. When clinging arises, arranging of karma to be ripen arises. Due to the arranging of karma, one takes rebirth. Through this meditation, he will realize how this dependant co-arising arises from the six sense bases. So, he meditates in an effort to prevent bonds, fetters and defilements from forming by cultivating mindfulness on these sense bases.

When he recognizes these impermanent sense bases within himself, he can surmise in other beings too exist impermanent sense bases. Outside of him, whatever forms, sounds, odours, tastes, tangibles and thoughts exist, he understands that they are impermanent and that it is the same for him, and for others too. Therefore, he remains detached. As he investigates this with insight, when existing fetters are finally destroyed, he understands how that happens. This is done by *yonisomanasikara* or investigation of this process using wise consideration, as you just learned. It is by applying *yonisomanasikara* that you develop the ability to see the true nature of things. Investigating with wise considerations means investigating the way how the Buddha taught us. It is through seeing correctly, that you can destroy the fetters that bind you to continued existence. If you do not do this, you continue to be attached.

When you perceive a form, you are confounded by it; you build on your imagination and embark on a mental journey. You begin to grasp this form and imagine mental formations. Your mind becomes immersed in images and mental adventures. This creates many sensations based on this form. Your mind becomes plagued by desire and exertion. This is *ayonisomanasikara*, which is the way you hold suffering and push away the ultimate freedom of Nibbana. Your usual life style is geared to take you away from this ultimate freedom. By continuing down this mundane road and wishing or hoping for freedom is futile. Therefore, if you want to head for the ultimate freedom, it is imperative that you develop mindfulness on the impermanence of these six sense bases. When mindfulness on the impermanence of these six sense bases is developed and the arising and the cessation of the sense bases are seen as impermanent, there will be no taking of any of the sense bases as me, mine or under my control.

You would only consider a course of action, which would free you from the eye; a course of action, which would free you from the ear; a course of action, which would free you from the nose; a course of action, which would free you from the tongue; a course of action, which would free you from the body; a course of action, which would free you from the mind. This course of action would free you from this world and this course of action would free you from the next world and everything else. At that point, the disciple would comprehensively understand the Buddha's teachings.

Contemplation of the sense bases

Eye

Because the eye arises due to causes and changes quickly, the eye is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Eye is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because forms arise due to causes and change quickly, forms are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Forms are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because eye consciousness arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Eye consciousness is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the union of eye, form, and eye consciousness arise due to causes and change quickly, eye contact is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Eye contact is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because feeling born from eye contact arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. The feeling born from eye contact is not me, not mine, or not myself.

Because the perception of form arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. perception of form is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because volitions regarding form arise due to causes and change quickly, they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Volitions regarding form are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the desire for forms arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Desire for forms is not me, not mine, not myself.

Ear

Because the ear arises due to causes and changes quickly, the ear is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. The ear is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because sounds arise due to causes and change quickly, sounds are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Sounds are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because sound consciousness arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Sound consciousness is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the union of ear, sound, and ear consciousness arise due to causes and change quickly, ear contact is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Ear contact is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because feeling born from ear contact arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. The feeling born from ear contact is not me, not mine, or not myself.

Because the perception of sound arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Perception of sound is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because volitions regarding sound arise due to causes and change quickly, they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Volitions regarding sounds are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the desire for sound arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Desire for sounds is not me, not mine, not myself.

Nose

Because the nose arises due to causes and changes quickly, the nose is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. The nose is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because smells arise due to causes and change quickly, smells are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Smells are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because nose consciousness arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Nose consciousness is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the union of nose, smells, and nose consciousness arise due to causes and change quickly, nose contact is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Nose contact is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because feeling born from nose contact arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. The feeling born from nose contact is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the perception of smells arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Perception of smells is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because volitions regarding smells arise due to causes and change quickly, they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Volitions regarding smells are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the desire for smells arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. desire for smells is not me, not mine, not myself.

Tongue

Because the tongue arises due to causes and changes quickly, the tongue is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. The tongue is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because tastes arise due to causes and change quickly, tastes are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Tastes are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because tongue consciousness arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Tongue consciousness is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the union of tongue, taste, and tongue consciousness arise due to causes and change quickly, tongue contact is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Tongue contact is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because feeling born from tongue contact arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. The feeling born from tongue contact is not me, not mine, or not myself.

Because the perception of taste arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Perception of taste is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because volitions regarding taste arise due to causes and change quickly, they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Volitions regarding taste are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the desire for taste arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Desire for taste is not me, not mine, not myself.

Body

Because the body arises due to causes and changes quickly, the body is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. The body is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because tangibles arise due to causes and change quickly, tangibles are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Tangibles are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because body consciousness arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Body consciousness is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the union of body, tangibles, and body consciousness arise due to causes and change quickly, body contact is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Body contact is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because feeling born from body contact arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. The feeling born from body contact is not me, not mine, or not myself.

Because the perception of tangibles arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Perception of tangibles is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because volitions regarding tangibles arise due to causes and change quickly, they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Volitions regarding tangibles are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the desire for tangibles arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Desire for tangibles is not me, not mine, not myself.

Mind

Because the mind arises due to causes and changes quickly, the mind is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Mind is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because thoughts arise due to causes and change quickly, thoughts are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Thoughts are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because mind consciousness arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Mind consciousness is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the union of mind, thought, and mind consciousness arise due to causes and change quickly, mind contact is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Mind contact is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because feeling born from mind contact arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. The feeling born from mind contact is not me, not mine, or not myself.

Because the perception of thought arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Perception of thought is not me, not mine, not myself.

Because volitions regarding thought arise due to causes and changes quickly, they are impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Volitions regarding thought are not me, not mine, not myself.

Because the desire for forms arises due to causes and changes quickly, it is impermanent, impermanent, impermanent. Desire for forms is not me, not mine, not myself.

13. Seven Factors of Enlightenment in Four Establishments of Mindfulness

In this chapter you will be learning the last section of *dhammanupassana* or the mindfulness of the way things are in the Sattipatana Sutta as taught by the Buddha. This comprises the seven factors of enlightenment, the *saptha bojjangas*. *Bojjangas* are the factors that aid to comprehend the Four Noble Truths. There are seven of these.

1. “*Sati*” or mindfulness.
2. “*Dhammavichya*” or investigation of the way things are.
3. “*Viriya*” or effort.
4. “*Peethi*” or rapture
5. “*Passaddhi*” or tranquility.

6. “*Samadhi*” or concentration.
7. “*Upekkha*” or equanimity.

All these can be cultivated within you through cultivation of the Four Establishments of Mindfulness. It is only through the cultivation of the Four Establishments of Mindfulness that the seven factors of enlightenment can be cultivated within you. These seven factors cannot grow within you through wishing or prayer. If it was possible, then there would be no need of the appearance of Buddhas to this world, there would be no need to listen to the Dhamma. Since the Buddha’s teachings are extremely essential for the future generation to realize the life, liberated monks preserved this Dhamma with utmost dedication.

When the Buddha’s life ended, liberated monks each took a section of the *dhamma* and organized it for posterity. The section of the Long Discourses was memorized by the student monks of liberated monk Ananda. The section of the Middle Discourses was memorized by the student monks of liberated monk Sariputta. The section of the Connected Discourses was memorized by the student monks of liberated monk Kassapa. The section of the Numerical Discourses was memorized by the student monks of liberated monk Annurudha. So, it could be passed down through generations of dedicated *sangha*. This *dhamma*, therefore, is still in a very pure form and must be studied in order to gain the knowledge, which would then lead to profound understanding of the way things really are.

There is no practical methodology or experience that leads to ultimate freedom that does not include the *Dhamma*. If there is some truth you comprehend, it is in the *dhamma*. Whatever is in the Dhamma, that is what you understand. True realization and the Dhamma are the same. Therefore, when one practices the four establishments of mindfulness, it is the seven factors of enlightenment they realize. You should cultivate the four establishments of mindfulness with the aim of developing the seven factors of enlightenment. Then, the factors needed for the comprehension of the Four Noble Truths will develop in you. This course of action is very clear, straight forward and there are no contradictions or unclear instructions.

Sati sambojjanga is the first factor of enlightenment. This is the four establishments of mindfulness. When the four establishments of mindfulness lead to the realization of the Four Noble Truths, it is called *sati sambojjanga*. When this factor is developed within you, you would know it with mindfulness. When this factor is undeveloped within you, you should know that too and continue with diligence to develop it.

The second factor, *dhammavichaya sambojjanga* is the result of investigation of the Buddha's teachings. This done as follows: by seeing impermanence as impermanent; by seeing suffering as suffering; by seeing things beyond our control as things beyond our control; as well as comprehending the nature of dependant co-arising. When you constantly meditate on these with mindfulness, we will develop *dhammavichaya sambojjanga* as a factor leading to the comprehension of the Four Noble Truths. When this factor is developed within you, you would know it with mindfulness. When this factor is undeveloped within you, you should know that too and continue with diligence to develop it.

The third factor is “*viriya*” or effort. That means you would make (1) the effort to eradicate any unwholesome actions that have arisen, (2) the effort to prevent unwholesome actions that have not yet arisen, (3) the effort to develop wholesome actions that have arisen and (4) the effort to cultivate wholesome actions that have not yet arisen. Unwholesome actions are: desire, anger, envy, revenge, retaliation, resentment, quarrelling and disobedience. As a meditator, you are aware when these arise within you and the effort you make to eradicate these if they arise in you and the effort you make to prevent these from arising is *viriya sambojjanga*.

Wholesome actions are: renunciation, loving kindness, compassion, virtue, tranquil concentration and wisdom. As a meditator, you are aware when these have not yet arisen in you. The effort you make to cultivate these and the effort you make to develop these when they arise in you is *viriya sambojjanga*. All this effort is made with the comprehension of the Four Noble Truths as the goal. When this factor is developed within you, you would know it with mindfulness. When this factor is undeveloped within you, you should know that too and continue with diligence to develop it. When your *viriya* is developed in this way with unwholesome actions becoming subdued and wholesome actions becoming enhanced, you will have established *viriya sambojjanga* or the enlightenment factor of effort.

In this way, when wholesome actions increase and unwholesome actions decrease, the meditator's mind is filled with a spiritual rapture, which is *Peethi*, the fourth factor of enlightenment. You develop this rapture thus, “I am subduing unwholesome actions; I am cultivating wholesome actions”. This exultation is a result of this effort from within you. There are two main factors that help to enhance this *dhamma* lifestyle; the first is humility and the next is dedication. Generally, when we follow the *dhamma* lifestyle, we should practice humility. We must never consider ourselves above others because we follow this path. With humility we can state that this cause of action is geared to free us from all fetters and with humility step on to the path.

This rapture is geared towards the comprehension of the Four Noble Truths. When this factor is developed within you, you would know it with mindfulness. When this factor is undeveloped within you, you should know that too and continue with diligence to develop it.

When this rapture grows within you, you develop a sense of physical and mental lightness or tranquility. This lightness is called *kayapassaddhi* and *chittapassaddhi*. *Passaddhi* means lightness or calmness of the body and the mind, which is produced by the rapture. This is the fifth factor of enlightenment, *passaddhi sambojjanga* or tranquility. This tranquility is geared towards the comprehension of the Four Noble Truths. When this factor is developed within you, you would know it with mindfulness. When this factor is undeveloped within you, you should know that too and continue with diligence to develop it.

When this tranquility grows within you, it leads to concentration. That is the sixth factor of enlightenment. Concentration means the unification of mind on a wholesome object. Without this concentration there can be no comprehensive understanding of the Four Noble Truths. Liberated ones and non-returners possessed higher levels of concentration. Even once-returners and stream-enterers possess a certain level of concentration. In general, concentration must be developed up to the fourth jhana at the stage of non-returning. Concentration of the liberated ones is fully collimated. This factor is connected to meditation. Concentration is the first *jhana*, *second jhana*, *third jhana*, and *the fourth jhana*. This concentration is geared towards the comprehension of the Four Noble Truths. When this factor is developed within you, you would know it with mindfulness. When this factor is undeveloped within you, you should know that too and continue with diligence to develop it.

When the meditator develops this concentration profoundly, and he sees this as a factor of the Four Noble Truths, he stops clinging to this concentration. And, instead of grasping this state of concentration, he begins to see in it too the ever changing five aggregates of clinging. He sees the impermanence of even this state of concentration. At this point his mind reaches equanimity. This is the seventh factor of enlightenment. At this stage he does not grab this equanimity either. He is not deceived by this equanimity. This equanimity is developed with an aim towards the comprehension of the Four Noble Truths.

What then are the Four Noble Truths? There is a noble truth called suffering. This needs to be comprehensively understood. This suffering is formed because we cling to it. This clinging and craving to suffering is the noble truth of the arising of suffering. They should be eradicated. When clinging and craving are eradicated, he is free from suffering. This freedom is called the noble truth of the cessation of suffering. This truth needs to be realized. The clinging and craving to suffering are

not automatically eradicated. It is done by following a certain cause of actions, the Noble Eight Fold Path. This path is the fourth noble truth, the path leading to the cessation of suffering. This has to be practiced and developed.

When this factor of equanimity is developed within you, you would know it with mindfulness. When this factor is undeveloped within you, you should know that too and continue with diligence to develop it.

This meditation on the *bojjanga dhamma* is cultivating within you the seven factors geared towards enlightenment. In summary, the seven factors of enlightenment are, “*sati*” or mindfulness; “*dhammavichya*” or investigation of the *dhamma*; “*viriya*” or effort; “*peethi*” or rapture; “*passaddhi*” or tranquility; “*samadhi*” or concentration; and “*upekkha*” or equanimity. These seven *bojjangas* are developed profoundly within you and it would lead you to inner purity. For this it is imperative that we practice the four establishments of mindfulness. Now it is extremely clear that the Buddha’s teachings show us the perfect way to the realization of the true nature of life.

14. Annusati Meditations

14.1 Buddhanussati Meditation

In the following sections we will explain the recollection meditations or *Anussati bhavana*. *Anussati bhavana* is practiced on several themes. The themes are **Buddhanussati bhavana or meditation on the qualities of the Buddha**, *Dhammanussati bhavana* or meditation on the qualities of the Dhamma, **Sanghanussati bhavana or meditation on the qualities of community of Noble Monks**, **Seelanussati bhavana or meditation on one's own virtue**, **Chaganussati bhavana or meditation on one's own generosity**, **Devatanussati bhavana or meditation on heavenly beings**, and **Marananussati or meditation on death**. In the following sections, we will discuss each of these meditation techniques in detail.

In *Buddhānussati* meditation one recollects the **marvellous and unsurpassed qualities of the Buddha**. The Gautama Buddha was the greatest sage who lived on the earth and taught the *Dhamma*, which he himself had realized without anyone's guidance, with compassion to beings, in particular for humans and *gods* in order to help them understanding the reality of the life. One recollects the qualities of the Buddha, even for a moment, is *Buddhānussati* meditation. Each moment one recollects the qualities of the Buddha, one purifies, tranquilizes and settles his mind. By practicing *Buddhanussati* meditation, one begins a new life without even knowing that.

The Buddha had a heart free from all defilements. His mind was free from passion. The Buddha was not furious about anything at all; he was free from hatred. The Buddha was not deceived or charmed by the illusions of the world as he was free from delusion. Therefore, the Buddha is an *Arahant*. By thinking about incomparable qualities of the Buddha you can purify your mind. The Buddha did not commit immoral acts even in secret. As he was free from all defilements, he was free from all suffering. The Buddha realized the Four Noble Truths without any guidance of a teacher. The Buddha fully realized the entire world system and all kinds of living beings, as well as their passing away and reappearing. By showing the direct and the right path to end suffering, which is the Noble Eightfold Path, he became the perfect and most capable teacher of gods and humans. In this way whenever you can recollect the qualities of the Buddha, you think about the supreme sage, the Buddha, who appeared in the history of mankind, and introduced the golden era to the world.

In the instant you start to recollect the qualities of the Buddha, from that very moment on, your mind starts to be free from defilements and calms down. The Buddha is born into this world

very rarely. You can recognise the Buddha only if you can develop your wisdom. That wisdom must be gained through listening to the Buddha's teachings. You can recognise the Buddha through that Dhamma, based on your wise consideration.

The Buddha's purity, marvellous wisdom, great compassion, unsurpassed concentration, extraordinary energy, all of these incomparable qualities will illuminate your world.

You can recollect on the qualities of the Buddha, thinking about the meanings of Arahant quality, Samma Sambudha quality, Vijacharana Sampanno quality, Sugata quality, lokavidu quality, annutaro purisa Dhamma sarati quality, satta devamanusanam quality, Buddha quality, and bhagava quality. Be familiar with this contemplation by constantly practicing it. This is a very beneficial contemplation.

Human life is like a stream of water that flows; that is being dried out gradually. As a human being, you have the rare opportunity to develop wisdom before you lose human life, by practicing the *Buddhānussati* meditation.

***Buddhanussati* meditation**

- My great teacher, supreme Buddha, was free from all defilements.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, did not engage in unwholesome acts, even in secret.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, escaped from all evil.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, was worthy of accepting material and spiritual offerings.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, did not cling to, was not repelled by, and was not deceived by forms seen with the eyes; he eradicated desire for all forms.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, did not cling to, was not repelled by, and was not deceived by sounds heard with the ears; he eradicated desire for all sounds.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, did not cling to, was not repelled by, and was not deceived by odours smelled by the nose; he eradicated desire for all odours.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, did not cling to, was not repelled by, and was not deceived by tastes sensed by the tongue; he eradicated desire for all tastes.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, did not cling to, was not repelled by, and was not deceived by sensations felt by the body; he eradicated desire for all bodily sensations.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, did not cling to, was not repelled by, and was not deceived by thoughts cognized by the mind; he eradicated desire for all thoughts.

Because of these great qualities, my great teacher, Supreme Buddha is an *Arahant*.

- My great teacher, supreme Buddha, realized “suffering”, as the first noble truth, without having guidance from a teacher.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, realized “the origin of suffering”, as the second noble truth, without having guidance from a teacher.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, realized “the cessation of suffering”, as the third noble truth, without having guidance from a teacher.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, realized “the path leading to cessation of suffering”, as the fourth noble truth, without having guidance from a teacher.

Supreme Buddha realized each Noble Truth in three steps making twelve aspects; these steps are, knowledge of truth (*sattya ñana*), knowledge of what needs to be done (*kruttya ñana*), and knowledge of fulfillment of what needs to be done (*kruttak ñana*).

Because of his great achievement my great teacher, Supreme Buddha is *Samma Sambuddha*.

- My great teacher, supreme Buddha, possessed supernatural powers; he walked in the sky, walked on water and passed through solid objects.

In this way, my great teacher, supreme Buddha possessed the knowledge of infinite supernatural powers (*iddhivida ñana*).

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, acquired the divine eye (*dibba chakkhu ñana*) which enabled him to see things from any distance.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, acquired the divine ear (*dibba sota ñana*) which enabled him to listen to sounds from any distance.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, acquired the ability to recollect past lives of beings (*pubbe nivasanussati ñana*).

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, acquired the ability to see passing away and arising of beings based on actions (*chutupapata ñana*).

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, acquired the knowledge of eradicating all hidden defilements (*asavakkhaya ñana*).

Because of his great knowledge, because of his great virtue, and because of his great concentration, my great teacher, Supreme Buddha is *Vijjacharana Sampanna*.

- My great teacher, supreme Buddha, discovered the excellent path to *Nibbana*, and by following it, reached the supreme bliss of *Nibbana*.

Because of his great discovery, my great teacher, supreme Buddha is *Sugata*.

- My great teacher, supreme Buddha, understood completely all brahma worlds, all divine worlds, the human world, the ghost world and the four hells; he escaped from these worlds.

Because of his great comprehension, my great teacher, supreme Buddha is *Lokavidu*.

- My great teacher, supreme Buddha, tamed arrogant divine beings and humans using his superhuman abilities.

The Buddha tamed and directed them to *Nibbana* with his supernatural powers (*iddhi patihariya*), reading their minds (*adesana pratiharya*) and preaching *Dhamma* (*anusasana pratiharya*).

Because of his great talent in taming beings, my great teacher, supreme Buddha is *Anuttaro Purisa Dhammasarathi*.

- My great teacher, supreme Buddha, showed the path to cross over the cycle of rebirth and attain *Nibbana* to wise divine beings and wise humans.

Because he guided *gods* and humans to *Nibbana*, my great teacher, supreme Buddha is *Sattha Devamanussanan*.

- My great teacher, supreme Buddha, taught the Four Noble Truths clearly, pleasantly, and meaningfully using clear words and clear definitions helping others realize *Dhamma*.

Because he taught *Dhamma* profoundly, my great teacher, supreme Buddha is *Buddha*.

- My great teacher, supreme Buddha, was blessed with all of these noble qualities.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, was blessed with the brightest wisdom, that surpasses the sun and moon.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, was blessed with a heart full of limitless compassion.

Because of his great fortune, supreme Buddha is *Baghava*.

My great teacher, supreme Buddha, possessed extraordinary qualities.

I pay homage to my great teacher, supreme Buddha, who possessed incomparable wisdom and great compassion.

14.2 Dhammanussati Meditation

In this section, we will discuss *Dhammanussati bhavana* or recollection on the qualities of the *Dhamma*.

If this world is a dry desert, the *Dhamma* proclaimed by the supreme Buddha is a stream of water that flows through the desert. Because, by listening to *Dhamma*, people suffering from sorrow and grief became purified and peaceful. Because of the power of the *Dhamma*, Angulimala and

others who had cruel mindsets and evil habits were transformed into noble ones with extremely kind hearts. The helpless lady Patacara, who was once out of her mind and went astray, later became a virtuous and courageous arahant nun because of the power of the *Dhamma*. The *Dhamma*, taught by the Buddha, can appease your mind. The Four Noble Truths is the essence of the teachings of the Buddha. You are fortunate if you hear, think or contemplate the Four Noble Truths in the morning as waking up; you are among the few who contemplates the rare phenomenon.

The Buddha is born into the world to achieve one goal; just one, no two goals. That only goal is to disclose the Four Noble Truths. By realizing the Four Noble Truths, beings who suffer develop joy; beings who wander through *in the cycle of rebirth* escape from the plane of misery and reach the blissful liberation of *Nibbana*. Therefore, the realization of the Four Noble Truths is a miracle of mind; an intellectual transformation. The miracle ensues only through the knowledge of *Dhamma* expounded by the Buddha.

Since the Four Noble Truths are well expounded by the Buddha, it is *swakkhata*. The *Dhamma* is *sandittika* since the *Dhamma* can be realized in this very life. The *Dhamma* is *akalika* as it can be realized at anytime. It is called *ehipassika* because anyone can be asked to “come and see (investigate) this *Dhamma*”. Because, *Dhamma* needs to be understood and investigated within oneself, it is *opanaika*. As any wise person can realize this *Dhamma* through wise consideration it is known as *paccattan vēditabbō vinnuhi*. The contemplation of the great qualities of *Dhamma*, as listed above, is *Dhammanussati* meditation. *Dhammanussati* meditation is possible only if you know the teachings of the Buddha well enough. The message of *Dhamma* is pleasant and peaceful; one cannot obtain the same calmness by engaging in mundane tasks such as watching movies and television, reading books, novels and newspapers, or listening to music and comedy. The mundane sensual pleasures cannot eliminate sorrow and pain you experience.

When you listen to the teachings of the Buddha, when you retain *Dhamma*, when you investigate *Dhamma* within your life, and when you examine the world through *Dhamma*, the serene transformation will happen within you. You will happy and peaceful. Therefore, determine to contemplate *Dhammanussati*, starting from this very moment; at least for a moment each day.

Dhammānussati meditation

- My great teacher, Supreme Buddha, well proclaimed the noble Dhamma.
The beginning of that exalted Dhamma is excellent because it develops virtue.
The middle of that exalted Dhamma is excellent because it develops concentration.
The end of that exalted Dhamma is excellent because it develops wisdom.

My great teacher, Supreme Buddha, taught Dhamma using clear words and clear definitions. Through the Dhamma, my great teacher, Supreme Buddha, showed the path leading to wholesome and defilement-free life.

Because the Dhamma is well expounded by the Supreme Buddha, the Dhamma is svakkhato.

I take refuge in the Dhamma that is svakkhato.

I pay homage to the Dhamma that is svakkhato.

- The Dhamma, proclaimed by the Supreme Buddha with great compassion, can be realized in this very life.

The Dhamma, proclaimed by the Supreme Buddha, can be developed as virtue, concentration, and wisdom.

The Dhamma, proclaimed by the Supreme Buddha, can be realized by reaching the stage of stream entry (sotapanna), the stage of once returning (sakadagami), the stage of non-returning (anagami), and the stage of arahant (Arahant).

Because the Dhamma can be realized in this very life, the Dhamma is sanditthiko.

I take refuge in Dhamma that is sanditthiko.

I pay homage to the Dhamma that is sanditthiko.

- The Dhamma, proclaimed by the Supreme Buddha, can be realized at any time.

The Dhamma can be realized in any period of time because virtue, concentration, wisdom, the noble path, noble states and the Four Noble Truths are eternal truths.

Because the Dhamma can be realized any time, whether in the past, present, or future, the Dhamma is akāliko.

I take refuge in Dhamma that is akāliko.

I pay homage to the Dhamma that is akāliko.

- The Dhamma, proclaimed by the Supreme Buddha, is open for investigation by gods and humans.

The Dhamma does not contain hidden sermons, hidden advices, or hidden discussions.

The Dhamma shines openly like the sun and the moon free from clouds.

Because the Dhamma is open for investigation, the Dhamma is ehipassiko.

I take refuge in Dhamma that is ehipassiko.

I pay homage to the Dhamma that is ehipassiko.

- The Dhamma, proclaimed by the Supreme Buddha, should be applied to one's life by listening, retaining, reciting, investigating wisely, and practicing it.

Because the Dhamma should be applied to one's life, the Dhamma is opanayiko.

I take refuge in Dhamma that is opanayiko.

I pay homage to the Dhamma that is opanayiko.

- The Dhamma, proclaimed by the Supreme Buddha can be realized by the wise who are honest and straight, irrespective of their race, cast, and clan.

Because the Dhamma can be realized by the wise each for themselves, the Dhamma is paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhi.

I take refuge in Dhamma that is paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhi.

I pay homage to the Dhamma that is paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhi.

14.3 Sanghanussati Meditation

Sanghanussati bhavana is the recollection on the qualities of the community of noble monks. The greatest community in the world is the community of disciples of the Buddha. When the Buddha is born into this world and preaches the *Dhamma*, wise humans listen to that *Dhamma*; follow, investigate and experience *Dhamma* for themselves. They develop virtue, concentration and wisdom leading to the realization of the Four Noble Truths. The first critical step in this path is the attainment of right view or *samma dhitti*. Only the disciples of the Buddha, namely, monks, nuns, male lay followers, and female lay followers are endowed with *right view*. Having developed *right view*, the disciples follow the Noble Eightfold Path and attain the stage of stream entry. They achieve the initial knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. Stream-enterers will attain *Nibbana* within seven lives at the most. By practicing the Noble Eight Fold Path further, these disciples attain the stage of once-returning; they are born only once and attain *Nibbana*. By practicing the Noble Eight Fold Path further, these disciples attain the stage of non-returning; they are born in a *brahma* world and attain *Nibbāna*. The disciples who attain the *stage of arahatship* will attain final extinguishing in this very life; at the completion of their life-span. There is no more rebirth for them. These disciples exist only in a dispensation of a Buddha. Therefore, the Buddha said, “Monks, you may cry a lion’s roar (say fearlessly) that the first *recluse* (stream enterer), second *recluse* (once returner), third *recluse* (non returner), and the fourth *recluse* (arahant) are only seen in a dispensation of a Buddha.”

The community of the disciples of the Buddha is unsurpassable in their virtue among various groups of people who practice various teachings. Because *these disciples* follow the path leading to the eradication of passion, hatred and delusion and attainment of *Nibbana*, the community of noble disciples is known as “*supatipanna*”. Since they follow the straight path to *Nibbana*, which is the Noble Eightfold Path, the community of noble disciples is “*ujupatipanna*” The community of noble disciples is called “*gnayapatipanna*” since they follow the path for the realization of the Four Noble

Truths. Because *the community of noble disciples* teaches *Dhamma* to gods and humans encouraging them to understand the Four Noble Truths, the community of noble monks is “*samicipatipanna*”. Those disciples of the Buddha who follow the Noble Eightfold Path are identified as eight types of individuals and four pairs of persons. (They are: those who are practicing the path to stream-entry and those who have attained the stage of stream-entry; those who are practicing the path to once returning and those who have attained the stage of once returning; those who are practicing the path to non returning and those who have attained the stage of non-returning; and those who are practicing the path to *arahantship* and those who have attained the stage of *arahantship*. The Buddha said that these disciples are worthy of gifts brought from afar; they are worthy of hospitality; they are worthy of offerings given for merit; and they are worthy of reverential salutation by others. The disciples of the Buddha who possess these noble qualities are supreme among worldly beings and are the unsurpassed field of merit. In this way, you can place confidence in the community of noble disciples of the Buddha.

In order to do sanghanussati meditation you need to recollect the noble qualities of the community of disciples, who dedicate their lives whole heartedly aspiring utmost purity. By frequently recollecting the qualities of *the community of noble disciples*, may you develop confidence in the noble disciples and become a true disciple of the Buddha with the intention of realizing of the Four Noble Truths.

Sanghanussati meditation

- The noble disciples of the Buddha have entered the path of cultivating virtue, concentration, and wisdom in order to eradicate passion, hatred, and delusion.

Therefore, the community of disciples of the Buddha is supatipanno.

I take refuge in the community of disciples of the Buddha that is supatipanno.

I pay homage to the community of disciples of the Buddha who is supatipanno.

- The noble disciples of the Buddha follow the straight path to Nibbana, the Noble Eightfold Path.

Therefore, the community of disciples of the Buddha is ujupatipanno.

I take refuge in the community of disciples of the Buddha that is ujupatipanno.

I pay homage to the community of disciples of the Buddha who is ujupatipanno.

- The noble disciples of the Buddha follow the path leading to realization of the Four Noble Truths.

Therefore, the community of disciples of the Buddha is ñayapatipanno.

I take refuge in the community of disciples of the Buddha that is ñayapatipanno.

I pay homage to the community of disciples of the Buddha who is ñayapatipanno.

- The noble disciples of the Buddha preach the Dhamma and propagate it in the world with great reverence to Dhamma.

Therefore, the community of disciples of the Buddha is samicipatipanno.

I take refuge in the community of disciples of the Buddha that is samicipatipanno.

I pay homage to the community of disciples of the Buddha who is samicipatipanno.

- The noble disciples of the Buddha are four pairs of persons and eight types of individuals. They consist of those who are in the path and those who reached the stage of stream entry, once-returning, non-returning and arahantship.

I take refuge in the noble disciples who are four pairs of persons and eight types of individuals.

I pay homage to the noble disciples who are four pairs of persons and eight types of individuals.

- The noble disciples of the Buddha, who are on the path and attained the stages of enlightenment, are worthy of offerings of robes, food and drinks, dwellings, and medicine prepared and brought from afar.

Therefore, the community of disciples of the Buddha is ahuneiyō.

I take refuge in the community of disciples of the Buddha that is ahuneiyō.

I pay homage to the community of disciples of the Buddha who is ahuneiyō.

- The noble disciples of the Buddha, who are on the path and attained the stages of enlightenment, are worthy of offerings of robes, food and drink, dwellings, and medicine when they arrive as guests.

Therefore, the community of disciples of the Buddha is pahuneiyō.

I take refuge in the community of disciples of the Buddha that is pahuneiyō.

I pay homage to the community of disciples of the Buddha who is pahuneiyō.

- The noble disciples of the Buddha, who are on the path and attained the stages of enlightenment, are worthy of offerings of robes, food and drink, dwellings, and medicine given by those aspiring for merit.

Therefore, the community of disciples of the Buddha is dakkhineiyō.

I take refuge in the community of disciples of the Buddha that is dakkhineiyō.

I pay homage to the community of disciples of the Buddha who is dakkhineiyō.

- The noble disciples of the Buddha, who are on the path and attained the stages of enlightenment, are worthy of reverential worship by gods and humans.

Therefore, the community of disciples of the Buddha is anjalikaneiyō.

I take refuge in the community of disciples of the Buddha that is anjalikaneiyō.

I pay homage to the community of disciples of the Buddha who is anjalikaneiyō.

- The noble disciples of the Buddha, who are on the path and attained the stages of enlightenment, are the unsurpassed field of merit that helps gods and humans acquire merit.

Therefore, the community of disciples of the Buddha is anuttaran puññakkettan lokassati.

I take refuge in the community of disciples of the Buddha that is anuttaran puññakkettan lokassati.

I pay homage to the community of disciples of the Buddha who is anuttaran puññakkettan lokassati.

14.4 Seelanussati Meditation

We will discuss another noble quality that must be developed by a noble disciple who has taken refuge in the Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Sangha*. In contemplation of virtue, also known as “*seelanussati bavana*”, one investigates on one’s own virtue developed through disciplining bodily and verbal actions. Having seen the virtue, one exalts and enjoys it. By practicing *seelanussati* one gets the opportunity to examine one’s strengths and weaknesses with respect to observing the precepts or *seela*.

A disciple wakes up in the morning and determines to watch bodily actions and verbal actions mindfully, right throughout the day and night, to avoid breaking precepts. At the end of the day, by contemplating on days’ endurance pertaining to precepts, one would be happy thinking that “Today, I didn’t use my body to commit any transgression; I did not kill or hurt living beings; I did not take what was not given; I did not engage in sexual misconduct; I did not take intoxicants”. Also, the person would be happy thinking that “Today, I didn’t deceive others with lies; I did hurt others with harsh words; I did not speak malicious words to break relationships or to hurt others; I did not speak meaningless idle words to waste time of others and mine.” In this way, one will be glad about one’s virtue and clearly identifies any blemishes in virtue as seeing impurity on a clean white cloth. Any failure to comply with precepts shall be identified; broken precepts shall be reinstated with a pledge to comply with them from that moment onwards. In this manner, a disciple develops his (her) virtue through contemplation.

A disciple cultivates virtue by thinking that “I do not engage in bodily misconduct; I do not engage in verbal misconduct; I am a person committed to observe precepts; I develop peace and calmness in me”. In this manner, gradually, one becomes virtuous and consequently, others will trust his words and deeds. No society accepts indecent corrupted people, liars or criminals. By investigating one’s own virtue, by contemplating on virtue a person can uplift bodily and verbal

conduct. This process of recollecting one's virtue is known as *seelanussati*. The disciples of the Buddha frequently practice *seelanussati*. Recollection on virtue develops peace and eliminates remorse, confusion and restlessness of mind. Tranquility of mind, thus acquired, will establish concentration (*samadhi*). One easily develops concentration (*samadhi*) through *seelanussati*, which is a noble gain. We must strive to cultivate *seelanussati* as the Buddha has taught.

Seelanussati meditation

- My great teacher, the Supreme Buddha, is virtuous.

The Supreme Buddha disciplined his body and his speech.

The Supreme Buddha led a life free from all defilements.

The Supreme Buddha mindfully investigated and eradicated all defilements of the body.

The Supreme Buddha mindfully investigated and eradicated all defilements of speech.

The Supreme Buddha avoided wrong livelihood and practiced right livelihood.

The Supreme Buddha fulfilled the noble virtue.

Having attained noble virtue, the Supreme Buddha taught about virtue with great compassion for gods and humans.

I will practice virtue as instructed by the Supreme Buddha.

I will practice virtue as a noble disciple of the Supreme Buddha with the intention of realizing the Four Noble Truths.

- With the intention of attaining Nibbana, I observe the precept of abstaining from killing beings.

Mindfully, I strive to observe the precept of abstaining from killing beings.

I practice loving kindness to all beings. I do not intentionally hurt beings, large or small.

Because I observe the precept of abstaining from killing beings, I am free from fear.

May all beings be free from fear! May all beings live happily!

I observe the precept of abstaining from killing beings and I encourage others to observe the precept of abstaining from killing beings. In doing so, I experience joy.

This joy will help to concentrate my mind.

- With the intention of attaining Nibbana, I observe the precept of abstaining from taking what is not given.

Mindfully, I strive to observe the precept of abstaining from taking what is not given.

By any means and anywhere, with a mind to steal, I do not take what is not given, big or small.

As I adore my property, valuables and money, others too adore their possessions.

I do not take what is not given by deceiving others through fraud or with a mind to steal.

Because I observe the precept of abstaining from taking what is not given, I am free from fear.
May all beings be free from fear! May all beings live happily!

I observe the precept of abstaining from taking what is not given and I encourage others to observe the precept of abstaining from what is not given. In doing so, I experience joy.

This joy will help to concentrate my mind.

- With the intention of attaining Nibbana, I observe the precept of abstaining from sexual misconduct.

Mindfully, I strive to observe the precept of abstaining from sexual misconduct.

I do not engage in sexual activity with a man or woman who is not my husband or wife.

I am trustworthy to my spouse.

I am trustworthy to my children.

I develop unblemished conduct.

Because I observe the precept of abstaining from sexual misconduct, I am free from fear.

May all beings be free from fear! May all beings live happily!

I observe the precept of abstaining from sexual misconduct and I encourage others to observe the precept of abstaining from sexual misconduct. In doing so, I experience joy.

This joy will help to concentrate my mind.

- With the intention of attaining Nibbana, I observe the precept of abstaining from lying.

Mindfully, I strive to observe the precept of abstaining from lying.

By any means and anywhere, I do not deceive others by lying. I do not hurt others by lying.

I speak the truth. I stand for the truth.

I speak pleasant and kind words.

Because I observe the precept of abstaining from lying, I am free from fear.

May all beings be free from fear! May all beings live happily!

I observe the precept of abstaining from lying and I encourage others to observe the precept of abstaining from lying. In doing so, I experience joy.

This joy will help to concentrate my mind.

- With the intention of attaining Nibbana, I observe the precept of abstaining from taking intoxicants.

Mindfully, I strive to observe the precept of abstaining from taking intoxicants.

I do not take any intoxicant that leads to impaired mental activity and unwholesome bodily and verbal actions.

I do not take any intoxicant as a way to celebrate my happiness or when I am depressed.

I abstain from taking intoxicants that leads to affliction, that harms my wealth and safety, and that causes diseases.

Because I observe the precept of abstaining from taking intoxicants, I am free from fear.

May all beings be free from fear! May all beings live happily!

I observe the precept of abstaining from taking intoxicants and I encourage others to observe the precept of abstaining from taking intoxicants. In doing so, I experience joy.

This joy will help to concentrate my mind.

- These precepts that I observe diligently and mindfully delight me.

These precepts that I observe diligently and mindfully help my wellbeing here in this life and in future lives.

These precepts, that I observe diligently and mindfully, develop right effort in me.

These precepts, that I observe diligently and mindfully, develop right concentration in me.

These precepts, that I observe diligently and mindfully, will help me to realize the Four Noble Truths.

Mindfully, I maintain these precepts.

May practicing meditation on virtue develop joy, rapture and concentration in me and help me to realize the Four Noble Truths!

(One may practice seelanussati for eight-precept and ten-precept as well, by appropriately modifying the content.)

14.4 Chaganussati Meditation

In this section you will learn “*chaganussati*” or reflection on one’s generosity. A disciple of the Buddha, who practices the *buddhanussati*, *Dhammanussati*, *sanghanussati*, and *seelanussati* and progresses in virtue, considers cultivating generosity, the ability to donate with a happy mind. Greed is a defilement of mind. Because of greed, because of thoughts of greed, one engages in bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct and mental misconduct. Donation, with a happy mind, is wholesome and will not lead to unwholesome actions by body, mind or speech.

One must overcome miserliness in order to be generous. It is comforting to be free from miserliness. It is a gain to be free from miserliness. It is gratifying to be free from miserliness. Miserliness is one’s dislike to share what one possesses with another. Being miserly and stingy, one develops rude character; being generous one will develop gentleness; being generous one will be noble. The Buddha said that one must overcome greed and be ready to donate at anytime and

anywhere. For example, possessing two mangoes, one is good and the other is spoiled, to be truly generous, a person must be able to donate the good mango keeping the inferior one for him (her). If someone asks for a garment, a generous person will donate a piece of cloth that makes the receiver happy or delight and will not give out rags. A person who donates the best he could, such as excellent food, excellent clothes, and excellent gifts will receive the best for himself. In order to cultivate noble generosity one should always donate what one likes the most.

The disciples of the supreme Buddha have excelled in generosity. When donating, a donor should not consider the social status or weaknesses of the receiver; instead, one should donate with an unblemished mind. A donor who recollects his or her own generosity will experience joy; will be joyous; both his body and mind will be relaxed and tranquilized. The joy he thus develops will lead to concentration. Knowing thus, the disciples of the Buddha practice *chaganussati*; excel in *chaganussati*. You should strive to practice *chaganussati* regularly, as part of the daily meditation. Human lifespan is short; indeed very short. In this brief time, one should practice generosity, subdue stinginess, develop wholesome qualities and a tranquil mind, which in turn will help with realization of the *Dhamma*.

Chaganussati meditation

- I have taken refuge in the Supreme Buddha, I have taken refuge in the Supreme Dhamma, and I have taken refuge in the Supreme Sangha.

I practice generosity in order to realize the Four Noble Truths and end suffering.

I donate and offer almsfood to monks and nuns using my hard earned and honestly earned money.

I am glad to see others using what I have donated.

I am glad to see that virtuous monks and nuns who strive to end suffering, have gained physical strength and mental strength because of food and drink I have donated.

I am delighted thinking that my contributions would help them in realizing the Four Noble Truths.

I am joyous to offer food and drinks to virtuous monks who are the unsurpassed field of merit as stated by the Supreme Buddha.

I am a person donating without miserliness.

I am a person who maintains a happy mind before giving, while giving, and after giving.

I am glad to donate the best I have.

Regularly, I donate and I am committed to donating.

I am glad to prepare alms food purely and with consideration.
 I am glad to offer almsfood that suits the needs of virtuous monks and nuns.
 I do not wish for worldly gains by offering alms food and donations.
 I do not wish for beauty by offering alms food and donations.
 I do not wish for long life by offering alms food and donations.
 I do not wish for honour and praise by offering alms food and donations.
 I do not wish for recognition or status by offering alms food and donations.
 I do not wish for heavenly pleasures after death by offering alms food and donations.
 I offer alms food and donations only as a way for cleansing my mind.
 I offer alms food and donations only for the development of my wisdom and to end suffering.
 Because I offer alms food and donations, I am delighted. My body and mind are relaxed.
 With a relaxed body and mind and with delight, I will develop concentration.
 My donations and offerings will help me in the realization of the Four Noble Truths.

- I know that one who trains in the Noble Eightfold Path practices generosity as a power of a trainee.

I am a trainee in the Noble Eightfold Path in order to end suffering.

In this way, I develop generosity as a power of a trainee.

May my generosity help me in the realization of the Four Noble Truths!

I will strive to eradicate passion, hatred and delusion.

By practicing generosity I will attain arahantship.

Because I practice generosity I am delighted, my body and mind are relaxed.

With a relaxed body and mind and with delight, I will develop concentration.

My donations and offerings will help me in the realization of the Four Noble Truths.

- The Supreme Buddha said generosity is the wealth of a noble disciple.

The generosity that I practice is my wealth. In this way, I own noble wealth.

I will practice generosity by spending my wealth. I always grow with the wealth of generosity.

I will practice generosity until I attain arahantship.

I know generosity is the noble wealth I possess.

Generosity provides me protection and security.

I will practice generosity knowing that it is an gain not a loss.

I will train for generosity in different ways.

I am glad to know that generosity is a noble wealth.

Because I practice generosity I am delighted. My body and mind are relaxed.

With a relaxed body and mind and with delight, I will develop concentration.

My donations and offerings will help me in the realization of the Four Noble Truths.

14.6 Devatanussati Meditation

Next, we will introduce you to the Devatanussati bhavana, a new technique of meditation, which you have not known before. *Devatanussati bhavana* is the contemplation on gods, the heavenly beings. The Buddha teaches Dhamma not only to humans, but also to gods and brahmas. The Buddha is the teacher of gods and humans (*sattthadevamanussanan*). Heavenly beings also listen to the Buddha's Dhamma and practice it. The Buddha is the knower of the world. With the Blessed One's divine eye, the Buddha saw many heavenly worlds. The Buddha said that there are six heavenly worlds, namely, *Chatummaharajika*, *Thavathimsa*, *Yama*, *Thusitha*, *Nimmanarathi*, and *Paranimmitha wassathi*. In addition, there are *brahma* worlds. The Buddha said, gods and *brahma* were born in those worlds because they cultivated five noble qualities when they were in the human world. These qualities are:

- *Shraddha*, which is the confidence in the Buddha
- *Seela* or virtue, which is disciplining body and speech
- *Sutha*, which is the knowledge of *Dhamma*
- *Chaga*, which is generosity
- *Panna* is the knowledge of the Four Noble Truths

These are collectively known as *sekha bala*, or powers of a trainee. The humans who develop *sekha bala* will be reborn in the heavenly worlds, having ended their lifespan in the human world.

The disciple recollects thus: Supreme Buddha, my teacher, made aware that there are six heavenly worlds; they are, *Chatummaharajika*, *Thavathimsa*, *Yama*, *Thusitha*, *Nimmanarathi*, and *Paranimmitha wassathi*. Supreme Buddha, my teacher, made aware that heavenly beings possess five noble qualities; they are *Shraddha*, *Seela*, *Sutha*, *Chaga* and *Panna*. Supreme Buddha, my teacher, made aware that heavenly beings developed these noble qualities when they were in the human world. I also possess *Shraddha*, *Seela*, *Sutha*, *Chaga* and *Panna*, the noble qualities that heavenly beings possess. Whatever noble qualities the gods have, I also have those noble qualities”.

In this manner, one contemplates thinking that one possesses the same noble qualities of gods. One's ability to see qualities of heavenly beings in him (or her) and one's ability to see one's noble qualities in gods is the *devatanussati* meditation. During the time of the Buddha, disciples

practiced *devatanussati*. There is a recent myth, that people say one cannot make merit in heavenly worlds; which is untrue. Many disciples of the Buddha were born in the heavenly worlds. You too have the opportunity to cultivate this divinity in your life. By practicing *devatanussati*, one develops equanimity on the pleasures of the human world. Thus, one establishes his (her) mind in heaven. At the breakup of the body, one who practices *devatanussati* will be reborn in the heavenly worlds. Having been born in heaven, one continues to practice *shraddha*, *seela*, *sutha*, *chaga* and *panna* and develop the noble path leading to *Nibbana*. Hence, *devatanussati* mediation helps with the realization of the Four Noble Truths.

Devatanussati meditation

- Devas of the Chatummarajika had developed great confidence (*saddha*) in the Supreme Buddha, Supreme Dhamma and Supreme Sangha, when they were in the human world.

Because of their great confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, at the breakup of the body they were born in heaven.

I have also developed great confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha similar to the confidence of gods.

The great confidence I have in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha is a great gain for me, a great protection, and my true refuge.

- Gods of the Chatummarajika had abstained from killing beings, abstained from stealing, abstained from sexual misconduct, abstained from lying and abstained from taking intoxicants when they were in the human world.

Gods of the Chatummarajika had observed five precepts and eight precepts (*seela*) when they were in the human world.

Having practiced precepts, at the breakup of the body, they were born in the Chatummarajika heaven.

I also observe the five precepts regularly, and eight precepts on uposatha days.

My virtue is a great gain for me, a great protection, and my true refuge.

- Gods of the Chatummarajika had developed knowledge of the Dhamma (*sutta*) when they were in the human world by listening to Dhamma, by remembering Dhamma and by wise-consideration of Dhamma.

Having developed knowledge of the Dhamma, at the breakup of the body they were born in the Chatummarajika heaven.

I also develop knowledge of the Dhamma by listening to Dhamma, by remembering Dhamma and by wise-consideration of Dhamma.

My knowledge of the Dhamma is a great gain for me, a great protection, and my true refuge.

- Gods of the Chatummaharajika had abandoned stinginess when they were in the human world, and donated to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, joyfully and believing in kamma and its results. Having practiced generosity (chaga), at the breakup of the body they were born in the Chatummaharajika heaven.

Regularly, abandoning stinginess, I also donate to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha.

My generosity is a great gain for me, a great protection, and my true refuge.

- Gods of the Chatummaharajika had understood impermanence (anitya), suffering (dukkha) and non-self (anatma) as well as the arising and cessation of body as taught by the Supreme Buddha, when they were in the human world.

In this way, having developed knowledge of the Four Noble Truths (panna) at the breakup of the body they were born in the Chatummaharajika heaven.

I also live with the understanding of arising and cessation of body in relation to the four great elements (dhatu), the six sense faculties (salayathana) and five aggregates of clinging (pancha upadanaskhanda).

My knowledge of the Four Noble Truths is a great gain for me, a great protection, and my true refuge.

In this manner a disciple practices the devatanussati meditation considering devas of other heavenly worlds, namely, Thavatimsa, Yama, Tusita, Nimmanarathi, and Paranimmitha vasavaatti. He further considers that,

- Gods of the Chatummaharajika... Tavatimsa... Yama... Tusita... Nimmanarati... and Paranimmita vasavatti were born in these heavenly worlds by developing the powers of a trainee (sekha bala: shraddha, seela, suta, chaga and pañña).

I too possess the same powers of a trainee.

My powers of a trainee are a great gain for me, a great protection, and my true refuge.

15. Mindfulness on Death Meditation

In this last section, we will introduce to you the *Marananussati bhavana* or contemplation on death. The Buddha once said that foot prints of all animals, despite them being two-legged, four-legged or multi-legged, could be placed within the footprint of an elephant. Similarly, all wholesome qualities can be assembled under “*Appamada*”, that is heedfulness or diligence. The Buddha said that a disciple should be heedful in order to generate merits and to end suffering.

The Buddha said that “*ma bhikkave punnanan bhayitta; kaththabban kusalan bahun*”; that is, monks, you should not be afraid of generating merits; do wholesome deeds frequently”. Merits we gather in this life will ripen in lives to come. In this life, we are born as human beings because of merits of the past lives. To be born in the human world and in *the heavenly world*, one needs merits. Nonetheless, merits generate the right conditions for the realization of noble *Dhamma*. The Buddha said that he would never, not for a moment, appreciate the continuation of this cycle of rebirth. Therefore, the disciple should be heedful to end suffering.

Many postpone practicing *Dhamma* because of their engagements of the mundane life. Ordinary human beings consider employment, housing and good education for their children as great challenges of life; but they are unable to recognize the grave crisis of the mankind; which are, aging, sickness and death. Many consider retirement is the best time for practicing *Dhamma*; this is because they do not realize that death can occur at any moment, without warning. They are preoccupied with planning for the future and often die before realizing their dreams for the future. The Buddha said that wise people should practice *mindfulness of death* to develop heedfulness. One who practices *mindfulness of death* is keen to practice *calming and insight* meditations for the realization of the noble *Dhamma*.

Mindfulness of Death meditation

- All beings that are born are subject to death.

Beings in heaven, beings in the Brahma world, beings in the animal world, and beings in the planes of misery are subject to death.

No being escapes death.

No one knows when and where death occurs.

Death comes in the womb. Death comes in infancy. Death comes in youth. Death comes in middle age. And death comes in old age. Death is independent from age.

- No one predicts when, where, and how one will die.

Death comes to the rich. Death comes to the poor. Death comes to the learned. Death comes to the unlearned. Death comes to the highborn. Death comes to the lowborn. Death comes to the noble. Death comes to the ignoble. Death comes to the beautiful. Death comes to the ugly. Death comes to the skilled; and death comes to the unskilled.

Death does not discriminate.

- Death comes in the morning. Death comes in the day. Death comes in the evening. And death comes in the night.

Men and women die independent of time.

- Death occurs from drowning. Death occurs from fire. Death occurs from poisoning. Death occurs from sickness. Death occurs from earthquakes. Death occurs from flooding. Death occurs from natural disasters. Death occurs from accidents. Death occurs from biting. Death occurs from callous actions. Death occurs from suffocation. Death occurs from choking. Death occurs from stumbling; and death occurs from the completion of lifespan.

Beings die in multitude of circumstances.

- Death comes to a Supreme Buddha. Death comes to a Private Buddha. Death comes to an enlightened one. And death comes to those who are on the noble path.
- Death comes closer as day and night pass.

One may die between an inhalation and an exhalation.

Death occurs in an instant.

All who are born inherit death.

Knowing this, I will engage in wholesome activities.

Knowing this, I will practice calm and insight meditation.

Knowing this, I will work to end suffering like one trying to put out a fire on their head.

16. Four Divine Dwellings

Chattaro Brahma Vihāro or the four divine dwellings are four methods of meditation that you will learn in this chapter. These four divine dwellings are expounded by the Buddha; they are *metta* or loving kindness, *muditha* or appreciative joy, *karuna* or compassion, and *upekkha* or equanimity. They are called *divine dwellings* because the *Maha Brahma* possesses these dwellings. If one practices these four divine dwellings habitually, at the break up of the body, he/she will be born in a Brahma world. In the following paragraphs, we will explain each of these meditation techniques in detail.

16.1 *Mettha bhavana* or loving kindness meditation

Mettha is the genuine friendship one extends to him/herself and to others. One who is friendly to one's self will not harm him/her. One who is friendly to others will not harm others. The friendship that brings benefits to both oneself and others is *mettha*. According to the *Anuruddha sutta* of the Middle-length Discourses, the *arahant* Anuruddha explained two methods of developing loving kindness meditation; they are *appamana ceto vimutthi* or infinite- mental-emancipation and *mahaggata ceto vimutthi* or great-mental-emancipation.

The spread of loving kindness to beings on the four main directions (North, East, South and West), four intermediate directions (Northeast, Southeast, Northwest and Southwest) and above and below, infinitely (*appamana*) is known as *appamana ceto vimutthi*. Thus, in this meditation one spreads loving kindness on ten directions. This is the way to practice *appamana ceto vimutthi*, if one prefers spreading loving kindness to beings infinitely.

1. May all beings in the North be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
2. May all beings in the Northeast be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
3. May all beings in the East be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
4. May all beings in the Southeast be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
5. May all beings in the South be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
6. May all beings in the Southwest be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
7. May all beings in the West be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
8. May all beings in the Northwest be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
9. May all beings in the direction above be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.

10. May all beings in the direction below be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.

Mahaggata ceto vimutthi is the spreading of loving kindness to beings, progressively expanding the land area covered. In this meditation, one first develops loving kindness to one's self. Then expand the land area of spreading loving kindness to include the beings in the village where he/she is; next include all beings in the city; then include the beings in the province; then include the beings in the country; next include beings in this world; and finally include all living beings. If one prefers spreading loving kindness to beings progressively based on land area covered, this is the way to practice *mahaggata ceto vimutthi*.

1. May I be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may I live in peace; may I live happily.
2. As I wish for me, may all beings in the village be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
3. As I wish for me, may all beings in the city be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
4. As I wish for me, may all beings in the province be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
5. As I wish for me, may all beings in this country be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
6. As I wish for me, may all beings in this world be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.
7. As I wish for me, may all beings be free from anger; be free from ill-will; be free from jealousy; be free from mental and physical suffering; may they live in peace; may they live happily.

The Buddha said that one may develop the mind to reach the third *jhana* through practicing loving kindness meditation. One who wishes to develop *jhana* through loving kindness meditation must practice as the Buddha had instructed. When one develops loving kindness meditation as

instructed by the Buddha, the mind gets concentrated suppressing the five hindrances. By practicing the loving kindness meditation in that concentrated mind, one develops the first *jhana* experiencing *vithakka* (applied thought), *vicara* (sustained thought), *niramisa peethi* (non-sensual rapture), *sukha* (gladness) and *ekaggatha* (one-pointedness- or unification-of-mind). Having developed the first *jhana*, one may continue to practice loving kindness meditation in the same manner to develop up to the third *jhana*.

The benefits of practicing loving kindness meditation are enormous. The Buddha expounded the gains of the loving kindness meditation in the *Metthansansa sutta*. Accordingly, one who practices loving kindness meditation will experience the following gains here in this very life. One who practices loving kindness meditation:

1. Sleeps well.
2. Wakes up well.
3. Does not dream nightmares.
4. Becomes likable to humans.
5. Becomes likable to ghostly beings.
6. Gets protection from divine beings (*devas*).
7. Is unharmed by fire, poisons and weapons.
8. Develops concentration easily.
9. Develops serene facial completion
10. Passes away consciously.
11. Will be born in a *brahma* world, if he/she does not become an *arahant* in this very life.

16.2 *Muditha bhavana* or contemplation on appreciative joy

Muditha is the genuine happiness one experiences seeing others' success. Having seeing the righteously collected wealth of others', their properties, if one does not develop envy, instead develops appreciative joy, he/she is said to be in *muditha*. When others around us gain fame and praise, succeed in education, or grow in beauty, we should be able to be happy about their gains. If one develops envy having seen beauty of another, having heard success in education of another, or having heard fame and praise of another, he/she must suppress such evil thoughts, eradicate such defiled thoughts and develop sympathetic joy.

The Buddha said that developing appreciative joy helps eliminating *arathi*, which is the mental phenomenon of developing displeasure in wholesome activities. In order to develop concentration, *muditha* meditation can be practiced as *appamana* (infinite) and *mahaggata* (great) following the

same approach as explained under *mettha* meditation. As explained below, one may practice *muditha* meditation based on *mahaggata ceto vimutthi*.

1. May I grow in lifespan; may I grow in power; may I grow in beauty; may I grow in pleasure; may I grow in fame; may I grow in praise; and may I grow in wisdom.
2. As I wish for me, may everyone in this house grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
3. As I wish for me, may everyone in this village grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
4. As I wish for me, may everyone in this city grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
5. As I wish for me, may everyone in this province grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
6. As I wish for me, may everyone in this country grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
7. As I wish for me, may everyone in this world grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
8. As I wish for me, may all beings grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.

Given below is the way to practice *mudtha* meditation based on *appamana ceto vimutthi*.

1. May I grow in lifespan; may I grow in power; may I grow in beauty; may I grow in pleasure; may I grow in fame; may I grow in praise; and may I grow in wisdom.
2. May all beings in the North grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.

3. May all beings in the Northeast grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
4. May all beings in the East grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
5. May all beings in the Southeast grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
6. May all beings in the South grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
7. May all beings in the Southwest grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
8. May all beings in the West grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
9. May all beings in the Northwest grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
10. May all beings in the direction above grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.
11. May all beings in the direction below grow in lifespan; may they grow in power; may they grow in beauty; may they grow in pleasure; may they grow in fame; may they grow in praise; and may they grow in wisdom.

16.3 *Karuna bhavana* or contemplation on compassion

Karuna is the compassion towards others when seeing their bodily and mental afflictions. We who live in human world suffer from one or another form of affliction every moment; physically and mentally people suffer due to sickness, natural disasters etc. Sympathy develops for those who suffer in turn will develop compassion. One may practice *karuna ceto vimutthi* (compassion based

mental-emancipation) either as *mahaggata* (great) or as *appamana* (infinite) by following the same approach as explained under *mettha* and *muditha* meditation. One may develop the ability to eradicate taints through practicing insight within *karuna ceto vimutthi*. *Karuna* meditation is developed contemplating as follows.

1. May I be free from bodily afflictions; may I be free from mental afflictions; may I be healthy, physically; may I be healthy, mentally; may I live happily.
2. As I wish for me... (Apply the same pattern as mentioned in the metta meditation) may all beings be free from bodily afflictions; may they be free from mental afflictions; may they be healthy, physically and mentally; may they live happily.

16.4 Upekkha bhavana or contemplation on equanimity

Daily, we grieve on painful encounters; we exhilarate with pleasurable encounters. In contrast, equanimity is one's neutral stance in facing both good and bad experiences of life. One who develops equanimity will not grieve in pain and will not elate in gain but experience life with neutrality and calmness. It is a must for human beings to face eight vicissitudes of life or *attha loka Dhamma*. By practicing equanimity, one develops the mind and face vicissitudes of life with a neutral attitude. Concentration that develops through practicing equanimity is known as *upekkha ceto vimutthi* (equanimity based mental-emancipation). *Upekkha* meditation may be practiced as *appamana* (infinite) or *mahaggatha* (great). By practicing insight through *upekkha ceto vimutthi*, one may develop the ability to eradicate taints. Given below is the way to contemplate on equanimity.

1. May I not be elated on gain, may I not be grieved on loss; may I not be elated on praise, may I not be grieved on blame; may I not be elated on fame, may I not be grieved on disrepute; may I not be elated on bodily pleasures, may I not be grieved on bodily displeasures; may I not be elated on mental pleasures, may I not be grieved on mental displeasures; may I be peaceful.
2. As I wish for me... (Apply the same pattern as mentioned in the metta meditation) may all beings not be elated on gain, may they not be grieved on loss; may they not be elated on praise, may they not be grieved on blame; may they not be elated on fame, may they not be grieved on disrepute; may they not be elated on bodily pleasures, may they not be grieved on bodily displeasures; may they not be elated on mental pleasures, may they not be grieved on mental displeasures; may they be peaceful.

In the same way as we have discussed for *mettha*, *muditha* and *kauna meditation*, *upekkha* meditation can be developed as *mahaggata* (great) and *appamana* (infinite) following the same approach.

17. Perception on Skeleton

Atthika sanna bhavana is the contemplation on the parts of a skeleton. By practicing *atthika sanna* frequently, one may advance the meditation for the cessation of defilements. One develops passion, hatred, and delusion because of the unrestrained eye, which is attracted to the details of forms seen. The eye can be disciplined by practicing *atthika sanna*, which avoids the eye attracting to details of forms.

In ancient Sri Lanka, a Buddhist monk named Tissa was travelling on foot from Mihintale, a small town, to Anuradhapura, a big city, to venerate the *Sri Maha Bodhi* tree, which was a sapling of the sacred *Bodhi* tree of India. The monk met a woman on the way when she was running away from her husband; she smiled at the monk and walked away. Her husband who followed the woman met with the monk and enquired whether the monk had seen a woman. The monk replied saying that “I saw a skeleton; did not know whether a man or a woman”. This incident, reported in the ancient writings, illustrates disciplining the eye by practicing *atthika sanna*.

One may improve the mind to eradicate defilements by practicing insight within the concentration developed through *atthika sanna*. In order to practice *atthika sanna*, one sits in front of a skeleton or a picture of a skeleton and focuses attention on the skeleton. By carefully observing the details of the skeleton, from head to toe, one develops a mental image of the skeleton. Once the image of the skeleton is well established in the mind, he/she contemplates on the skeleton while sitting at the same place or after moving to an appropriate location.

Mediation on the contemplation of a skeleton

Find a suitable place for meditation and sit comfortably. Close your eyes and reflect on the image of a skeleton. Continue reflecting on a skeleton until a clear image of the complete skeleton is visualized.

1. Now, look at the skull. Instead of eyes, there are two large holes where the eyes were. Beautifully painted eyebrows are no longer there. Instead of nose there is a hole. Teeth are exposed. Beautifully painted lips are missing. Earlobes decorated with earrings are no longer there. Cheeks embellished with makeup and perfumes are missing. What remains is only the skull, which is like a dried out pumpkin. Because it is a conditioned thing, arising out of causes, this skeleton made of the four great elements is impermanent, impermanent. This skeleton is not mine, not myself, I am not.

2. Collarbones are connected to sternum and ribs. Ribs are arranged like a bird-cage. Ribs resemble bamboo strips. Along the skeleton run the vertebrae resembling pearls on a string. My body too will become a skeleton. Because it is a conditioned thing, arising out of causes, this skeleton made of the four great elements is impermanent, impermanent. This skeleton is not mine, not myself, I am not.
3. Vertebrae end by attaching to the pelvis. The pelvis resembles the wings of a butterfly. The pelvis supports the hips. Leg bones are connected to the pelvis. Leg bones are like dried out bamboo canes. Leg bones end by connecting to foot bones. Foot bones are hooked to toes. Because it is a conditioned thing, arising out of causes, this skeleton made of the four great elements is impermanent, impermanent. This skeleton is not mine, not myself, I am not.
4. My body too will become a skeleton. On top of this skeleton, muscles are fastened, bound with blood vessels, and covered with skin. I call this structure my body and cling to it. When skin is peeled off, flesh is taken off, and vessels are pulled out, only the skeleton will remain. This skeleton helps to bear the weight of the body. It helps bending and movements of the body. The body I protect always, the body I clean and beautify always is only a skeleton. Because it is a conditioned thing, arising out of causes, this skeleton made of the four great elements is impermanent, impermanent. This skeleton is not mine, not myself, I am not.