

❁ About the Compiler of this book ❁

Ledi Pyinnyar-Thiha was the first son of U Maung Shin and Daw Thein Shin of Htanaung-Kone Village, Myitche, Pakkokku Township, born on the 11th waxing day of Waso, 1307 (5-7-45). His name since youth is Maung Paik Chon.

He began Schooling at the age of 5 under the tutelage of Sayadaw U Sobhana, abbot of Kan-Oo Monastery of Htanaung-Kone Village. He graduated from the University of Yangon, with a B.A. degree in History.

He has earned his living variously as a bazaar seller, school teacher, literary editor, poet, Lawyer, etc. In 1970, he composed and published a collection of children's poems, titled "Flat Play Ground under Moon Light." In 1988, he has served as a member of the National League for Democracy, a deputy chairman of the NLD organizing committee of Bago Division, a member of NLD Central Committee, and an elected representative for People's Assembly in the general elections of 1990.

In 1990, He entered into a meditation retreat under Sayagyi U Than, Mahasaddhmma Jotikadhaja. In 2008, he studied and meditated persistently under Sayadaw U Kumara (Aba Nyo). He sat for and passed Abhidhamma, Tika-kyaw, Vissuddhi Magga, and Samyutta examinations.

While Serving as a member of Service Committee of Pyawbwe-gyi Centre, he attended one 45 day training course of meditation instructors conducted by Sayadaw U Kumara, at the original Centre of Anagam Saya Thet-Gyi. He had served as an Assistant Meditation Instructor since then.

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Compiled by Ledi Paññāsiha

Translated by U Nyi

A Brief Biography

Of

Anāgām Sayāgyi U Thet

And His Teaching

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Introductory Notes

From

Venerable Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumāra

Resident Kammathānācariya

Of

Anāgām Saya Thetgyi's

Original Vipassanā Meditation Centre

It has been a delightful experience to observe that nowadays people of all walks of life are pursuing and propagating the Ledi insight meditation practice to their fullest capacities, i.e. as best they can and as much as they learn from generations of teachers.

Just as I am gratified by the great efforts of the meditation teachers, doing their best as far as they can reach out, I have also been saddened by the news and evidence of deviations in practice from the original Ledi vipassanā guidelines.

What dhamma teachers teach in accordance with their views and ideas is their own business, and so any variance or deviation from the original is their own responsibility. As such, in my thinking, if they claim it as their own intellectual property, there should not be any problem. But it is invalid and improper to have their head signboards inscribed as "Ledi Method of Anāgām Saya Thet Gyi Vipassanā."

I am happy to see the spread of Ledi vipassanā practice in accord with the instructions of Ledi-authorized

A Brief Biography

instructors. But my mind is disturbed by the use of those head signboards by those whose teachings are not really in agreement with the original Ledi guidelines.

Ledi Paññāsiha is one of my assistants in vipassanā teaching.

In our village of Pyawbwegyi in Dala Township, Sayagyi Saya Thet began teaching in 1279 the method of vipassanā meditation that he had learned from Ledi Sayadaw Phaya-gyi. The method of teaching by Saya Thet was thus named and its banner inscribed with "*Ledi-mu Anāgām Saya Thet-gyi's Vipassanā Nikāya*" (Ledi-principle vipassanā method of meditation).

The Ledi-mu vipassanā method as taught first by Saya Thet was adopted by Venerable Sayadaw U Kovida who carried on teaching at the meditation center established by Saya Thet. When Sayadaw U Kovida passed away, the tradition was carried over by Venerable Sayadaw U Kumāra (Ahba Nyo), who had taught as an assistant to Sayadaw U Kovida.

Thus the teaching of dhamma at the vipassanā meditation center in Pyawbwegyi is in accord with the original Ledi vipassanā meditation instructions, pure, unadulterated, protected and maintained by the successive teachers.

I am now over 80 years old, with an aspiration all my life to keep the practice as pure as its original teaching. To achieve that objective of maintenance and preservation, and in order to hand over the Ledi-mu vipassanā practice in its pure form to members of the Sanghā, I have

Anāgām Sayāgyi U Thet

conducted 45-day teacher training courses, the last class being the eighth.

My teaching assistant, Ledi Paññāsiha has, in support of the Ledi dhamma, studied biographies, the search and findings of real practical dhamma, as well as the series of discourses delivered, by the 11 masters starting with Ledi Sayadaw through Gurugyi U Goenka. He had compiled his studies in print form and distributed them as donation among the trainees as a means of helpful assistance in their studies of the original Ledi instructions.

This booklet on the brief biography and dhamma instructions of Anāgām Saya Thetgyi is an extract from the treatise on Ledi-mu vipassanā, with references to the works of those 11 masters.

It is a brief description of the life of Saya Thet, the first main-spring teacher of Ledi vipassanā and the essential text content of his teachings.

In fact the book is an extract from the Concepts and Practice in Experiential Vipassanā Wisdom (*ditthadhamma vipassanā ñānadassana*), a short-cut approach to insight meditation, personally used by Saya Thet for the benefit of Ledi yogis, as well as for those interested in the practice. I, therefore, believe that this little book will benefit all Ledi vipassanā followers without fail. And, it is the original text book of Ledi vipassanā Master Saya Thet.

And so, may I wish this little book of Ledi Paññāsiha be of real aid and benefit to people in pursuit of the original Ledi vipassanā study and practice!

Bhaddanta Kumāra,
Kammathānācariya Sayadawgyi,

A Brief Biography

Anāgām Saya Thetgyi Vipassanā Original
Meditation Center,
Pyawbwegyi Village, Dala Township

Translator's Notes

I am grateful to author Ledi Paññāsiha for his offer to me of the opportunity to translate his work. It is a good offer of kusala kamma that inspires me on from start to the finish. A protégé of the late Sayagyī U Than, I am a student of Anāgām Sayagyī Sāya Thet's meditation method.

I have endeavored to tender the translation for easier reading, attempting to render it, hopefully, less sophisticated. For this reason, I have given definitions of Pali words, some within parentheses, but most in the footnotes. A glossary is also included at the end of the text. I have used a simplified presentation of Latinized Pali, with the use of only two diacritical marks.

May this work of kusala kamma be a support to my efforts at vipassanā bhāvanā.

UNyi,
Shwe-Pyi-Thar,
Yangon Division.

Virtuous Mind, Firm Precepts, and Constant Vipassanā Practice, The way of Deliverance from Samsāra without fail

Having donated water, fruit, flowers and lights with deep faith and confidence, do not be content with the thought of overflowing merits.

By worshipping in the shrine day and night, happy with the thought of veneration and bountiful benefits, do not feel assured of security and safety.

By recitation of *dharana sutta*, *dhamma cakka sutta*, *metta sutta* and *pathāna*, cheerful and soft as oil-soaked cotton wool, do not expect any fame or fortune to come through.

By telling beads on the attributes of the Buddha to the count of one's age, firm and quiet with piety, do not feel it good enough.

Do not stop donating water, fruit and lights, worshipping and recitation of verses, extension of *metta*, or telling the hundred and eight beads, but carry that on as usual.

Advance One Step Forward

A person truly desiring the benefits of *nibbāna* would have to work with a firm faith and determination, taking to the right path to perceive the experiential wisdom of matter and mind (*rūpa-nāma*) differentiation, so that liberation from the vicious rounds of samsāra may be achieved. But

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be mindful that one makes one's life worthwhile in the hard-to-find era of the unparalleled Buddha, never shying away from diligent work, but work, by day and night, at vipassanā meditation with a purposeful resolve.

Anāgām Sayāgyi U Thet And His Teaching

Veneration to the Exalted One
The Homage-Worthy,
The Perfectly Self-Enlightened!

Anāgām Saya Thet Gyi

The Birth of Saya Thet

A baby boy, to be known in his adult life as Saya Thet, was born to U Kyaw Tote and Daw Ngwe-U in the village of Pyawbwe-gyi, Dala Township, Yangon Division, on Friday, the 3rd waxing day of the month of Warkhaung in the year 1235 M.E.(27-6-1873). His siblings were U Pho Ba, Daw Phwa Yin and U Pho Htun.

His Youth

Father U Kyaw Tote died when Maung Pho Thet was 12. Mother Daw Ngwe-U prepared and sold *akyaw* (fried snacks) for maintenance of the four children. One day, after finishing with customer distribution, some *akyaws* were left unsold. So the mother asked Maung Pho Thet to go round in the village and sell them. Maung Pho Thet, after going round in the village with the snack-tray on his head, returned with all the snacks in the tray unsold: he could not sell because he was too shy to shout, "Akyaw, akyaw." He was asked to go round again, but this time with his little sister Ma Phwa Yin who shouted, "akyaw, akyaw" as her brother carried the tray of food on his head. They sold out all the stuff this time.

The widowed mother sent Maung Pho Thet to

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school to the age of 14. He learned in Myanmar language to the sixth standard under Assistant Teacher Saya Theik at Sayagyī U Phyo's school. At 14, during school holidays, he worked as a runner to organize bullock-carts and sampans for paddy transportation. "It was a great happiness to give the quarter-kyat that I earned each day to his mother. I did not really know how to say how happy I was," he was quoted as saying.

The Young Tally Clerk

Maung Pho thet one day was transferring paddy from sampan to bullock carts at No.25 rice mill, when the mill owner, U Pho Hla, noticed him working with enthusiasm. Further observations showed the miller the personal qualities of Maung Pho Thet: his fast work, diligence, honesty and good human relations. U Pho Hla called the young man and appointed him a tally-*wahlah*, whose job was to keep count of bags of raw paddy and milled rice shifted between the carts and the mill by way of little sticks, for a monthly salary of six kyats.

Maung Pho Thet worked and lived at the mill, spending two kyats a month for himself, while supporting his widowed mother and family with the remaining four kyats. How did he live on the two kyats?

The time was when 64 *pices* made one *kyat*. A duck egg cost two pices. Eating half an egg per meal for two meals a day would cost him only sixty pices for thirty eggs in a month, four pices short of a *kyat*. The remaining *kyat* was spent on other essentials.

Since he lived at the mill site, he did not have to

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buy rice, but was given the *jardu*-rice that was swept and collected from the floor by the old security man of Indian decent. He did not have to eat the *jardu*-rice for long. As a return of favor for his assisting in the raising and lowering of raw paddy and rice in the mill for the cart and sampan men, the men gave him good rice free of charge. The Boss allowed him to keep the *jardu*-rice given by the Indian, which he took and donated to the people less privileged than he.

He ate his rice meals with fried ground peas, smoked fish paste, and half a duck egg; the two kyats he allowed himself was quite sufficient. He might have split-pea curry on the days of light work. A pice-worth of salt would last him for two months.

Paddy Broker Maung Pho Thet

The Boss was observing all these manners of obedience, diligence at work and honesty of Maung Pho Thet. Over a year, Maung Pho Thet's salary was raised to ten kyats. In two years time it was raised to 15 kyats. In spite of these raises, his way of life did not change. The boss then entrusted him with advanced payments for purchase of paddy. He was also allowed to have his own paddy of a hundred baskets (four cart-loads) husked and polished, free of charge. He earned extra income from his brokerage, as well as a raise in his monthly pay to 25 kyats, thus enabling him to support his widowed mother very well. He was now a middle-class personality, and wedded to one Ma Mhyin, daughter of U Thein and Daw Thuzar, a well-to-do family of the Nyaung-bin-thar section of

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Pyawbwe-gyi village. He was now a trusted paddy broker of his boss.

To Maung Pho Thet and Ma Mhyin were born a daughter Ma Hla Nyunt and son Maung Chitti (alias) Maung Yin Maung. They were a happy family.

The Grievous Encounter

But a misfortune waited round the corner; an epidemic of cholera struck Pyawbwe-gyi village. The air in the house of U Pho Thet that had been normally filled with the graceful, pious sounds of *kyay-si'* (a decorated triangular brass gong), recitals of verses in homage to the Buddha, discussions of the Buddhist teachings, the words of *paramattha*, *dhātu* elements, at dusk in the evening, was now filled with weeping and sobbing, a family in mourning.

There was U Kay, a farmer and head of the family, suddenly died, and before the end of the seven days after his death, his wife, Daw Khin died. During that time, U Pho Thet's teenage niece, Ma Chit Myaing, in spite of intensive medical care, died within a few hours of the symptoms. And before her body was buried, Ma Hla Nyunt, U Pho Thet's daughter, struck with the disease, clung to her father, and cried, "Father, my stomach begins to hurt. Please save me, father." After several motions, she passed away in her father's lap. The unending epidemic also took away their small son Maung Chitti. There seemed to be no end in the grieving of U Pho Thet and Daw Mhyin.

kyay-si'(M)- a decorated triangular gong, made of brass, struck with a wooden hammer

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The whole village of Pyawbwe-gyi was gripped with fear and afraid to go out of doors. U Pho Thet was deeply aggrieved from the loss of their loved ones, especially of the daughter. He seemed not to be able to contain himself. But then, this grievous hurt made him want to seek a way of immortality.

He sought permission from Ma Mhyin, time and again. But the good wife told him, "You can find a lost one, if you search. You can forget the dead one over time. I bore them nine months each and gave birth to them myself. I am the mother. Don't go far to find solace. Your pain will be overcome as time goes." And yet, U Pho Thet would not be persuaded. Once his pain is under control, he pleaded his family again, and left Pyawbwe-gyi in search of the way of immortality. For him, there is no firm and reliable refuge other than that of the way of immortality.

Journey in Search of Dhamma

Ko Pho Thet traveled up-country and approached, and learned meditation practice from Ledi Sayadaw and all prominent contemporaries of the time such as Thitchaung Sayadaw U Tiloka, Nyaung-lunt Sayadaw, Inma-gyi-tawya (Thein-taung) Sayadaw, Shwe-myo Udaung-taung Sayadaw, and more. There was no known meditation teacher of the time whom Ko Pho Thet had not taken refuge to and entered retreats under. There was no mountain and forest retreat that he had not entered into for refuge. All throughout thirteen years, he worked, seldom resting, in one forest retreat after another, under one teacher after another, in search of the immortal way of life. Out of

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those thirteen, he worked for seven years, mainly according to Ledi Sayadaw's instructions.

Ledi Sayadaw had said, "Dagar² Thet, there are no two ways but one that can lead beings to the purity of the mind that is free from defilements, confusions, evil thoughts and anxieties; that can free beings from distress and grieve; that by wish one can become holy and attain *Nibbāna*. There is only one way, the only way to follow through.

"That one way, which can clear away all the miseries and sufferings, is the practice of *samatha-vipassanā*³ meditation, by means of *satipathāna*⁴, the in-breath/out-breath method that I am about to teach you, Dagar Thet.

"By that one method, one will clear away all that living beings fear and would not want to experience, and at the same time reach a state of blissfulness that is all happiness that no other delight or joy can match. There is no crying, no suffering, no miseries and no dying of relatives. Dagar Thet, it is cutting off all attachments in one stroke.

"That was what the Buddha had said. In Pali it is:

*"ekāyano ayam bikkhane maggo sattānam visuddhiyā
sokaparidevanam samatikkamāya dukkhadomanas-
sānam;*

*atthingamāya ñāyassa adhivamāya nibbānassa
sacchikariyāya yadidam cattāro satipathānā".*

Although he was following Ledi Sayadaw

² Dagar(Myan)- honorific address to devotees by monks

³ Samatha-vipassanā(P)-mind concentration and by insight meditation

⁴ Satipathāna(P)-the four foundations of mindfulness

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wherever the sage went, and in spite of his constant efforts at meditation, U Pho Thet got nowhere. He was thirteen years away from home and had achieved nothing of the sort of experiential wisdom he aimed to achieve. To return home now, he felt like one without a handsome gift to take back to his family. He had asked the Sayadaw explicitly, and he thought the reply he received was not quite encouraging.

When Fruits are Ripe

"Dagar Thet, you carry on gaining concentration of the mind (*samādhi sāsanā*⁵) with steadfastness and diligence. Wisdom, the *paññā sāsanā*⁶, will come and establish with you on its own."

Saya Thet was not much encouraged and so, asked his protégé, Maung Nyo, how he understood Sayadaw's words. Maung Nyo gave his view:

"Dear Saya, if you haven't got any gift, if you haven't got some evident potential of wisdom, the venerable Sayadaw wouldn't have taken so much trouble to teach you. Although you haven't so far found what you seek in a satisfactory way, you will certainly find it one of these days. Fruits are full of beauty, aroma and taste, when ripe."

U Pho Thet's morale rose and responded gladly, "Oh Maung Nyo, is that really what you said? Yes, indeed, you are right. Before ripeness, how can fruits show their maturity, aroma and taste? Only when ripe, their true color, aroma and taste will be fully evident.

⁵ Samādhi sāsanā (P) - concentration, the mental state of being firmly fixed, the pursuit of samatha

⁶ Paññā sāsanā (P) - achievement of wisdom and a mission of propagating insight meditation

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“Yes, yes, *sādhu, sādhu*⁷! Sayadaw *phaya*⁸ had advised me to carry on working hard with steadfast efforts, so as to achieve a complete state of concentration. Then the *paññā sāsana* will arrive and get established by itself, he had said.

“Whatever stage of concentration I might have gained so far, I must keep it up and work on for progress. That is my duty,” said U Pho Thet, much gratified.

The mentor and protégé arrived back at Pyawbwe-gyi. U Pho Thet did not want to go back home. They entered the congregation pavilion in the middle of the village, and paid homage to the Buddha images. U Pho Thet presently liked meditating in front of the images and so, carried on meditating there. Daw Thein Pyaw, a childhood friend of U Pho Thet, who lived near the pavilion compound, took care of food and water for him.

Some time before U Pho Thet and Maung Nyo returned to the village, the images from inside the shrine emitted the radiant lights of the Buddha. The whole village saw the lights and paid homage in great ovation. In the dead quiet of the night, some sounds like that of drums were heard from above the pavilion. The villagers took to heart those signs as a natural course of their faith.

One night, while in meditation, U Pho Thet heard the sound of a drum from above the congregation hall. He also felt as if some soft, round thing was climbing on to him from across his hips and rubbing his thigh above the crossed legs. Not unfolding his cross legs, with closed eyes

⁷ *Sādhu, sādhu* (P) - well done, well done (well said, well said)!

⁸ *Phaya* (Myan) - a revering address to monks, similar to "sir" but intended most for veneration

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he tried to stay undisturbed in his meditation. But he could not help opening his eye, and saw that it was a large snake. Its whole length was bright, cinnabar-red, with brilliant eyes. It is unusual for a snake to have a comb like that of a cock, about three inches in size. Only when he extended *mettā*⁹ and said his wish to let it share his meritorious deeds, the snake slipped away into the shrine.

Like Saya Thet, Saya Nyo also saw about ten dragon heads from pillar-holes in the floor of the congregation hall, and was frightened in thought.

To this experience Saya Thet said, “Maung Nyo, if you were to be bitten by snakes, you would have been dead from snake bites when we were travelling through forests and mountains. You cannot now die of any snake bite. But see, we have in our laps the four snakes called the elements of *earth, heat, water and air*. They are the real dangers, not those from outside.” They carried on with their work of meditation.

The Truth Shown at Top of His Head

As usual, one early morning before dawn came, about four o'clock, U Pho Thet, after preliminary service, entered into *ānāpāna samādhi*¹⁰ meditation. Unlike earlier experiences, this time consciousness of the body *kāya*¹¹ and his surrounding was more clearly pronounced. The awareness was crystal clear. The clarity was definitive and doubtless. He was paying intense attention, flowing

⁹ *Mettā* (P) - loving kindness

¹⁰ *Ānāpāna samādhi* (P) - Work of mind concentration by focusing awareness on the passing (rush) of the streams of in-breath and out-breath at the tip of the nose

¹¹ *kāya* (P) - the material body

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stream-like and without a break, to the body kāya with a mindfulness that proceeded to establish samādhi and from there to access *paññā* (the Wisdom).

And then he was unaware of the back-and forth currents of in-breath and out-breath flows of air, his awareness were spread throughout the body kāya. Any point of the body he paid his attention on, it was the point of his awareness sharply focused: the awareness of sensations of varying degrees of heat (hot or cold), and movements (bold or minute). But then, generally his attention fell wide and spread out so that he was unable to get a clear grip of awareness of any particular point for any length of time. Awareness was thin as the attention was too spread out.

While he was thus, completely mindful and in a firm grip of concentration, moving his attention throughout the body, a distinctly clear sensation appeared at the top of his head. The heat of *tejo* (the property of heat) and the movement of *vāyo* (the property of air) were quite distinctly felt at that point. The sensation (*vedanā*) of vibrant movements at the point became more and more distinct. He force-moved the awareness to an area confined to the size of a kyat-coin at the vertex. The idea of impermanence (*anicca*) came to him; and more “*phassa, vedanā, tejo, vāyo, udayavaya, binga* . . .”¹²

After all the thirteen years he had travelled all over the country, trying to learn from one teacher after another,

¹² Phassa, vedanā tejo, vāyo, udayavaya binga (P) - the making of contact (object and sense receptor), sensation, heat, air, becoming/vanishing of rupa-nāma, sense of non-becoming, respectively

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going in and out of one forest after another, in search of the “immortal way”, he had now, quite unexpectedly, found it from that spot at the top of his head. The way of wisdom was sought everywhere, but found in one’s body.

That inch-sized spot slowly spread out till the vibrant movements covered the whole body from head to feet, and suddenly, he understood the nature of all the thirty-one realms of existence. The mind-matter interactions, their conditionality and dependent origination cannot be stopped, running like a non-stoppable machine. Like in a large factory, he saw in detail the tiniest of matter stirred and moved incessantly throughout the body. And often, he seemed to hear the sounds of the motions in circular paths.

He imagined he heard again the sermons from various teachers on the nature of mind and matter. He recited verses from the book “Manual of Vipassanā” that U Nandiya, the Ledi Forest Monastery Sayadaw of Myo Hla, specifically wrote for him

“The properties of the elements of *pathavi, āpo, tejo, vāyo* are hardness (earthy), cohesion to form (water), heat-cold (fire), and pressure (air), respectively. The four basic elements show their nature by way of their physical attributes.

“As one directly observes the changing nature, the characteristic of impermanence (*anicca*) of matter (*rupa*) and mind (*nāma*), one directly experiences the characteristic of non-self (*anatta*). And so, it is not “I” that exists but only *rupa-nāma*. Thus the surreal personality, self or soul (*sakkāya*) is discarded.

Like the constant flow of water in a river, or the

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flame of an oil lamp, the words of wisdom that he had heard once upon a time came back and now he understood.

Checking His Findings against Ledi Treatises

He was quite satisfied with his new-found insightful perceptions of the continually changing nature of rupa and nāma. But his findings need to be verified or validated by some authority, and so, he was not much gratified for lack of masters nearby, who could give advice in such matters. The only thing he could do, therefore, was to read the Ledi treatises in place of the Sayadaw, and check up his works.

Saya Thet then returned home. His wife and sister-in-law welcomed him in great delights, and took care of his health, food and lodging. They now took care of food for Saya Thet on his return to the congregation hall. Saya Thet read “Anatta Dipani” and “Bāvanā Dipani”, the books he had brought back from his home, and checked up all his findings by personal experience. He felt as if the Sayadaw was teaching him at close quarters. His gladness was immense. The concepts, explanations and instructions heard over ten years ago came back bit by bit, and checked well against his personal findings. He was now completely satisfied.

A village lady by the name of Ma Kyi Yin and other friends made a request to U Pho Thet to teach them meditation. He started and carried on teaching from then on. The impact on the villagers was mixed: some were satisfied but some others not; some respectful, some others not; some liked, some others not. The first person to make

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nuisance was one U Kalagyi of the same village. No matter how much he said slights, Saya Thet bore them all with no reaction. Once, when he walked past U Kalagyi’s house, U Kalagyi made offensive remarks. Saya Thet made no response. But one U Kar walking behind him thought the remarks were directed at him. A fight ensued. Later on, U Kalagyi went out of his mind; perhaps, it was his evil kamma that bounced back at him.

Saya Thet carried on teaching meditation. He instructed *yogis* (persons in the retreat) to meditate by *samatha*¹³ method first. The yogis practiced samatha for over a week and then changed over to *vipassanā*¹⁴ method. Some had to be given *kasina*¹⁵. When U Pho Thet gave dhamma talks, people not in the retreat group also came and listened in. It was unbelievable that U Pho Thet had no literary learning.

Blessed by Ledi Sayadaw

Saya Thet, accompanied by his protégés, went to Monywa and visited Ledi Sayadaw for the purpose of undergoing test, assessment, and verification, of his personal findings in *dhamma*¹⁶ by the authority of the great sage. Daw Yin, Daw Mhyin and U Nyo were among the party. “I am your protégé from Dala Pyawbwe-gyi, *phaya*¹⁷,” Saya Thet reverently submitted. Sayadaw was immensely

¹³ Samatha (P) - the practice of mental concentration, 40 methods including *ānpāna*, *mettā* and *kasina*

¹⁴ Vipassanā (P) - insight meditation, method of inward, as against exterior, search for the Four Noble Truths

¹⁵ Kasina (P) - a samatha method of mental concentration, by way of an external object

¹⁶ Dhamma (P) - the natural Law of all phenomena, corporeal or mental, all tenets of the teaching of the buddha

¹⁷ Phaya (P,M) - a revering address to monks in Myanmar

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delighted. After giving away donations, Saya Thet recounted all his experience and findings from his works at meditation and how he had progressed on the Path in detail. Sayadaw blessed Saya Thet's account by calling out *sādhu* over and over.

"I owed Sayadaw-pahra a debt of gratitude that is immeasurable for repayment."

"Dagar Thet, are you thanking me?"

"Yes, pahra, my gratitude is more than I can pay back, pahra."

"Yes, indeed, you appreciate and know how to be grateful. But then, it is not enough that you offer food, parasols, slippers and robes. Only by carrying out what your teacher might tell you to do, it would be the real pay-back of gratitude."

"Whatever Sayadaw asks, this protégé of Sayadaw will do the best he can, phara."

Sayadaw asked a young monk sitting nearby to bring him the walking stick Sayadaw always used, and gave it to Saya Thet.

"My senior protégé, take this *taung-whay*¹⁸ and keep it well. It is not for longevity. It is a reward so that you do not slip and trip in all your life time."

"Yes, phaya!"

Duty Handed Down by Ledi Sayadaw

"My protégé, you have succeeded! From this day on, you will show the light of dhamma, and teach people, not less than six thousand in number, the ways of the elements of

¹⁸ Taung-whay (M) - walking stick made of bamboo, cane or turned hardwood

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rupa and nāma that you know all about. The facets of dhamma that you know are more than you can spread. Now, go and propagate Teachings the Buddha. You pay homage to the Mission (*Buddha Sāssanā*) on my behalf."

U Pho Thet and the congregation were filled with the kind of joy that welled up beyond the capacity of their hearts. Sayadaw called up resident monks for assembly by the sound of a dry, hollow wooden trunk.

"Now, young *bikkhus*¹⁹, wait a while," said the Sayadaw and turned to Saya Thet.

"All *bikkhus*, please note: this devotee is Dagar Thet, my protégé who comes from the lower country. Like us, he can teach dhamma. Those of you, who want to meditate, get trained under him. Dagar Thet, you will hoist in victory the banner of dhamma on my behalf, starting in this monastery," said Ledi Sayadaw.

And Sayadaw handed a paper to Saya Thet. The content of the letter was a *tehtat*²⁰, beginning with "Later generations come noble, come one after another, and carry the Teaching . . ." a determined slogan from the work place of meditation.

Who else was given the duty of teaching meditation by Ledi Sayadaw as was Saya Thet? There was no one else on record other than Monhyin Sayadaw who had been entrusted with the duty to carry the torch of the Ledi *vipassanā kammathān* (meditation).

The Honor and Power of *Ariyās*

¹⁹ Bikkhus (P) - monks, ordained members of the Buddhist Order

²⁰ Tehtat (M) - a type of poem, sung in melodious, repeated waves of rhymes

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U Pho Thet, by order of the Sayadaw, began training in meditation about twenty to twenty five monks, who were well learned in Buddhist scripture, in the Ledi Monastery. From that time, “U Pho Thet” became “Saya Thet”.

After ten days of teaching, when Saya Thet was preparing to leave, Sayadaw said,

“Dagar Thet, if for showing a man a correct and proper way to attain Nibbāna, the teacher must go to *mahāvijī niraya*²¹ for a thousand years, never mind that: the teacher must have such valor and good will. Get that clear?” It was an added impetus for Saya Thet to carry teaching with zeal. It was proof that Sayadaw was completely satisfied with Saya Thet, as he had watched the latter, right at his feet, train yogis in meditation.

In spite of sayadaw’s confidence, recognition and encouragement in various ways in his work in the *patipatti*²² mission on behalf of the Sayadaw, Saya Thet felt some inferiority complex though, as he had no *pariyatti*²³ or scriptural learning. But then, Saya Thet had learned the many Ledi treatises by heart. He could teach and quote textual contents together with page numbers.

And so, whatever utterances that came out of Saygyi’s mouth – any subject matter, biography, judgment and the truth of *paramattha*²⁴ - are accompanied by recitations of quotations from relevant treatises, thereby

²¹ Mahāvijī niraya (P) - the deepest realm of hellish existence

²² Patipatti mission (P) - propagation of the actual practice of the Buddha’s teaching, particularly the vipassanā meditation as the only way for Nibbāna

²³ Pariyatti (P) - Scriptural learning

²⁴ Paramattha (P) - the Truth in the ultimate sense, the Objective Truths of citta, setasiika, rupa and Nibbāna

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prompting no criticism even from the most learned senior monks.

Apart from the ability to off-handedly recite quotations from books and scriptural points of view, he was so well versed in the principles and practical aspects (*paripatti*) of the nature of rupa, nāma and pramattha that his teachings were spontaneous and natural.

Saygyi Thet was a clear proof of the fact that the holy persons who had attained the right view of the super-mundane world of *magga* and *phla nāna*²⁵, although they might lack the literary knowledge, but out of the strong light of holiness (*ariya*), lived a day-to-day life, starting with food and shelter, with a completely insightful understanding of *loka* (the world, mundane and super-mundane).

To quote from “*Sammoha Atthakathā*” and “*Patisambidāmagga Atthakathā*,”

“There is no holy person who does not possess the analytical knowledge of the sense and meaning of dhamma (*patisambhidā nāna*).”

But the responsibility as loaded on him was so heavy that Syagyi Thet, before his departure, submitted reverently to Sayadawgyi, with his forehead at his mentor’s feet,

“Sayadaw pahra, this protégé of yours lacks knowledge in the matter of scriptural learning, and is lowest in the rating. The mission work, the teaching of meditation is so subtle and the responsibility so heavy. When I submit

²⁵ Magga and phla nāna (P) - the sighting and fruition the Ultimate Wisdom of Nibbāna (4 levels each)

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some requests and ask for some explanations, kindly bless me with a favor of priority in coming to my aid. Kindly be my refuge and shelter. Admonish me any time should you find it necessary to do so.”

“I will not leave you alone till the time I pass away,” blessed the Sayadawgyi.

(While teaching meditation at the town of Shwekyin, Sayagyi Thet met with some disturbing elements. He wished for help, and the Sayadawgyi came by way of the sky and helped. See “*Rahantas* and *Awesome Persons*”- U Htay Hlaing.)

Thus, after receiving the blessing of authority from Ledi Sayadaw, Saya Thet and protégé U Nyo carried their responsibility of propagation of the *patipatti sāsana*, and left the Ledi monastery.

Criteria for Attainment of Magga-phala nāna, Sotapana

...

It was a period of renaissance for Patipatti Sāsana in which Ledi Sayadaw and Saya Thet were involved in reinvigorating the practice of vipassana meditation. All over the country, there was a surge in the number of meditation practitioners, increasing day by day. Yogis from various parts of the country sought and accepted decision of Ledi Sayadaw on questions as to whether one attained some levels on the Path²⁶ or not. Sayadaw often had to tell his protégés thus:

“My protégés, never in the future tell anyone whether they reached any magga-phala nāna. I received

²⁶ The Path - magginga, magga (-phala) nāna (4 levels, starting with sotapana)

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a great many applications from all along the course of the Irrawaddy asking me to decide on whether they have attained *sotapana*, *sagadāgāmi*, *anāgāmi*²⁷. They are so many that there is no end in answering them.

The proclivities towards defilements are so subtle that you cannot make decisions easily. At times, concentration is so intense that defilements are hidden, making one believe it is a bliss mistaken for magga. For both teacher and the taught, not to have plucked the sprouting of magga and phala, do not rush into any early decision. Thinking to have closed the doors to *apāya*²⁸, do not content your-self with the big thought, but just carry on working diligently.

“Even if one really thinks and decides one is *ariya*²⁹, watch and wait for seven years to see whether the defilements have been in hiding: whether the three *kammās*³⁰ are in revolt,” said Ledi Sayadaw, as quoted from Se-Gyi Tawya Sayadaw’s “*Explanations of Ariyā Vijjā Magga*”, book serial No. 386.

After his return, hoisting the victorious banner of Dhamma, from Ledi Sayadaw’s monastery, Saya Thet began teaching at Pyawbwe-gyi in the year 1279.

Samatha practice was scheduled for three days, beginning with mentally watching in-breaths and out-breaths at the tip of the nose. As the breath comes and goes out, the touch of the air current (in- and out-breaths) with the tip of the nose is watched, and then awareness of that

²⁷ Sotāpana, sagadāgāmi, anāgāmi (P) - the lower three levels of attainment on the Path

²⁸ Apāya (P) - the four abodes of the under world

²⁹ Ariya (P) - holy person, one who has attained a level of magga-phala

³⁰ Kamma (P) - actions, deeds in three ways - verbal, bodily and mental

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touch is noted without a break, i.e. without missing for a fraction of a moment.

U Ne Oo, U Pho Oo, etc., the well-learned personalities of Pyawbwe-gyi, came to learn from Saya Thet and meditated. The news of the retreat centre spread slowly, and the number of yogis increased with those from Yangon. Daw Yin and Saya Thet's life-partner Daw Mhyin gave their hands in and took care of food and shelter for the yogis.

Vipassanā was the kind of spiritual technique that people could learn only when the Buddha came into being. Only by way of vipassanā *kusala*³¹ that the three characteristics of the elements that compose life could be found, and subsequently, the vicious circular journey of the *samsāra*³² could be cut short.

Sotāpan can cut the lower part of the *samsāra*. Sagadāgām would return to a good sensuous world once. Anāgām would go to a higher celestial world (*brahma bhumi*) and thereafter, enter Nibbāna. The roots of the 31 realms of circulating existence are so firm that the starting point of the way out could only be seen with the coming of a Buddha.

The mind-after must be aware of the mind-before. The apāya-bound factors of wrong views (*diṭṭhi*) and doubts about the Truth (*vicikicchā*) can thus be discarded. Also defilements such as greed (*lobha*), anger (*dosa*) and ignorance (*moha*) can thus be in one's consciousness as they happen. Only by way of consciousness of such evils,

³¹ kusala (P) - wholesome activity

³² Samsāra (P) - round of rebirth, perpetual wandering

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at the instant each occurs, the roots of the round of rebirth can be cut short.

In connection with *āramana*, *āramanika*, and *phassa*, Sayadawgyi has composed:

“The six elements of sense objects (*āramana*) cause impact on the six elements of sense receptors (*āramanika*), to cause sense impressions (*phassa*). These impressions in the form of whole images and other signals are perceived in the mind as the six elements of consciousness (*viññāna*). As the sense impressions are roused, like the flash of god-king's weapon of lightening, the sense objects appear in the mind in clear flashes of sensation that classify them: that one is pleasant or this unpleasant; that much good and this much bad. Thoughts arising out of these sensations give rise to further analyses as to finer qualities, enabling to come to decisions as to what is desirable and what abominable. And that, indeed, is the power of the six elements of impression (*phassa*).”

Saya Thet, with his two palms together in lotus form, his mind oriented towards Ledi Sayadaw, was often absorbed in thought of man's immense gratitude to all mentors who showed the way of dhamma, explaining the element of rupa, its attribute of arousing the senses of seeing, hearing, and so on, and the perception, the consciousness that come and go continually, the concept of the Objective Truth (*paramattha*). There was no end of his wonder and veneration of these mentors . . .

It was Saya Thet's habit to tell us, his students, that we were fortunate to find shelter under the great teachers who had given us guidance, by which we have

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each taken our own routes and carry on travelling, and how it was wonderful and delightful to do so.

Reverence to the Attributes of the Venerable Sanghā

The Ledi vipassanā meditation technique as taught by Saya Thetgyi is based on the samatha method of meditation. When concentration by samatha is firm, it is switched over to vipassanā with particular attention paid to body kāya. In the vipassanā practice, the four elements of pathavi, tejo, āpo, vāyo must be sought and found. The phenomena that characterize the nature of body kāya, the paramattha dhammas, namely the rising and falling of body temperature, movements rough and fine, rising and falling of tension, numbness and aches, stiffness and pain, and so on are there in the body at all times: they must be found and noted as such. Yogis are taught to see and know by groups the four elements are named, and their attributes in nature, and what in real sense are meant by paramattha dhamma, dhātu and *kalappas*³³.

When those paramattha dhamma and dhātu elements found in the body kāya are further studied and examined closely, it is observed that each constituent element has three inherent characteristics (*lakḥhanās*). When these three characteristics are clearly understood upon repeated contemplation (*bhāvanā*), the incidents of coming into being and disappearing of material and mind elements (*rūpa* and *nāma*), i.e. as observed with *udayabbhaya ñāna*, become distinct and clear in one's

³³ kalappas (P) - groups of the smallest unit definable with the Four Elements of pathavi, tejo, āpo, vāyo

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consciousness.

Basically, those yogis at work in meditation at the retreat centre who have attained to udayabbhaya ñāna can be said to have reached a certain point, a mile-stone, on their journey on the Path. Saya Thet in his time continued teaching some yogis who had remarkable gifts (*parami*) to attain some stage of magga-ñāna phala-ñāna.

Saya Thet travelled to Yangon, and from Yangon to various parts of the country, to open new retreat centers and taught meditation. He had worked tirelessly to serve and propagate the Ledi Vipassanā Sāsana all through his life time.

List of Kammathān Retreats Established by Saya Thet

1. Original Kammathān Center at Pyawbwe-gyi Village
2. Pyawbwe West School, Second Kammathān Centre
3. Hanthawaddy Kammathān Center, Yangon
4. Nānacāgi Kammathān Center
5. Inyar-myaing Patipatti Center
6. Ledi-mu Vipassanā
7. Samsāra Aye Yeikthar (Sabai Chan, Kamayut), and
8. Mahā Bodhi Kammathān Center, Mandalay.

Saya Thet taught meditation not only at the original center at Pyawbwe-gyi but also in other centers he had established. It is said that there are a total of 67 centers both inside and outside of the country.

Sayagyi Saya Thet Passed Away

Sayagyi Saya Thet passed away, aged 72, on the

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14th waxing day of 1307 at U Ohn's place, Thar Shwe-cin Company, No.77, Yetarshay Street, Yangon. He died at ease and in peace³⁴. He was buried with a grand ceremony at a place situated on the North-East of Dhāt-Paung Pagoda on Arzini Hill.

Distinguished Protégés of the Sayagyi

Sayagyi U Ba Khin, Sayagyi U Aung Myat, Sayadaw U Kaw Vida, Saya Thein-gyi, Ñānacāgi Sayadaw, Hantharwaddy Sayadaw, Sayadaw U Kumāra (Uzin Nyo), U Tin Hla, Sayagyi U Than and U Goenka were distinguished teachers from amongst Sayagyi Saya Thet's protégés..

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Ledi Sayadaw Phayargyi

And

Saya Thet-gyi

A Shortcut To

Ditthadhamma Ñānadassana

**A Manual of Insight Meditation
Practice
Dhamma Gift**

³⁴"died at ease and in peace" - Traditional statement is "to die of 96 ailments," not specific as to cause of death. Dhammacariya U Htay Hlaing described Sayagyi's attainment on the Path as Anāgāmi. (inserted by translator)

Service Before Samatha Meditation

1. Before commencing vipassanā meditation, the lay yogi must first keep *ājivatthamaka sila*³⁵, the eight or the ten precepts, whichever the yogi prefers. But monks do not need to keep those precepts as they already are keeping the *pātimokkha samvara sila*³⁶.
2. Immediately before the in-breath out-breath (*ānāpāna*) meditation, Yogi must make a request to the Buddha³⁷ thus:

*aham bante samsāra vattadukkhato mocanathāya,
samatha kammathānan yācāmi
dutiyaampi aham bante yācāmi,
tatiyaampi aham bante yācāmi.*

*Ashin phaya*³⁸, for the benefit of deliverance from the vicious round of all miseries and suffering, may I ask for your kind permission to practice samatha meditation.

For the second time, Ashin phaya, for the benefit of meditation.

For the third time, Ashin phaya, for the benefit of meditation.

3. After making the request thus, yogi must take to some darkened, confined place to meditate. Out of 24 hours

³⁵ *Ājivatthamaka sila* (P) - abstention from killing, stealing, wrongful sex, lying, rough language, slandering, idle talk, and wrongful livelihood (eight in number)

³⁶ *Pātimokkha samvara sila* (P) - morality consisting of restraints with regard to the Disciplinary Code of Conduct as has been laid down by the Buddha (vinaya pitaka)

³⁷ Ashin phaya, Ashin phaya (M) - formal reverent address to the Buddha and the venerable monks

a day, meditation time is allotted to a minimum of 6 hours, and for a maximum of 12. Focus the mind at the tip of the nose, and be aware of the in breath and out breath. Mind most carefully that the mind does not follow the current of air. If the mind follows the air stream, needing longer time to see signs (*nimitta*).

Service Before Vipassanā Meditation

1. After that, yogi sits in front of a Buddha image and submits:

*Tu-mhākam bante ovādāya jivitaṃ pariccajāmi
Ashin phaya, I renounce and offer my life to Ashin
phaya, so that I may be given guidance in the same
way as the yogis of Ashin phaya's life time.*

2. After that, yogi must ask for vipassanā kammathān from the Buddha:

*aham bante samsāra vattadukkhato mocanathāya,
vipassanā kammathānam yācāmi.
dutiyaampi aham bante yācāmi,
tatiyaampi aham bante yācāmi.*

Ashin phaya, for deliverance from the round of rebirth, the habitat of *khandhā āyatana*³⁹ that in reality are subject to rounding of the samsāra, and for attainment to Nibbāna, may I be blessed with your kind permission to practice insight meditation (*vipassanā kammathāna*) that views the phenomenal world of nāma rupa in myriad ways in accessing the Path (*magginga*).

3. After that yogi must make a plea to all his good

³⁹ *khandhā āyavana* (P) - the five groups of nāma-rupa (or existence), and the six groups of sense receptors (dvāras)

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associates: if ever I have committed any wrongs by actions, bodily, verbally or mentally, towards any of those I have associated with, may I ask to be kindly forgiven; if any of you have committed some wrongs towards me, I have forborne and forgiven you.

4. When keeping watch at the spot on top of the head, take time and wait at least 5 minutes. This brief lesson is given so that yogi can be on sure footholds. Every step needs to be sure and secure so as to keep the doors to the four underworlds (*apāya*) shut.

Ānāpān Samatha Method

As taught by Kammathān Sayāgyi Saya Thet

First, the Practice of Samatha method of Meditation

There are 40 samatha methods. One out of them, the ānāpāna method generally suits most people. It is found to be easy to practice. Therefore, ānāpāna kammathān will be described as the main method in this book. There are varieties of ānāpāna kammathān practices. But as the aim is to make a shortcut in learning to achieve the desired level of concentration, the author has chosen one by which yogis pick up fast in the shortest possible time.

As a person plans to enter a meditation session, he or she must, after bowing down and paying respects to the Buddha-led Three Gems and the Five Great Mentors⁴⁰, carry out the preliminary services as already described. Then, sit in a posture that suits and sustain the yogi to sit

⁴⁰ The Three Gems are Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha; the Five Great Mentors, the Three Gems plus Parents and Teachers.

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for an appreciable length of time: generally used postures are for men to sit cross-legged, and for ladies with one leg folded in front, and the other folded outside and tucked against the thigh. It is suggested to have a white shawl wrapped over one shoulder and across the chest. The trunk must be kept straight up, with the neck and head also in alignment. After so composing, breathe in and out as one does normally. Attention is kept focused at the tip of the nose where the breath rushes in and out. Do not think of anything. Do not recite or say anything. Just keep the mind on the rushing and rubbing of the breaths at tip of the nose, and know the in and out breaths in sequence continually, not letting your attention wander away. Often the breathing may go out of step, making the yogi tire. If that happens, correct it to the normal. Sometimes, slow breathing may make the yogi sleepy. Correct it to the normal. Like “hunter learning from deer”, yogi learns from work. If aches and pains seem unbearable, change the posture, but keep breathing as normal and keeping the focus of attention as usual.

The yogi will have to work hard with all willingness and earnest belief that he/she will certainly succeed and reach the set goal; that he/she has some gift (*pārami* or accumulated attributes); and that the doors to the four underworlds will be closed. This will enable a fast performance. Half-believing and half-heartedness in what is being pursued will bear no fruit, only resulting in waste of time and energy. Such laxity will also cause immediate difficulties in his/her attempt in the next time round. In normal circumstances, after many a repeated times and sessions of practice, within

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a second to a few minutes of sitting, yogi may see signs. By signs (*nimitta*) is meant the twelve ānāpāna signs or any other signs that appear in the mind whilst in at different levels of concentration (*samādhi*). After appearing, the signs will disappear. As soon as they disappear, bring back the mind in focus at the tip of the nose where the breath is moving and rubbing in and out.

Be aware of the air current at every moment of it moving in. Also be aware of the air current at every moment of it moving out. Be aware of each at the precise moment of touch and at all times without a break. And then various forms of signs may come in. The incessantly repeating in-breaths and out-breaths may appear like a stream of air as if it were really visible. The out-breath sometimes appears to go out a few inches to a foot and a half from the nostril; similarly the in-breath appears to go through the throat, through the chamber of the chest and even to reach the navel. (Note: Some people take this to mean exertion to get the in-breath to reach the navel, and so, they purposely draw in the air so as to push it to that point. This is an impossible approach; it takes longer to achieve some concentration, if at all.)

The in-breath and out-breath may sometimes seem like vapors, white and smoke-like, sometimes like wafts of cotton wool at the nostril piling up waft upon waft. Sometimes white vapors appear together with sparkling golden or silvery particles, often like fireworks. Sometimes a single piece or more of pearls, large or small, appears to come in and go out of the nose, mixed with breaths. Sometimes it is like a line of pearls moving in and out.

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As concentration gets more mature, these pearls shine like electric lights, coming in and going out. When going out, they get outside of the nostril together with the out-breath. When entering, they go as far as the navel. With that light, the content of the abdomen can be seen. When these signs are on, yogi may be aware of the signs only, with no awareness on the nostril. When the signs disappear, the mind returns to the tip of the nose. If it does not return by itself, yogi must collect and place it there.

There are more signs. Here is a partial list of signs that are likely to appear as concentration gets more and more mature. Various species of trees and flowers native to the 31 realms of living beings: forests, mountains, lakes and rivers, earth, all the oceans; caves, monasteries and pagodas, various places of leisure and pleasure; suns, moons, planets and myriad stars, precious stones, comet-like shafts of lights, flash lights, lights from sources such as glow worms, flares and fireworks, and more. The more mature concentration gets, the more signs will appear.

Sometimes, one may, whilst in complete concentration, encounter celestial gods, earth-bound gods, wizzas, zawjis, tapathis⁴¹ photes, petas and tissays⁴². Yogi may even talk to them. But it does not appear to be strange; it is just like man meeting man. They cannot rouse fear. Some even cheer the yogi. Some come if yogi wishes. Some answers questions. At this point, yogi may have stopped his original work, being happy to be with the gods. Yogi may think very highly of self, and assumed statures

⁴¹ Wizzas, zqwjis, tapathis (M) - men said to have some supernatural powers

⁴² Phoat, petas, tissays (M) - ghost-like beings

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as if he/she were a god or a wizza, expecting much that is not real. Over time, yogi's manners of speech allude to insanity, getting nowhere and losing sight of the original aim. So, it is god practice to stop the samatha session and switch over to working in vipassanā meditation once a certain level of concentration is achieved, which would enable yogi to begin learning and working in vipassanā with ease.

This matter of stopping samatha at a point can be controversial with some questions asked. Would it be the same with those who work for *jhān-abhiññān*⁴³? Mustn't anybody attain *jhān-abhiññān*? The questions are relevant, but those who work for the attributes of jhan-abhiññān work with diligent effort till they get those attributes, not stopping short of their objective, merely content with meeting with and talking to gods of haven and trees.

These signs are called *uggaha nimmita*⁴⁴. One of these signs is a very bright, white, round object about 2-3 inches in diameter or bigger, suspended at a distance about one and a half feet from the tip of the nose. It is seen there with closed eyes. It seems to disappear and appear again where yogi wishes it to be. After a time, the sphere does not disappear and may be seen with open eyes. But it is suggested that yogi carries on seeing it in the mind with closed eyes. After a lapse of time, as samādhi becomes

⁴³ Jhān- abhiññān (P) - Short for jhāna-abhiññāna, 4 levels of purity in absorption and supernormal knowledge (supernormal power)

⁴⁴ Uggaha nimitta (P) - A second degree nimitta in which signs are clearly "seen" but less stable than those with the more stable patibhāga nimitta at which point samatha may be stopped and switched over to vipassanā.

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stronger and firmer, the nimitta sphere shines with cool, clear light brighter than the moon or the sun.

Then, the sphere will be still and fixed there. This sign is called *patibhāga nimitta*. The longer the object is watched the brighter and more still it would become. After a length of time, yogi becomes enchanted and takes pleasure with rapture (*pīti*). This rapture leads to the feeling of happiness or bliss (*sukha*). This happiness leads to a unified, quiet, undisturbed state of the mind (*ekaggatā*), strong and fast like an inscribed rocky monument. At this stage, yogi is not aware of anything else but the sight of the patibhāga nimitta; yogi may think he/she is that patibhāga nimitta and vice versa. Then, yogi is in complete absorption known as in the first stage of *jhāna* complete with the five parts, namely *vitakka*, *vicāra*, *pīti*, *sukha*, *ekaggatā*.

Of these five parts of the first jhāna, *vitakka* is a property of the mind that collects itself and other factors of consciousness to receive signals from the sense object. *Vicāra* is a property of the mind and its factors of consciousness that identify and determine the nature of the sense object received by virtue of vitakka. *Pīti* is an enchanted state of the mind that is enraptured by the sense object identified; and its nature determined, by vicāra. *Sukha* is feeling of happiness at the climax of pīti on the sense object. *Ekaggatā* is a unified, quiet and undisturbed state of the mind filled with tranquil bliss. This is a brief description of the first jhāna, starting with nimittas the highest of which is patibhāga nimitta, and through vitakka, vicāra, pīti, sukha and ekaggatā, the five integral parts, at

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the completion of which yogi attains the first jhāna.

For more information on jhāna, see “A Treatise on Pandita Vedaniya” written by Sayadaw Ashin U Tiloka. The Ashin is a scholar as well as an achieved practitioner of samatha-vipassanā. If curious about how well the Sayadaw has achieved, it is recommended that yogi read Ashin’s book mentioned above, after a successful application this book.

Apart from the nimittas shown above, there are other nimittas related to the 40 kinds of kammattān that include *kasina*, *asubha*, *anussati*, etc. They are not described in this book as including them would make it heavy. Besides, this book is meant for the practice of vipassanā, and so, it would suffice to describe samatha method just as far as is required to start vipassanā. Those who do not adapt to ānāpāna can take to any of the other methods they prefer.

This ends section on samatha.

Vipassanā Meditation

As Taught by Kammattān Sayagyī Saya Thet

Yogi wishing to work in vipassanā meditation must first have done ānāpāna kammattān most willingly and most diligently for three days, at the end of which he/she may have seen *uggaha* and *patibhāga* nimittas. That would be time yogi begins to embark upon training in vipassanā. If yogi is quite sure he has seen those signs clearly and distinctly, i.e. if the objects together with the lights stay long with yogi, then it can be taken that yogi has achieved

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sound samādhi. Then, the preliminary services, namely bowing down to the Buddha, taking sila, requesting for kammattān, etc., must be performed again. Yogi must believe in his/her work, and have a strong will to achieve.

Yogi must pull down his/her pride and nurture modesty, with a mind bent on liberation from miseries and suffering of the world. All personal manners physical, verbal and mental must be mild and gentle. With the personal qualities thus nurtured, yogi sits in a mode that suits him/her, and then begins ānāpāna kammattān. Staying with ānāpāna for about ten minutes, watching the wavelike motion of the in- and out-breaths at the nostril, yogi will begin to feel and know the instant to instant drag of the air against the flesh of the nostrils, vibrant and pulsating, appearing and disappearing, appearing and disappearing, . . . the minute corpuscles of the air appearing and disappearing, appearing and disappearing in a wave-like motion . . . ! This is the nature of impermanence (*anicca*). After watching this nature of *anicca* for about ten minutes, yogi moves his/her attention to the top of the head, and keeps it there, with mindfulness (*sati*) that must not be allowed to break up and scatter.

At this point, it is good practice to have a teacher close by. Yogi may feel, in an area about half an inch to an inch in size at the top of the head, some coolness or warmth. When that happens, do not let the attention go away but just be aware of the fact. After a while, the cool or otherwise warm spot will begin to appear to move, in minute vibrant motions. Let it be so, but keep the attention there. The inch-size spot may expand and spread all over the

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head. Just be aware of the fact at every moment. It may spread and cover the whole body. When it covers the whole body or before it does so, some coolness or warmth may be felt at some places on the body, exhibiting wave-like rise and fall. Or, at some spots, some perceptible movement, some vibrant motions on the body may be felt, the areas often moving in slow motion like movement of clouds.

At times, there may be some feeling of rising and falling of temperature in the bowels or on the back. At other times, there may be a feeling of some very lightly perceptible movement of something, like tiny ants, on the body. It may be like bubbling of gas in a glass of soft drink. Or it may be like the burst of fireworks, bursting forth and out. At times it is like numbness off and on in swift succession. After numerous times of repetition of the practice and the experience, the level of samādhi would rise to a stage when the whole body of yogi is covered, not leaving a spot, the tiniest size of a needle, with subtle, prickly feeling alive and vibrant. These incidents are not seen with naked eye; it is experiential knowledge. In Samyutta Pali,

“It is due to the two entities, namely the sense receptors on body (*kāyañca*) and the sense of touch (*phoṭṭhabba*), that awareness of experience in the body (*kāya viññāna*) appears.”⁴⁵

The sense of touch is not the kind of object that can be seen with eye. It is only an experiential phenomenon. Why is that so? For, it is observation of a phenomenon that occurs in or on the body.

⁴⁵ Pali text: "kāyañca phuddabeca paticcakāya viññāna upajjati."

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Samādhi becomes stronger as this process of repeated observation goes on, enhancing clarity and multiplicity of the views of the on-off processes, appearing-disappearing attributes of rupa and nāma. A simile would illustrate the process: suppose a open-ended cauldron, half full of pure sesame oil, is heated from below, bubbles would form and rise to the lips of the cauldron; the heat is maintained just so, and the bubbles on top would burst and be lost, while new bubbles would rise to take their place.

New bubbles will be seen to replace the earlier ones that have disappeared. This is a continual process, showing only the appearing and disappearing of bubbles. Closely likened to this is the components of the elemental matter in the our body coming into being and dying out, only to be replaced by new particles of matter (rupa), the mild sizzling sound of which may even be heard like that of the sesame oil bubbles in the cauldron.

But then, the frequency of rupa appearing and dying out is a great many times faster than that of the oil bubbles. This time, the whole body is jammed, like the cauldron, with vibrant elemental matter popping in and popping out.

Sometimes the elemental matter behaved as if it were falling shower-like throughout the body, thus being likened to collapse of a river bank. Often it is like a rain pour. Still often it is like a huge mass of lightning entering the body, and like a mirage rapidly appearing and disappearing.

Sometimes, it is like maggots that eat old and rotten flesh, moving fast, pushing each other, and in a mass rising and falling. Sometimes, it is like the whole body, inside and

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outside, filled with maggots from open toilet pits pushing, jostling, and rising over one upon another. Sometimes, it is like the cold winter dew falling on the body in showers. At other times, it is like the whole body being pricked by small needles.

Sometimes, it feels like the entire body cannot be moved, the limbs heavy but the flesh light and vibrant like that of boiling water. In prolonged sitting in meditation, night and day, the entire body is filled with vibrant movements, which are the shadow of incessant coming into being and dying out of rupa and the awareness of it at all times. If viewed while lying down, these vibrant movements are like foams or bubbles of water moving up and down from top of head to toes of the feet.

This can be illustrated with a simile. Suppose a glass statue of a human being is made, with hollows for all the exterior parts of a human body, and filled with water. By heating the water in the hollow statue to boiling point, temperatures will rise and boiling will spread throughout the body, often showing sounds, bubbles, etc., all the signs of boiling water in the head, in the limbs, and in the whole body, often in parts and often simultaneously throughout. Similarly, this kind of boiling occurs in yogi's body. In cases of extremely firm samādhi, the sizzling sound of boiling matter, bubbling and ascending, may actually be heard.

As awareness is occupied with these incidents of coming-into-being and dying out of rupa-nāma elements that take place inside the body unceasingly, for night and day, every hour, every minute, and every second, there come less and less of weariness, stupor, sleepiness, anxiety,

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restless thoughts, desire to listen to idle talks, thoughts of caring worldly affairs, reading news papers, greed, anger, fun and humor, minding business. All these mundane, defilement-bound mental inclinations become less and less frequent, finally settling down at rare occurrence. At that stage, yogi becomes patient and forbearing, capable of equanimity even when faced with death of loved ones, and unafraid to die.

If that were so, a question arises: why did Visākhā, a sottpan, wept visibly with great bereavement at the death of her grand child? It was so, because equanimity applies only whilst in awareness of dhamma. Sotapan is only devoid of two tendencies, namely love of life (*dīthānusaya*) and skeptical doubt (*vicikicchānusaya*), and she was not in meditation at the time. She was not devoid of the five other five tendencies (*anusaya*). She was still like most ordinary laity (*puthujana*). This answer is in accord with pariyatti literature.

While in the depths of meditation thus, yogi may become loathe to the facts of having to live a life, the worldly affairs of which can hardly be evaded in an age not so virtuous. With a samādhi so strong at this stage, aches and pains (*vedanā*) almost unbearable may be experienced. The whole body is felt as if it were extremely hot, being filled with liquid iron metal. Yogi finds vedanā always in a flux of change, off and on, or rising and falling.

With reference to the books, how would yogi comprehend and understand such phenomenal world, which is obvious only as a result of repeated observation? What yogi now finds in his inner consciousness is the changing

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nature of the five aggregates (*khandhā*) of matter (*rupa*) and mind (*nāma*), which signals in the three characteristics (*lakḥhanas*) of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*). This is the full understanding acquired with investigative work (*Tīraṇa pariññā*) that leads to achievement of purification by overcoming doubts (*kankhāvitarana visuḍḍhī*).

This calls for clarification. Observe thoroughly with intense attention. Although this is in full accord with the Buddha's teaching as recorded in the books, these practical findings may appear to contradict with the thinking of some scholars, well versed with literature but without experiential knowledge. Actually, there is no contradiction. Nature does not contradict. Those highly learned scholars, without the practice of dhamma, are prone to speculative thoughts that are either under or above the correct interpretation of natural phenomena. It is not meant to damn the noble, venerable men of learning, but for their kind review and reconciliation.

The five aggregates (*khandhā*) consist of aggregate of rupa (*rupakkhandhā*), aggregate of sensations (*vedanakkhandhā*), aggregate of perception (*saññākkhandhā*), aggregate of formative factors (*sankhārakkhandhā*), and aggregate of consciousness (*viññānakhandhā*). Ruppakkhandhā consists of the four original elements, namely earth (*pathavi*), heat (*tejo*), water (*āpo*), and air (*vāyo*). This booklet treats these four original elements the most important in practicing vipassanā. Pathavi is characterized by its attribute of hardness; tejo, hotness or coldness; vāyo, pressure; āpo, water element with attributes of collecting and holding

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together in each of the three other elements. Āpo element cannot be felt, but its properties obvious. These four dhātu elements are called *rupa*. Consciousness, awareness, perception or anything to do with the mental process is called *nāma*.

Rupa outside of human body is everywhere, in all objects animate and inanimate, filling up the full extent of the universe. The human body is also rupa. Matter outside of the human body has its own way following the law of nature. So also matter in our body has its own way following the law of nature. The law of nature is change: what comes into being must pass away; what appears, disappear; what is born must die. The rupa *kalāpas*⁴⁶ inside the body are sites of sense receptors, filling the whole extent of the body; thus their nature of coming into being and passing away incessantly fills the full expanse of the body. With the all-penetrating property of samādhi, this phenomenon of incessant change can be seen at with ease.

Awareness of such attributes of rupa is called nāma. Every moment rupa appears and disappears, so also nāma appears and disappears together with rupa. Wherever pathavi element appears, some stiffness is found to appear. If stiffness is intense, pain develops as it raises its volume. Here is an example: supposing someone sits with a naked torso, and someone else drops a hard substance the size of a sesame seed at his back. In watching the case, the first incident is coming into contact (*phoṭṭhabba*) of the tiny object with the body skin on the

⁴⁶ kalāpas (P) - the infinitesimally small material units definable with the Four Elements of pathavi, tejo, āpo, vāyo

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back, causing a tiny sense of contact (*phassa*). Consider the sense of contact: which one of the four elements, i.e. pathavi, tejo, āpo, vāyo, is responsible for prompting such a sensation? Upon contemplation, the characteristic (*lakḥhanā*) of the most distinct element will appear. The distinct characteristic in this case is hardness. What is the element that has the property of hardness? It is pathavi!

Yogi must note that the hardness felt when the small object hits the back is in fact the pathavi element. Just as soon as the hitting is felt, the sensation of hardness disappears, as if the object were dropped on the tip of a needle. To which element does hardness belong to? It is pathavi! So, note that it is pathavi that disappears. If more objects were dropped on the back one after another, contacts with pathavi element appear one after another. Also note that the sensation of each appearance of contact is followed by disappearance; it is the disappearance of pathavi one after another.

Thus, all awareness of contact with hardness is to be noted as contact with the nature of pathavi element. That being so, isn't the consciousness of rupa that appears and disappears inside the body like the bubbling and sizzling hot water, knowledge by experience of material contact? If all that comes into contact and its awareness is pathavi, then all that happens inside the whole body are all the character of paathavi element. With pathavi, the other three elements of āpo, tejo and vāyo pop in simultaneously without fail, and appear and disappear together with pathavi. How do we know about it? It is an intrinsic nature of those four elements that they never occur separately, never apart from

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each other. Although impossible for them to occur separately, their properties, namely hardness, heat, cohesion, and pressure, behave in their own way, showing their distinct characteristics as the case may be.

Out of the four, how does pathavi show its characteristic? When distinct above all else, it shows its characteristic by way of its unique character of hardness. Tejo element, when more distinct than others, shows by way of coldness/hotness. Vāyo element, when distinct above all else, shows by way of push and pull, expansion and contraction, in other words, variable pressure. Āpo element, however, cannot be touched, for experiential knowledge, but it is apparent, and obvious, in the cohesiveness and fusing together of pathavi, tejo and vāyo, forming them together simultaneously. And so, The-phyu Ledi Sayadaw said in his poem:

“When pathavi is sharp, hardness is tough; when poor, it is soft and clear as liquid;

When sharp, āpo forms liquid; when poor, it is tough and solid;

When sharp, tejo gives heat and coldness; when poor, it is mild and temperate;

When poor, vāyo is still and quiet; when poor, it moves and press to the extreme;

And these are the natural characters of the four original elements.”

Here is another simile for an explanation. Suppose we put hot pepper, salt, sour juice and sugar, the four different tastes, together in a pot and cook a meal. Too much chili would make the meal taste hot as soon as the

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chili gets on the tongue. Too much salt would make the meal salty. Similarly, too much vinegar or sugar would make it taste either sour or sweet, whichever is in excess over the others. When chili is in excess over others, the taste is hot, in spite of the presence of the others. It is impossible to separate the four tastes, and take out one at a time. But when there is no excess of one item over and above the others, each item shows its character in the combined state: chili, its hotness; salt, its saltiness; vinegar, its sourness; sugar, its sweetness. All show off their characteristics in unity and harmony simultaneously. But then, when one type is in excess of the others, people say that the meal is hot, salty, sour or sweet, whichever is the more pronounced. If hotness prevails, people say, "Oh! It is hot!" Although they say so, they know the presence of saltiness, sourness and sweetness is there all the same by their characteristic flavor and milder taste. Similar is the case with the four primary elements.

For another simile, suppose a man has malaria. He has a regular bout of high fever daily. Before his temperature rises, he is normal. But when his body temperature rises, he feels extremely cold, trembles and shakes. During the feverish time, the four elements are there as for normal, but the coldness-tejo element is in excess over the other three, making the feeling of coldness most pronounced so that the man moans, "Oh, so cold, extremely cold!" But all the four elements are there at all times. He knows that. How does he know? Coldness is the element of tejo. Its presence is dependent on the hard, solid pathavi element. If there is no such hard element,

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there would no place for coldness to appear on. Only due to the presence of hardness, phassa can be aware of. Pathavi is the one element that enables the feeling of phassa.

Thus the sick man knows, by virtue of pathavi element in him, he is feeling cold and trembling, and thus he knows the simultaneous occurrence of coldness and hardness. And then there is a question to ask: isn't there vāyo at the same time? Vāyo has the attributes of energy to cause press-expansion and press-contraction. When that energy is much pronounced, the feeling of movement and tension appears. But in fact, objective entities (rupa and nāma) pass away at the sites they come into being, and so they lack the ability to move. Even though that is so, they do appear to move. That is because the new rupa-calāpas come into being at new sites. (contemplate the case in depth). In pali it reads:

*"na hi rupārupadhamānam uppādadese
aniruazzhittva*

*Kesaggamatthampi desantara sankamanamnāma
athi,*

meaning, "Rupa-nāma elements pass away at the point they came into being, never moving away a tiny little bit."

So, when we say vāyo element moves, it does not really move. It is the new rupa-kalāpas that appear at new sites, and we say that vāyo element moves. Thus, because in the sick body vāyo element presses on the hard pathavi and the hot tejo elements, new rupa-calāpas take up new

positions, and so, unlike the old ones, the new rupa-calāpas appear in the form of high-temperature fever with feeling of the chill and trembling of the body. Trembling is due to the property of vāyo. Āpo is apparent only for its property of formation and holding firmly together the pathavi, tejo and vāyo elements. So, looking through the penetrating ability of the Right View, we see the vibrant movements and appearing-disappearing incidents of rupa, and that they are nothing but the characteristics of the four foundation elements, in other words, the showing of the aggregate of body matter (*rupakkhandhā*), a reality in the sense of the objective principles (*paramattha dhamma*).

After having shown ruppakkhandhā, the mind group (*nāmakkhandhā*) will be described. It is to do with paying attention to sense objects, consisting primarily of 53 mental entities, grouped in four aggregates. They are the aggregate of feeling (*vedanakkhandhā*), the aggregate of perception (*saññakkhandhā*), the aggregate of mental formation (*sankhārakkhandhā*), and the aggregate of consciousness (*viññānakkhandhā*). Vedanakkhandhā is originated by phassa (*phassa paccayā vedanā*). Phassa in this book means body impressions (*kāya-samphassa*).

Two factors, namely the body sensor (*kāya*) and actual contact (*phothabba*) together give rise to body-consciousness (*kāya-viññāna*). Those three factors – the body, the contact with the object and body-consciousness – give rise to sensation (*vedanā*). (from “Samyutta Pali”)

To explain further, when yogi looks in the rupa-body in full concentration, yogi would find that all rupa

⁴⁷ kamma, citta, utu, ahāra (P) - past and current deeds, the mind, seasons (body heat, etc.) and food

entities, as conditioned by *kamma, citta, utu* and *ahāra*⁴⁷, come into being and passing away nonstop at all times. Body consciousness (*kāya viññāna*) knows the coming into contact (*phothbba*) of the body sensor and sense object (*ārammana*). This gives rise to sense impression (*phassa*); phassa gives rise to vedanā (*vedanakkhandhā*). Perception (*saññā, saññākkhandhā*) takes note of the sense object shown by viññāna. *Phassa, cetanā, ekaggatā, jivitindare, manasikāya*, etc., are aggregate of mind formations (*sankhārakkhandhā*). *Kāya-viññāna* is *viññānakkhandhā*. These are the four *nāma khandhās*. It is not yet personalized wisdom. Only immediately after consciousness on the body (*kāya-viññāna*) has appeared, consciousness in the mind (*mano-viññāna*) comes.

If the sense object as depicted by sense impression (*phassa*) is thought good, it is *sukha vedanā*, or alternatively, *somanassa vedanā*. If thought bad, it is *dukkha vedanā* or *domanassa vedanā*. If thought neither good nor bad, it is neutral feeling *upekkhā vedanā*, or alternatively, *a-dukkha-ma-sukha vedanā*. *Vedana* so felt has its origin in the two rupa elements, namely *kāya* and *phothabba*. Therefore when rupa elements, on which vedanā is dependent, disappears, vedanā also disappears. Just as rupa objects appear and disappear, so also vedanā follows suit, just as fast.

Saññākkhandhā takes note of the aramana object that is revealed by *kāya viññāna* and *mano viññāna*, as well as various vedanā sensations. At this point, the wisdoms of *viññānakkhandhā* and *saññākkhandhā* should be differentiated. The awareness of *phothabba* on objects

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that impact successively on body dvāra discerning, “that is earth; that other one is wind”, is viññāna knowledge. Making note of whatever viññāna knows is the duty of saññā. In short, viññāna cannot memorize the aramana objects, where as saññā remembers whatever it has experienced; only it cannot do any forward thinking. Whenever vedanākkhandhā disappears saññākkhandhā also disappears. (page 58, para1)

Sankhārakkhandhā comprises fifty associates of the mind (*cetasika*), excluding those of vedanākkhandhā. To dwell on them, wide-ranging as they are, would make this book too lengthy. Only enough will be discussed for yogis to understand. Looking into the body, as the appearance and disappearance of rupa elements, vedanā and saññā are being watched, the sense object (aramana) in view may rouse some will, some volition (*cetanā*) in yogi. As cetasikas are associated with citta, the mind, during meditation, every instance of the mind is complemented with corresponding mind factors (*cetasika*). With every instance of awareness of appearance and disappearance of rupa-nāma elements, citta, phassa, cetanā, ekaggatā, manasikāra, etc. appear and then disappear. Vitakka, vicāra, also come into being. Saddhā, sati, hiri, ottapa, a-loba, a-dosa, tattaramajjhata, etc. appear. After appearing, they disappear. These incidents are called sankhārakkhandhā. The instant vedanākkhandhā and saññākkhandhā disappear, sankhārakkhandhā also disappears.

Saññākkhandhā and sankhārakkhandhā, with reference to Ledi Sayadaw’s “Bhāvanā Dipani,” will be

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discussed here for some general knowledge. Saññākkhandhā in terms of aramana is of six kinds: rupa saññā, saddasaññā, gandhāsaññā, rasasaññā, phothtabbasaññā, and dhamma saññā. That means consciousness of the six kinds of āramana: sight, sound, smell, taste, phothtabba āramanas, namely pathavi, tejo, āpo, vāyo, and dhamma aramanas, namely wholesome and unwholesome thoughts. In other words, they are awareness of the senses that occur at the eye, ear, nose, and tongue, on the body and in the mind. All living beings are keep alive day and night with these perceptions (saññās), doing all sorts of chores and business. This is a brief discussion on saññākkhandhā.

At this point, it would do well to discuss and show the difference between awareness by viññānakkhandhā and that by saññākkhandhā. Awareness of the incessant impacts of sense objects on the six corresponding sense organs (dvāras) as “this is earth, and that, water” and so on is awareness by viññāna, not that by saññā. Taking note and memorizing what viññāna acquires and shows is the duty of awareness by, saññā, not the business of viññāna. Viññāna, if it wills, can grasp all forward experiences, but cannot remember. It cannot remember any past experience. Saññā, if it wills, remembers past experiences, but cannot grasp anything forward looking. That is the difference between the two.

With reference to Abhidhammā Pitaka, sankhārakkhandhā consists of fifty cetasikas, including sankhārakkhandhā itself. With reference to Suttana Pitaka, cetanā cetasika is the main factor, by the understanding of which anicca-lakkhanā can be fully grasped, and all those

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categories of sankhārakkhandhā follow automatically in full view. Volition or free will (cetanā cetasika) is a quality of the mind that is always prompting and pushing living beings to be thinking of something, not allowing to pause or rest even for a blink of the eye. Only take a guess back at all the past uncountable existences, with the exception of the highest celestial realm (*a-saññassa bhūmi*)⁴⁸.

When yogi sees the continually restless, vibrant, wavy nature of the mind, yogi will come to understand how cetanā works. When dying in one life, as the hitherto active living rupa comes to a stop (*cuti-kammaja rupa*), consciousness (nāma) switches over, not stopping for as short a time as a blink of the eye, immediately into a new life form. Cetanā is the driving force in such action of the mind. This urging, driving action of cetanā is the source of wholesome and unwholesome deeds, i.e. all bodily, verbal and mental actions. Depending on its association with the six sense objects (aramanas), there are six types of cetanā: cetanā for sight objects, cetanā for sound objects, and so on. Sankhārakkhandhā has been briefly differentiated and explained. (Reference: Bhāvanā Dipani, No. 70)

Viññānakkhandhā has one associated factor (cetasika), characterized by knowing sense objects. But there are six types of this khandhā, as dependent upon the types of sense objects, namely cakkhu-viññāna, sota-viññāna, ghāna-viññāna, jinwhā-viññāna, kāya-viññāna and mano-viññāna. And because it is to look inward at rupa-nāma

⁴⁸ A-ssaññassa bhūmi (P) - once there, the traveler goes nowhere, up or down, but to enter nibbāna.

⁴⁹ Ijjhattarupa-nāma (P) - in-born material body and mind, matter and mind sought inward, insightful understanding of matter and mind internal to one's own body kāya

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(*ijjhattarupa-nāma*)⁴⁹, the only essential requirement is to see the appearing-disappearing phenomena of the five khandhās inside of body-kāya. And to know the five khandhās inside of the body, it is essential only to look at kāya-viññāna and mano-viññāna.

Therefore when we look at the rupa-kāya internal to this solid body, we see the properties of rupa such as hardness, cohesiveness, coldness/hotness, pressure, and their incessant flux of change – what appears disappears, what appears anew also disappears, repeating the cycle without a stop, shown by vibrant movements, prickly sensations, heat/cold or tension, the process never stopping. These appearing-disappearing phenomena are incidents inside our bodies, and so, that is only known to our kāya-viññāna. Kāya-viññāna knows the fact of rupa coming into being, and mano-viññāna knows what and how every moment kāya-viññāna knows. Every time vedanākkhandhā, saññākkhandhā and sankhārakkhandhā disappear, so also kāya-viññāna and mano-viññāna disappear. (This short discussion of five khandhās is about enough for comprehension.)

Note that five khandhās are paramattha dhamma. Persons and beings are paññatta. The five khandhās never cease their state of change, always in a flux of change day and night, every minute and every second. The five internal khandhās can only be seen by means of samādhi practice, not by means the physical eye. Having known the five khandhās, we will proceed to the objective study of the three characteristics (the three *lakkhanās*) of those khandhā, first in Pali:

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*Aniccā vata sankhārā
Upādāvaya dhammino;
Uppajjittavā nirujjhiti
Tesam vupasamo sukho.*

Translation: elements of rupa-nāma sankhāra dhammas, the existence of which depends on the four bases of kamma, citta, utu and āhāra, in reality are not permanent or perpetual. They are subject to the law of change, i.e. coming into existence and passing away. In accord with this law, these elements of rupa-nāma sankhāra dhammas come into, and immediately thereafter go out of existence. Only when this phenomenon of change ceases, will *nibbāna*, the real peace in a state of real bliss called *santisukha*, be found.

The three characteristics (*paramattha lakḥanas*) are anicca, dukkha and anatta. The essence of these characteristics is also the phenomenon of perpetual change. What are the changing entities? They are the sankhāra dhammas, the appearing-disappearing nature of rupa-nāma. Rupa comes into being fifty billion times in a blink of the eye; nāma, a trillion times. This state of change, never ceasing during day or night, minute or second, is called the objective nature of instantaneous **anicca**. The repetitive, never ceasing suffering from such perpetually changing dhammas is called instantaneous **dukkha**. That nature of change cannot be suspended, stopped or administered by man, nay, not even by the omniscient Lord Buddha Himself. This characteristic is called instantaneous **anatta**.

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Yogi may be quite satisfied in the dubbing of appearing-disappearing nature of rupa-nāma as anicca and anatta, but not quite so with dukkha. The reason why all rupa-nāma phenomena including temporal sukha are called dukkha is that impermanence is death in reality. In Samyutta Athakathā, death is said to be the greatest dukkha:

*“anicca tā ca nāmesā maranam maranato
uttaridukkham nāma natthi.”*

Translation: This nature of impermanence also means death (*marana*). There is no suffering greater than death.

Khanika and Santati

Ledi Sayadaw Phayagyi has written that by *khanika* is meant by the paramattha nature of rupa-nāma for their nature of extremely fast, incessant appearing-disappearing type of change. It is *khanika anicca* because immediately after the instant of appearance, disappearance follows. In the understanding of *khanika* (also *khana*), there is a difference between that of the Buddha and that of the vipassanā yogi. Lord Buddha knew that rupa appears fifty billion times whereas nāma appears a trillion times in a blink of the eye. Multiplied by *upāda-khana*, *banga-khana* and *thi-khana*⁵⁰, there would be three trillion *khanas*. Lord Buddha knew the exact counting of three trillion *khanas*.

But it would be impossible for vipassanā yogi to be capable of counting the *khanas* in a blink or the eye, but perhaps, only able to count to some hundreds of times of

⁵⁰ Upād(a), thi, bang(a) (P) - infinitesimally short durations of time, in which rupa and nāma appear, stay and disappear, Thi or stay, although present, is not apparent.

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appearance-disappearance. Those revered personalities who have done much and achieved the goal would have known better. If yogi can grasp such fast tiny bits of khanas, yogi would have achieved much in anicca vipassanā, and would be able to complete the task of vipassanā. Thus, the yogi, who is able to see the bubble-like, mirage-like, fast moving appearing-disappearing rupa-nāma dhammas, is said to be invisible to the king of death. In Pali it is:

“yathā pupputthakam passe, yathā passé maricikam;
evum lokam avakkhantam, miccurājā na passati.”

The noble yogi who grasps such fast speed of the appearing-disappearing phenomena, is called *animittavihāra*. The noble yogi who observes the *khanika anicca vipassanā*, and attained *magga-phala*, is called *animitta vimokkha sukha patipadā puggala*. See “Visuddi Magga” for wider commentary.

Because of the difference between the wisdom levels of the Buddha and the vipassanā yogi, the rates of change, the depths and spreads, sharpness and certainty of the rupa-nāma dhammas known to the Buddha and the yogi, although said to be taking place without a pause, and yet separated by space in between, and incomparably fast in both cases, cannot be the same. That may be so, but it is only essential that the noble yogis, by dint of unbroken mindfulness and diligent meditation (*bhāvanāmaya ñāna*), perceive with confidence and experience the extremely fast, continually changing nature of anicca, the suffering

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nature of dukkha and the unmanageable nature of anatta.

Ledi Sayadaw Phayagyi had denoted the incessantly changing nature of khandhā-nāma-rupa as *khanika anicca*; and also that the intrinsic paramattha dhammas, the incessant deaths (*khanika maranas*) are not visible to the natural eye. It is thus obvious that the whole body is full of uncountable incidents of birth (*jāti*), aging (*jarā*) and death (*marana*). See “Vijjāmagga Dipani”, “Lakkhana Dipani”, etc. for wider commentary.

On page 50, line 7 of Bhāvanā Dipani, it is shown that the view of the appearing-disappearing of rupa-nāma does not have to catch up with the instant present single moment (*khanika paccuppan*), but rather, a diffusion of present single moments (*santati paccuppan*) that covers the state of change entailing in chaos and disorientations. But this book only deals with catching up on *khanika paccuppan*.

To explain it further, our Lord said that a human being has 24 million strands of hair and ninety-nine thousand strands of finer body hair. Every human has those hairs, as accounted for by the Buddha. The hairs everyone knows of are not different from the hairs the Buddha described. But humans are not capable of counting exactly how many strands of hair there are. Just because we are incapable of counting, and so, not able to tell, their quantity, we cannot say that Buddha’s counting was not true.

Those persons, who have done *animitta*, or *anicca vipassanā*, can view the innumerable incidents of appearing-disappearing (of rupa-nāma khandhās) in a moment (*khanika anicca*), allowing the yogis to see the numerous

khanikas in any mode of posture, and in any kind of vedanā. The longer the viewing, the stronger is the samādhi. The stronger the samādhi, the more numerous and clearer is the khanika anicca.

Santati Anicca

By *santati* is meant the impression of fast moving, incessant incidents of khanikas as a single unit. For a simile, when pouring sand from a height, we do not see the rapid loss in sight of the individual grains of sand as they fall, but instead, we see the continuous stream of sand as a single unit. Khanika disappears the moment it appears. It is also like the disappearance of sound of a grain of mustard seed at the very moment it hits the point of a needle, when letting it fall from a height. Santati takes, and stays for, longer time than khanika.

Ledi Sayadaw Phayagyi also gave some indication of the stay of santati for various lengths of time as one minute, two minutes, one hour, two hours and so on. The disappearance of sense objects after staying in view for a certain length of time is called santati anicca. Khanika anicca is disappearance immediately after the instant the sense object appears. When we say of the instant, or khana, it should be noted that this khana that we know of is different from that known to Lord Buddha. Any time-length longer than khana is santati. The life-spans of santati paññatta can be quite long. But when the real internal sense objects (ijjhatta-paramattha) are in yogi's view, khanika anicca is the object of contemplation. Whichever anicca comes into view, if correct method is applied, vipassanā experience is

complete. (See Ledi Sayadaw Phayagyi's "Bhāvanā Dipani" for wider reading of santati anicca.)

Full Understanding by Investigation (*Tirana Pariññā*)

Tirana pariññā is defined as the nine levels of vipassanā wisdom (ñāna) from *udayabhaya ñāna*⁵¹ to *anuloma ñāna*⁵² in which the appearing-disappearing phenomena of sense objects in yogi's mental view (aramana) are contemplated, subjecting them to the criteria of the three characteristics (lakkhanas) simultaneously by insight meditation (vipassanā). The three characteristics are primarily one, but split in three. By expansion of the Pali, "anicca vata sankhārā," anicca is change (impermanence, appearance-disappearance), which in essence is dukkha, and so also is anatta. This phenomenon of perpetually appearing and disappearing alone, is, in fact, impermanence, anicca; suffering, dukkha; inability to manage, anatta. To contemplate and meditate on these three characteristics is called *tirana pariññā*. See Visuddhi Magga.

To explain *kankhāvitarana visuddhi*⁵³ a brief discussion of the seven articles of *visuddhi magga*⁵⁴ would suffice for some understanding. They are sila visuddhi, citta visuddhi, ditthi visuddhi, kankhāvitadana visuddhi, maggāmagga ñānadassana visuddhi, patipadā ñānadassana visuddhi and ñānadassana visuddhi. Sila visuddhi is keeping

⁵¹ Udayabbaya ñāna (P) - the fourth level vipassana ñāna (begins to see the three characteristics)

⁵² Anuloma ñāna (P) - the 13th and highest level vipassanā ñāna (ñāna means wisdom)

⁵³ kankhāvitarana visuddhi (P) - purification by overcoming doubt

⁵⁴ Visuddhi magga (P) - the path to Freedom by purification

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silā without breaking a precept once it is admitted and committed. Committed to silā, in meditation with ānaāpāna, or any one of the 40 kammaṭṭhāna, when parikamma nimitta appears, it is the beginning of citta visuddhi. When uggaha nimitta appears, it is the mid level of citta visuddhi. When patibhāga nimitta appears, it is the high level citta visuddhi. Beginning with patibhāga nimitta, vitakka, vicāra, piti, sukha, ekaaggatā- the five parts of the first jhāna – are the higher and higher levels of *citta visuddhi*.

With ditthi visuddhi comes ability to know differentially the five khandhās, and so clear insights of nāma-rupa pariccheda ñāna, nāma-rupa paccayapariggaha ñāna, sammasana ñāna. At this point, yogi discerns the nature of santati that tells hot rupa is not there where it is cold, cold rupa is not there where it is hot, and that hotness and coldness are rupa; sense of feeling is vedanā; perception is saññā; volition, will to act, to form is sankhāra; consciousness is viññāna; rupa during the night is not the rupa of day time, and vice, versa. These facts were understood by scholars. But the mind that has critically observed, and satisfied with the experiential findings of the rupa, nāma and the five khandhās is *ditthi visuddhi*.

As wisdom progresses further and has distinctly perceived all the three lakkhanas of anicca, dukkha, anatta, and passed the tirana pariññā milepost, as described in this book, *udabbaya ñāna* is attained, whereby paññat and paramat are clearly distinguished, and all skeptical doubts about the Truth have been discarded. This stage of purity of the mind is called *kankhāvitarana visuddhi*. Only at this point, the true anicca is understood, the true paramat

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found, and the three true lakhanas realized. Further work on this udabbaya nāma would give rise to still stronger samādhi. Then various kinds of joy (*pīti*) may appear; so may a variety of tranquility (*passadhi*); so may various white lights (*obhāsa*). Then yogi may be enchanted by piti, passadhi or obhāsa, and confused as to whether these are magga, phala or Nibbāna. Teacher is advised to tell yogis of these possibilities in advance. Only by a prior knowledge will they know they are not magga. This is *maggāmagga ñānadassana visuddhi*.

When piti, passadhi and obhāsa are known not to be magga, phala, or Nibbāna, yogi remembers to carry on working for magga, phala and Nibbāna in accordance with the correct practice, i.e. watching the appearing-disappearing phenomena of rupa-nāma. In doing so with no laxity but with diligence, yogi would attain further wisdom from the level of patisankhāra ñāna to anuloma ñāna. This is called *patipadā ñānadassana visuddhi*.

In accord with this patipadā ñānadassana visuddhi, as watching of the appearing-disappearing phenomenon of rupa-nāma khandhās is carried on, beginning from patisankhāra ñāna, wisdom (ñāna) ascends, reaching and passing each, finally, immediately before abandoning sankhāra, the first adaptation mind-moment (*anuloma citta*) appears: it is called preparatory mind-moment (*parikamma citta*). Then the second adaption mind-moment appears: it is called proximity moment (*upacāra citta*). And then the third adaption mind-moment appears: it is called adaption knowledge or wisdom (*anuloma ñāna*). This wisdom has tendency to reject sankhāra, but

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still tending to hang onto it. Only the matured wisdom (*gotrabhu ñāna*) cuts the thread of sankhāra completely, to be ready to enter the Noble Path (*ariyā magga*). And yet, Nibbāna is not in sight, but only seen as an imagined object (*aramana*). After that moment of contemplation, the real Nibbāna is comprehended and sighted, but only once. *Magga vithi citta*⁵⁵ appears only once. In the book of “Thingyo”, it is stated, “*maggā bhiññā satin matā.*” This *magga citta* is called *ñānadassana visuddhi*.

This last description of *ñānadassana visuddhi* is in accordance with the literature. For one who strives for wisdom, starting with *patipadā ñānadassana visuddhi*, must carry on watching the appearing-disappearing of *rupa* and *nāma*. Whilst doing so, consciousness reaches past and beyond the chaotic events of *rupa-nāma* appearing and disappearing. That consciousness is *ñāna dassana visuddhi*. To understand clearly and surely as to how *magga citta* comes about during meditation, some more explanation will be given in another place.

To personally know by way of *bhāvanāmaya ñāna*

In the matter of *vipassanā*, experiential wisdom by meditation (*bhāvanāmaya ñāna*) is the main requisite. But it is good, not futile, to think about *rupa* and *nāma*. That way *nāma-rupa pariccheda* and *paccaya pariggaha ñānas* are acquired. It is in a cumulative process of knowledge, a gift or a part of *parami*. If this much of intellectual learning (*cintāmaya ñāna*) is acquired in this life, in some other future life, by listening to proper *dhamma*

⁵⁵ *Magga vithi citta* (P) - consciousness of *magga* or (here and now) *Nibbāna*.

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talks, deliverance is possible. Take inspiration from *culapan* venerable monks. If in this life frequent thoughts can lead to strong *samādhi*, by which some experience with the continual on-again-off-again nature of mind and matter may be found. But then mostly, for not knowing the significance and not knowing how to observe correctly, the findings can be lost in oblivion.

When reality of the nature of change of *nāma-rupa* is first found by meditation, if only *yogi* observes those incidents of change with complete mindfulness, not allowing to have it lost from the mind's view, *yogi* may arrive at *tirana pariññā kinkhāvittrana visuddhi*. Only then the *yogi* would understand the practical significance of keeping the *aramana* in view, and carry on watching it. That is why it is said, “Without a teacher, one cannot even smoke fish-paste properly.” *Bhāvanāmaya ñāna* means wisdom acquired by direct observation of the real objects as per instructions given, without any speculative element.

This *bhāvanāmaya ñāna* is most difficult to acquire unless one finds a good teacher as regards the awareness of coming-into-contact with sense objects and disappearance of it. If a good teacher is near at hand, it should be easier. A willing *yogi*, thought he/she may be green to meditation, but can be trained easily to gain some level of wisdom, under the care of a skilled teacher. But under a teacher who is not well versed in the principles and practice, it would be like trying to see but unable to find one's own ear, although the eye and ear are closely situated: the further the eye chases, the further the ear moves away.

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Ledi Sayadaw Phayagyi once said that vipassanā is like juggler's art. Juggling, if its tricks are not known, is difficult to perform. If tricks are known it is an easy art. And so, the saying goes:

Shallow, but thought deep; narrow, but thought wide, so says the book;

Easy, but thought difficult; to know what it is, there the teacher is.

In *cintāmaya ñāna*, there has to be prior learning, the knowledge that enables critical view and analysis, to be able to think and contemplate the nature of coming into being and going out of existence of rupa and nāma that are extant in the mass of our body kāya.

Bhāvanāmaya ñāna does not mean the general knowledge learned before. As teacher tells where to place the mind, yogi focuses his mind at the place the teacher tells him/her to focus, without thinking a tiny bit of thought. As the mind gets stilled, and concentration rises, yogi begins to see the phenomenal world of nature as it is. The teacher would not tell at length what the yogi is seeing, but urged to carry on watching what the yogi is seeing; thus, over time, the yogi would see more and more: the nature of impermanence of the whole body kāya, the nature of pains and suffering, and the nature of uncontrollability of the natural phenomena. Once these experiential facts sink in the consciousness, the yogi's manners of speech, way of life and behavior become mild and gentle, indicating tiredness of life, accompanied by more reverence and homage to the Three Jewels.

At this point the teacher tells the yogi only briefly

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and short to the point, "This nature is rupa, and that nāma; this, anicca; that dukkha; and that other one, anatta," only enough for him/her to comprehend. Only when the yogi is happy with his/her experiential knowledge, and ready to go home, the teacher explained more of the nature of dhamma at length and in detail to a point at which the yogi is completely satisfied with his efforts and wisdom so gained. The reason why the teacher tells the nature of dhamma at length not before, but after, the work of meditation is that if told beforehand, the yogi may be thinking of the nature of dhamma aimlessly during meditation; this would prevent yogi from achieving bhāvanāmaya ñāna.

It is essential that yogis see the natural phenomena of rupa and nāma in objective view, and they must make sure that they see that way. After seeing that way, they may check their experience against the books. This work is for literate people. But what is essential is to acquire wisdom. Good book knowledge is good *cintāmaya ñāna*. But for *bhāvanāmaya ñāna*, literary knowledge is not that essential; acquirement of wisdom by real experience is all that matters.

Once upon a time, a lady by the name of Karli became enthused and filled with reverence by listening to the two gods, Thartar giri and Hemavata, who were questioning and answering about Lord Buddha. Her mind became tender and gentle. The gentleness rose in degree with time. The gentleness of rupa caused by the gentle mind also grew in degree. At one stage, Karli saw the change in her body rupa and nāma. By repetitive observation of this change and by her mature parami, the three

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characteristics (lakkhanas) appear to her automatically, and she attained sotāpana magga. There are a great many exemplary stories similar to this one of Karli.

The yogi striving at meditation is like a patient under medical treatment. The patient does not need to understand the medicaments and health food prescribed by the doctor. Making their appraisal as to their efficacies is a waste of time. It is the duty of the patient to take in whatever is given by the physician; to take the treatment and get cured is all that is required.

In this simile, the yogi is like the patient. The physician is like the lay, monk or book teacher of meditation. The medicine and health food are like the technique and discipline of meditation. Taking the medicine and food as directed by the physician is like practicing meditation according as the teacher teaches. The cure of all maladies by the effectiveness of the medicine and food taken by the patient is like the eradication of sakkāya ditthi by means of correct practice of meditation that instills experiential wisdom in the yogi. The malady is like sakkāya ditthi and vicikicchā.

Considering these examples and similes, it is only reasonable that people not versed in literature can strive to practice meditation and gain some advance on the journey up. Dhammapada Pali says that people who, though without any literary knowledge, make efforts at meditation, using proper methods, can attain magga-phala ñāna, and enter Nibbāna. The related Pali will be shown later.

Nowadays, where people see sight objects that disappear and hear sound objects that get lost, the methods

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they know are correct, as being in accord with literary contents. But then, most are very slow and take too long a time to make some headway. They are easy to practice, and easy to understand. But, from observation of some people in the practice of meditation, most find it very difficult to reach the stage of bhāvanāmaya ñāna. Even with the guidance of teachers, they do not get to bhāvanāmaya ñāna after days, months or for some, even years. If they think they seem to find something, it does not last long, nor stay firm.

Even some of those who go to and dwell in forests and take to meditation do not find any dhamma, except as what everybody knows of sight-seen-lost, sound-heard-lost, but not getting to any bhāvanāmaya ñāna. The visions do not stay. Even when bhāvanāmaya ñāna comes, it stays only for a moment, not firm and fast. They do not know how to make it firm and fast; dejectedly some would say, "I cannot find dhamma. It is very difficult to find it," and return home.

If practiced as shown in this book, complete with the awareness of appearance-disappearance of the intrinsic (*ijjhatta*) rupa and nāma, it becomes quite easy to thoroughly comprehend and understand the five khandhās, the twelve categories of āyatana, and the 18 constituent rupa and nāma elements or dhātu. And thus, all natural phenomena (aspects of dhamma) would come in easy grasp of the meditation practitioner. Therefore it is apparent that the three pure insights of kāya dhātu, phothabba dhātu and kāya-viññāna dhātu are the easiest, and yet, for some yogis, the most difficult, to understand; the shallowest, and yet

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the deepest to fathom. Hence the following poem:

Sangha and lay various, make use of books for work;
Right is the book, yogi not clever, knows not the touch
on and off;
To learn to be true and objective, yogi must seek a teacher;
wisdom shallow, and yet deep, just as is narrow and yet
wide;
It is all in the book,
But to make ease of the difficult,
Have a teacher to consult.

This pure insight is difficult, because āramana is internal to kāya, and *āramanika* (the means of looking) is also insight, internal to kāya. Some wise men are thus sometimes like a good horse with warped hoofs. How can I say that? My first teacher and mentor, Saya Thet of Dala Pyawbwe-gyi village, searched for kammattān teachers, one after another, but finding no insight wisdom, returned home after thirteen years of ardent search, with a depressed mind of a failed man. But he strived with a relentless resolution and determination to find the Truth, in the congregation hall for seven days and nights, without a word with anyone. Only at the end of that arduous work of search that Saya Thet found, to his satisfaction, the dhamma that he looked for and the technique that readers are now being shown.

Having been thus satisfied, Sayagyi had seen Ledi Sayadaw Phayagyi and Thitcha-taung U Ti-loka Sayadaw, and submitted his findings. The Sayadawgyis had approved his findings as correct and objective, blessing him with *sadhu* thrice. More than that, he was authorized and urged

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to teach his methods to others. Thus, sayagyi and his protégés had taught monks and lay people. It is estimated that there would be around 4000 to 5000 persons who have done much objective work and some of them attained certain levels of wisdom.

Sayagyi's method is now being applied and taught in seven-day retreat sessions, and many have accessed the lights of vipassanā ñāna. This sayagyi is gifted (good parami), and that is the reason why he received the technique. Even then, it took him 14 years to find it. Why did it take him so long? Two reasons: one is that he was unable to get at the true experiential dhamma; the second, that he was unable to find the fast technique. But when he found the true dhamma and the fast technique, he found them so simple and easy. The material objects that he needs to look at are around and about him, which he sees in his daily life. And it is the case of a good horse that happens to have warped hoofs.

The body sensor (*kāya*) and actual contact (*phothabba*) together give rise to body-consciousness (*kāya-viññāna*). The interpretation that the sense receptor (*kāya*) and the impact (*phothabba*) together give rise to perception (*kāyaviññāna*) is generally correct.

But the real impact (*phothabba*) is not interpreted as an entity subject to, and dependent on kamma, citta, utu and āhāra that are internal (*ijjatta*) to body kāya. The interpretation by some people is the *phothabba* due to the rubbing of the wind on the body or that due to the bites of mosquitoes. Without the wind there is no sense of contact, and so, how is it possible to contemplate the three

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lakkhanas. Similarly is with the mosquito bite. The internal phothhabba is due to kamma, citta, utu and āhāra, and so, there is no ceasing of coming-into-being and passing away of rupa-nāma phenomena. Because there is no ceasing of events inside, yogi with samādhi finds the phenomenal world of rupa-nāma every time he/she looks inside his body kāya. Even if closed off in an underground cave, yogi would find this truth all the same.

As he/she finds dhamma that way all the time, yogi can look into the inside of his body kāya continually. But it is not the kind of looking at the element of phothhabba in the ordinary way, but to see the natural process, he/she must look in for insight with complete concentration (samādhi). So, Lord Buddha laid down the three main virtues of noble persons as sila, samādhi and *paññā* (wisdom). The flaw is that people do not think much of samādhi. Even if thoughtful of it, they have no idea about the significance of insightful phothhabba, and so, do not know how to be aware of it. Because of this ignorance, there is no will to care, and on account of that non-care there is no familiarity. But the dhamma inside always tells people with samādhi, "I am here. I am the truth," and shows itself. That calls for correct method of approach and further work.

(One main intension of the author of this book is to make the teaching plain to lay people with little or no meditation experience, and so, much of what he has written is in the style of a narrative, face to face with them.)

Lord Buddha is unmatched in kindness and compassion towards all living things. All that the Lord had

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taught are direct on instances and personalities. It is only because some scholars speculate and go astray that the Buddha's Teachings become hard to understand. This directness is exemplified by an extract from Khandhavagga Samyutta Pali:

*Phenapintupamam rupam, vadanā pubbutthupamā;
Maricikupamā saññā, sankhārā kadalupamā;
Māyupamanca viññānam, desitā dicavapandhunā.*

The meaning: rupa dhamma is like a foam bubble. In watching the body kāya, it is found to boil giving out bubbles, which appear like a mass of foam. The foam is filled with bubbles that appear and perish, sizzling all the time. Like this mass of foam, and also like the oil boiling in the cauldron, overflowing, as has been mentioned before, the rupa elements appear and perish. The way the bubbles and the rupa elements appear and perish are similar. All are alike.

In saying *vedanāpubbutthupamā*, it means that the foam internal to body kāya begins with bubbles. In the process of boiling, at the point of contact between the bubbles and kāya appears phassa. Feeling of that phassa is called vedanā. Vedanā thus fills the whole body, bubbling and sizzling, with even not a needle-point area left, easily coming up and just as easily perishing. There is awareness that some vedanās are bearable, just as there are unbearable ones, and often there is equanimity. All sorts of vedanās appear and perish, repetitively and continually in yogi's awareness. Vedanās and water bubbles are all alike in appearing and perishing, having no hard substance whatsoever, and existing for only the tiniest fraction of a

moment.

In saying *marīcīkupamā saññā*, the ability to take note of rupa and nāma is called saññā. Saññā takes note of every incident of hardness and softness, hotness and coldness, resistance and expansion, and all attributes of rupa and nāma. Every notion of coming into being is immediately followed by perishing. It notes incidents of all vedanās. As all the incidents of the five khandhās are being noted, the notions become jammed, and because they happen so fast that they appear like mirages, as has been shown earlier. The nature of saññā is that it is easy to appear and just as easy to perish. Having no substance, it is not firm, fast appearing and fast vanishing, exactly like the nature of mirages.

In saying *sankhārā kadalupamā*, it is about sankhārakkhandhā that has been discussed earlier. Sankhārakkhandhās appear and disappear in profusion, appearing rapidly and vanishing just as rapidly, having no hard and firm substance.

In saying *māyupmanca viññānam*, all the beings, man, devas and brahmas extant in the 31 realms think they are males, females, personalities, I, he, she and so on. But in fact, they are only made of rupa and nāma. They are thinking of what are not as if they were so and so. For being in human realm now, one thinks one really is a human being. In the next life, one may be a deva; in the next, an animal. Like magic, it seems one becomes one kind of being after another. People do not see the right view of rupa and nāma, and won't believe when told so. How it is rupa and how, nāma, they cannot see as in a real, objective view.

Because they do not have the right view, they take to believing that the humans, devas, brahmas and other beings are the objects of some creation, and cannot let go of their clinging to such views. Only after pursuing the correct meditation methods that such wrong views are discarded, arriving at the realization that the forms are all magic rupas. There are six kinds of viññāna, all of which appear and disappear. This process is fast, never pausing a moment.

I will explain the paragraph, mentioned above, which is an extract from Phenapintupamam Sutta, "Khandhavagga Samyutta Pali" contained in Ledi Sayadaw Phayagyi's "Catusacca Dipani" Series No.3:

Rupam phena pintupamam = there is no substance as "I" to cling to, as all forms are cohesive masses like the chunk of a foam.

Vedanā pubbutthupamā = there is no substance as "I" to cling to, as feelings have no kāya body to exist in, but the foam-like masses boiling and bubbling.

Saññā marīcīkupamā = there is no substance as "I" to cling to, as saññā has no *atta* or kāya body to dwell in, but the mirage-like images coming to view and vanishing rapidly.

Sankhārā phassa cetanā kadalupamā = there is no substance to cling to, as sankhāra elements have no *atta* kāya to dwell in, but something like the banana stem that has no hard core.

Viññānam māyupamam = there is no substance as "I" to cling to, as viññāna has no *atta* kāya to dwell in, but only something like a magic show.

Eti ādiccabandunā = thus Lord Buddha had

uttered.

Although each of these five khadhās have been explained with a simile each, all the five similes fit with each khandhā, and each simile can fit with all of the five khandhās. The same nature of appearing-disappearing applies to all khandhās. The same law of impermanent anicca applies to all; so does that of suffering dukkha, and also that of uncontrollable anatta. The five khandhās are rupa and nāma; rupa and nāma are the twelve āyatanas; the twelve āyatanas are the eighteen elements of dhātu. And the eighteen elements are the khandhās. All these articles of dhamma are subject to the phenomenon of coming into being and vanishing. And the phenomenon is the reality, or the objective truth, of existence (*sankhata paramattha*.)

Sankhata paramattha means in essence that there is only one kind of reality (*eko dhammo*), no matter how many various ways of expositions, each going its own way, of the natural laws there may be. There is only one way of coming-into-being and vanishing. But where there is no coming-into-being and vanishing, there is unique never-changing (*a-sankhata*) entity called Nibbāna. Therefore, in searching for origin of all in the world, there is only one paramattha dhamma, which is sankhata paramattha. Where there is no sankhata paramattha, there is Nibbāna. Sankhata is coming into being and vanishing. Nibbāna is no coming into being. And so, Myo-Mi Kodawgyi composed a verse:

Coming into being is anicca; perishing, anicca;
Coming into being is dukkha; perishing, dukkha;
Coming into being is anatta, perishing, anatta;

Not coming into being is anatta.

Besides that –

1. Coming-into-being and perishing, the flux of change is, without a doubt, *dukkha*;
2. To wish to become once again (*samudaya saccā*), death must come now; that is the cause of dukkha;
3. Coming-into-being, and perishing tires one; wishing not to become once again, is on the true Path to Nibbāna;
4. Not wishing to become once again is the right view; that is *magga saccā*;
5. Not becoming once again is *nirodha saccā*, all the dukkhas being extinct;
6. Note with differentially, these Four Noble Truths (*cat-saccā*);
7. Note and get this verse by heart and recite by word of mouth;
8. Contemplate time and again, and get to know the Right View;
9. Only knowledge of the Right View will liberate one from dukkha;
10. Yogi will pursue this knowledge and technique.

(*The original verse in Myanmar is, for clarity, translated here in prose form. - Translator*)

So in conclusion, the world is composed of the five khandhās, the two rupa and nāma and sankhāra dhammas, and in short, it is only coming-into-being and perishing. If there is no becoming, it is Nibbāna. So, in the whole of the mundane world, there is only coming into being and perishing. And, all that becomes is dukkha only; dukkha is what stays as well as what vanishes, and so, all that become

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and perish are dukkha.

In Samyutta Pali,

*Dukkhamēva hisamboti, dukkham tithati vetica;
Nāñatara dukkhā sambhoti nāñandukkhā
nirujjhati.*

Translation: In fact, there is nothing but dukkha. It is merely dukkha that stays, and that is also what perishes. There is nothing that appears apart from dukkha. And there is nothing that perishes apart from dukkha.

Thus, searching through all sankhāras in this world, there is only the reality of coming into being and perishing of rupa-nāma. There is nothing but the becoming and perishing. Therefore, in the whole world, because there is nothing but dukkha saccā, to explain dukkha saccā, it is in reality nothing but the nature of coming into being and perishing of nāma and rupa. It is as clear as seeing a piece of ruby placed on a palm spread out.

By virtue of the paragraph above, because the objective study of rupa, nāma, sankhāradhamma dhammas shows, in reality, the becoming and perishing nature of all life forms, these phenomena in objective sense are dukkha saccā. According to “*dukkha saccā pariññāya*,” if yogi knows these becoming and perishing phenomena, he/she has, in final analysis, known dukkha saccā. Once dukkha saccā is fully in yogi’s grasp, the moment the knowledge of dukkha saccā arrives, in conformity with the dictum, “knowing, discarding, arriving and watching,” yogi sees, and does not want to pursue, the cause of dukkha, called samudaya; and instantly discards the dukkha samudaya.

As yogi, not wanting any dukkha, does not wish to

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pursue dukkha samudaya, a wish automatically appears, the wish to be in some place that is devoid of all dukkhas, where all the dukkhas come to an end and vanish altogether; that is the wish for the peaceful, blissful state of Nibbāna. That is in accordance with Lord Buddha’s word, “*nirodha saccā sacchikaranatthāya*,” and means a blissful state whereby all dukkhas end and cease to become. During the time yogi is aware of dukkha saccā, it is being discarded, facing the nirodha saccā at the same time; this is like “cutting all ropes in one stroke”.

So, the fact that yogi is aware of dukkha saccā, continually and unceasingly at all times, in effect, works in such a way that the thread of dukkha samudaya is “chopped and cast off with the dagger of *ariya magga*”. This consciousness of *magga saccā*, in effect, prevents dukkhas from recurring. And the contemplation of dukkha saccā is, in accord with Lord Buddha’s word, “*maggasaccā bhāvetabba*,” actually an absorption in *magga saccā*. Therefore, at every moment *dukkha saccā* is realized, *samudaya saccā* is discarded, *magga saccā* is in absorption, and *nirodha saccā* is in sight, and so, the four Noble Truths come gathering in complete union. And yet, for those who have not attained any super-mundane wisdom, this is only some level of high wisdom in close proximity with the first magga-phala ñāna, known as *sotapatti magga*.

Anattalakkhanam vinā buddhuppādāna paññāyati.

Translation: Outside of the time period in which Buddha Sāsanā shines, anatta lakkhana cannot be

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comprehended. and understood, as quoted from “Navaka Nīpāta Anguttara Tikā”. Some say that anicca and dukkha are understood by many. In fact, the anicca and dukkha they know are designated terms (*samuti saccā*), not the knowledge of Truth found by personal experience (*paramattha saccā*).

As it is not in the nature of paramattha saccā, in spite of their seeing anicca and dukkha, they cannot see the true anatta lakkhana. The true anicca and dukkha in real objective sense are khanika anicca and khanika marana dukkha, occurring “unaccountably” fast: rupa occurs mind-wobbling 50 billion times and nāma a trillion times in a blink of the eye. Only those khanika anicca and khanika marana dukkha are the real anatta that cannot be stopped, barred or controlled for the shortest possible length of time, not even by Lord Buddha Himself.

Samuti anicca is the kind of anicca in which one lives now and dies. It is the kind of anicca like something we see now perishes sometime later; something that is here, but disappears in the next month: something that is here this year, but disappears next year, many months and many years later, and even one after another of world cycles (*kappas*). In the longest living brahma realm, there is only one anicca in the time lapse of eighty-four thousand mahā kappas.

Samuti dukkha is the kind of dukkha as is suffering with various maladies and diseases, anxiety, unbearable pains in *niraya* (hellish realm), various disabilities, blindness, and so on. This kind of dukkha is known to all beings in the 31 realms. The real anicca is the kind of anicca not known

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to the human and devas who have not gained some perfection (gift). Once true anicca is known, true anatta is already known.

Therefore, in Navanguttara Pali, Lord Buddha had said:
Anicca saññino meghiya anatta saññā santāti;
Anatta saññino a-samimāna samugghātam pāpunāti;
Dittheva dhamme nibbānam.

Translation: Beloved son, Meghiya, to the person who has perceived anicca saññā, perception of anatta saññā automatically comes. The person who perceived anatta saññā is wise by virtue of personal experience, free of pride and conceit as “I”, and so, has arrived in Nibbāna.

Rupa, nāma sakkāya ditthi and Culasotāpan

Question: Is there any dhamma in the continuity of beings other than rupa and nāma?

Answer : No, there is none other than rupa and nāma.

Question: Why do people talk of man, woman, soul (atta), life (Jiva)?

Answer : They are talking of the worldly terms. In reality, these terms refer to the elements of rupa (bodily forms), not man, woman, atta, jiva, or I, he, she, etc. In literature, it says, “Apart from nāma and rupa, there is no such thing as no man, woman, atta or jiva. Wisdom tells us that there are only the elements of dhātu.

Question: How does sakkāya ditthi cling?

Answer : It clings to the idea that the chunky rupa that is known as a living thing is “my body, my hand, my feet,” and so on. One clings to the idea of the work of nāma as one’s own work, thinking,

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“I see, I hear, I know, I note” and so on.

Question: Why is this clinging to self?

Answer: That is because of the ignorance of the truth about nāma rupa. There is a maxim that says: “Because of the lack of practical knowledge of the true nature of nāma and rupa, people think, “I stand, I sit, I hold, I go, I hear, I look, I know, I see,” and so, take the actions of the elements of dhātu as the doings of “I” with a sense of absolute certainty. That, indeed, is sakkāya ditthi.”

Question: Would those with clinging sakkāya ditthi be free from destination apāya?

Answer: No way. Sakkāya is the fundamental cause for destination apāya.

Question: What is the practical way of life to have the doors of apāya closed?

Answer: Just as people who have spears in their chests, fire on their heads must pull out the spears and extinguish the fire in haste and urgency, so also sakkāya ditthi must be rejected and discarded as a matter of great urgency.

Question: Why is there the urgency?

Answer: You don't know how soon you would die - today, tomorrow - you never know. So, you have to discard this ditthi as soon as possible. There is a maxim that says. “As long as sakkāya ditthi is with you, you are bound for apāya. So, Lord Buddha told us to face the spear in your chest and the fire on your head, not stepping

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backward, but striving forward with valor, ‘sattiyā viya o-matho’. Further support from “Samyutta Pali” says:

*Sattiyā viyā o-matho,
Da-yhamānova matthake,
Sakkāya ditthi pahānāya,
Sato bikkhu paribbaje.*

Like the man whose chest has been pierced with a sharp double-edged spear, and also like the man whose head is on fire, monks who have foreseen the dangers of samsāra would always strive with relentless determination and mind-fullness at vipassanā.

Question: How do we go about discarding sakkāya ditthi?

Answer: If anicca of nāma and rupa is perceived as reality by personal experience, then sakkāya ditthi is discarded. Therefore, one must strive at vipassanā to actually perceive anicca of nāma and rupa.

Question: How do we strive to perceive the real anicca?

Answer: It depends on the adaptability and intuitiveness of the yogi. It is said that if only either nāma-rupa or one group of nāma-rupa are watched with complete concentration and right contemplation that their true intrinsic nature will be experienced and enlightened in yogi's fīāna, without fail.

The clue in the matter of methodology as to how to note and how to contemplate lies in seeing the fact that this chunk of the body is, in fact, a composition of the four basic elements of hardness, cohesiveness, temperature and

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pressure. In final analysis, yogi should apply his/her mental concentration and contemplation to see that the chunk of the body is not a hard, solid thing but a cohesive form of the elements; and that the physical form does not stay whole, undivided or un-collapsible, but like a heap of loose sand, the smallest grains of which appear to stay in shape with spaces in-between them.

Yogi, looking in throughout the body, will see the elemental *calapas* with spaces in between; out of the four elements, *pathavi* is most pronounced, and so it is hard; though hard, it is not really a hard solid thing, but only shows the property of hardness. See that all the attributes of the *pathavi* element is all too clear.

Yogi should contemplate to see that the properties of the element will be seen staying not for long, but perish, never ceasing to appear anew and perish. Contemplate to see that the changing behavior is the natural law of impermanence, *anicca*. Repeat contemplating until the truth is in view. And this is the clue as to how to watch and contemplate on *rupa*.

Question: If forms of the sight objects resist to give way to proper objective views and *vipassanā* contemplation, how do we proceed?

Answer: Use your wisdom for clarity.

Question: How do we use our wisdom for clarity?

Answer: Clear the view as you know how to. For instance, Clear them with intense concentration and remember to watch the broken-down *rupa calapas* (elements) as distinct from chunky body parts. You have to use your intelligence (*nāna*)

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gained by dint of diligent effort so that *anicca* comes into view.

Some clues could be summarized: Seen through the physical eye, it is a composite of elemental *calapas* in solid form as occurs in yogi's thought. But in reality, there is no such solid form. Contemplate to see the reality in the mind's eye (*nāna*) that such is the nature of elemental *dhātu*.

Light or color for example is one of the several kinds of *vunna rupa*, the minor splits of the four Elements of *Dhātu*. Whirling a lighted torch round in the night is seen as a circle of light. Such consecutive sense of a series of moving light (coming into being and perishing) is not seen by *cakkhu viññāna*, but only as a circle of light. In reality, there is no circle of light but a series of *vunna rupa* that comes into being and going out of sight, continually. On contemplation, that is *anicca*.

That is how to watch *rupa* in contemplation of the reality of *anicca*.

Question: By concentrating attention on the six sense receptors, how do we see *anicca* from the six *viññānas*.

Answer: Grasp the six *viññānas* that arise out of the six sense receptors and watch them in full awareness.

Question: How do we grasp and watch the six *viññānas*?

Answer: Grasp the view as you know how to, depending on your wisdom. By paying attention to the six sense receptors, the six *viññānas* will come into view, and that will lead to the realization of *anicca* without fail.

Some clues could be summarized: when the sense

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object is seen, it is not the eye but cakkhu viññāna that sees. Catch the cakkhu viññāna that does not stay permanently, but only for as long as cakkhu and rupa object meet. Put all your diligent effort so as to catch the cakkhu viññāna, and use your wisdom as suits you.

Similarly, try to catch the view of hearing sota viññāna, smell ghāna viññāna, taste jivhā viññāna and body kāya viññāna.

When wholesome mind (*kusala citta*) and unwholesome mind (*a-kusala citta*) appear, know that either kusala or akusala citta does not stay for long, but only short-lived; contemplate that these citta viññānas are dependent on the mind, being impacted by the thought object (dhamma āramana). Put all your diligent effort, your attention concentrating on your heart (*hadaya vatthu*) so as to catch the mano viññāna, and use your wisdom as suits you.

Try to catch the six viññānas by means of the examples shown in the section on nāma. Catch them by all means. You will come to know you have caught them as there will be no confusion or ambiguity but a clarity; clarity is there with you as you no longer cling to the ideas of “I see, I hear”, etc.

If you haven't discarded these sakkāya clinging, know that you haven't caught them. It is not proper yet. And you haven't seen. Do not think it is easy? It is like the fish you cannot reach in some deep clear water.

It is easier to know than see (in wisdom) the nature of rupa and nāma. It is hard to catch them. Try it. You will soon find out. This completes discussion on grasping the

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six viññāmas.

Question: If after seeing anicca, anatta is also seen, how is that sakkāya ditthi is discarded?

Answer : If anicca is seen, anatta can be seen and sakkāya ditthi can be discarded. So, it is said that if anicca is perceived by personal experience, anatta is seen with clarity. This, by contemplation, shows that there is no “I” but only the two elements of nāma and rupa, and thus sakkāya is thrown away to oblivion.

The source is Navinguttara Pali:

*Anicca sañño meghiya anatta saññā santāhi;
Anatta sañño as amimāna samugghātam yāpunāti
Dittheva dhamme nibbānam.*

The verse means: beloved Megheya, to one who has learned anicca, anatta automatically comes and stays. To one who has grasped anatta, there is no māna that clings to “I”. That one enters Nibbāna in the present life.

Question: What do you call a person who avoids sekkāya ditthi on a momentary basis?

Answer : The person is called “proximate stream winner” or *cula sotāpanna*.

Question: If sakkāya ditthi is overcome for good, the doors for apāya realms are closed and the person becomes a truly holy person (*ariya puggala*), one who enters the Path to Nibbāna. It is said: “If ditthi sakkāya is void for a moment, the person is cula sotapanna; if it is void for good, the person is barred from apāya, and enters the Path to Nibbāna and yet journeys through a few life cycles in the good realms like

the proverbial Lady Visākhā.”

“Visuddhi Magga Pālī” illustrates:

*I-mināpana ñānena samannāgato vipassako
Buddhasāsane laddhassāso laddhapatitho
niyatagatiko
Culasotāpannonāma hoti.*

The verse means that the yogi whose wisdom is complete with vipassanā ñāna, who finds comfort and refuge in the teaching of Lord Buddha, and so destined straight to good realms (*sugati*), would go void of the lowly worlds (*apāya*), and is called cula sotāpanna.

Cula sotāpanna means a junior sotāpanna, a would-be sotāpanna, one who is close to being a sotāpanna.

Practicing vipassanā meditation to reach the highest level with unremitting diligence is the way to realize Nibbāna, a short and straight one among various kinds of old roads. And yet, being the work of ñāna, not everybody can work on it with success. Thus, like a monkey who does not know how to crack open a coconut for food, nor does he know the taste, nor have the cleverness, so also some people are foolish and blind to the natural law of dhamma. This kind of people roam the samsāra, not being able to look into the future, or backward into the past, but drunk with fun and pleasure, forgetting and smiling. Many people may be drunk, but one, in pursuit of grace and goodness, should not get mixed up with them, lest one may also get into the malady.

In Sutta Nipāda Atthakathā, “Having found the straight road, you shouldn’t get drunk the way many people do. This is the time opportune, and so, get into the practice

of vipassanā, repeating it over and over, so that it will accompany you in the journey through the samsāra. So, you better take care.”

The practice of vipassanā involves concentration and contemplation of the nature of rupa nāma, with the aim for Nibbāna. Thus, yogi should keep in mind that the door to magga ñāna has been opened by virtue of hard work, and that it is the parami, the noblest of all that one could have ever fulfilled.

Quoting Suttanipāta Atthakathā, Lord Buddha had said,

*“paññavāhi puriso vipassanam veguttavā
ariyamaggadvāram vivarivā amatanibbānam
pavisissati, sāvaka pāramimpi paccekabodimpi sammā
sambodimpi pativijjhissati, amata mahānibbāna
sammāpakesu hidhammesu paññāva sitthā, avasesā
tassaparivārā honti.”*

Translation: Amongst all the aspects of dhamma that can lead to Nibbāna, the vipassanā paññā paraami is the noblest. The rest of all the dhammas are only supportive, associate aspects of vipassanā pārami paññā.

Knowledge accumulated from literature, and that gained from talks and discussion with other persons is called acquired wisdom (*sutamaya ñāna*). Wisdom gained by one’s own effort together with objective contemplation is called experiential wisdom (*cintamaya ñāna*). Wisdom gained from the practice in vipassanā is *cintamaya ñāna*. The contents of the books compiled by Ledi Sayadaw Phayagyi are guidance to the practice of vipassanā for accessing *cintamaya ñāna*. Some people say that the books

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did not use Pali, rendering them superficial. The direct use of Pali is not cintamaya ñāna. It is only sutamaya ñāna. Without cintamaya ñāna, true vipassanā ñāna cannot be accessed. Without true vipassanā ñāna the immortal Nibbāna cannot be reached. It is meant to encourage yogis for inspiration, and to discard sakkāya ditthi, the vanity of man.

Some people do not make effort to know by way of cintamaya ñāna, nor do they want to learn from other people's cintamaya wisdom, conceited as they are. That is a big mistake.

This ends a reminder diction for the wise who may forget.

I member, in heritage of The-phyu Monywa Monastic Order, resident monk of The-phyu Forest monastery that is situated by the side of The-phyu Creek, after which the monastery is named, have now finished writing this book, on the fifth waning day of the month of Tawthalin in the year, 1270.

"I the forest dweller monk of Thephyu Ledi,
Completed this work of vipassanā successfully,
In the midst of Lent, the Month of Tawthalin,
The year of twelve hundred and seventy."

References

The vipassanā section in this book, "A Brief Biography of Anagam Sayagi Saya Thet and His Teaching," is extracted from "A Short-cut to Ditthadhamma Vipassanā Ñānaadassana".

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Dhammacariya U Htay Hlaing had written that "A Short-Cut to Ditthadhamma Vipassanā Ñānaadassana" was used as a manual by Anāgām Saya Thet-gyi.

Pali teacher U Yu Myanig and associates mentioned this book as written by Anāgām Saya Sayagi himself.

Vipassanā Paragu Sayagi, in his list of vipassanā treatises, placed this treatise, "A Short-Cut to Ditthadhamma Vipassanā Ñānaadassana" at the top of the list.

Glossary

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Suggested Pronunciations

A or a should be pronounced as for Ah or ah as in Buddha, *lobha*, *dosa*, *alobha*, *adosa* in Pali.

If followed by a double consonant, it should be pronounced as for ut- as in utter, like in *atta*, *anatta*.

Ā or ā should be pronounced as in par, like *avijjā*, *saddhā*, *Nibbāna*.

C or c should be pronounced as for certain, like *saccā*, *caṅka*, *anicca*.

E should be pronounced as for ay as in way, like *ekaggatā*, *bante*.

I has the sound of English vowel 'a' as for date, mate, as in *dittha*, *adhittāna*, *viññāna*

J is pronounced normal, but in Burmese equivalence of z, as in *vijjā*, *jhāna*

N or n has the normal sound.

Ñ or ñ should be pronounced as for ny, like canyon, as in *ñāna*, *viññāna*.

O has the sound of aw as for saw, as in *namotassa*, *bhavo*. *Tejo*.

Th has the sound of 't' as for normal English, Myanmar sound 'ht-' as in *ditthi*, *adhitthāna*.

S is pronounced normal, in Burmese equivalent of tha, as in *sati*, *namotassa*.

Note: These are only a few selected, simplified, indications enough for the purpose of this book.

Glossary

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Abhiññā(a) – supernormal knowledge or powers

Ājivatthamaka sila (P) – abstention from killing, stealing, wrongful sex, lying, rough language, slandering, idle talk, and wrongful livelihood (eight in number)

Akusala (P) – unwholesome deeds (mental, verbal and bodily acts)

Akyaw (M) – fried snacks of vegetables, peas, potatoes, rice, etc.

Anāgām(i) (P) - the 3rd highest stage of spiritual development before *arahanta*, the “non-returner”

Ānāpāna samādhi (P) – Work of mind concentration by focusing awareness on the passing (rush) of the streams of in-breath and out-breath at the tip of the nose

Anatta (P) – non-self, non-ego, impersonality, one of the three characteristics or *lakkhanas*

Anicca (P) – impermanence, ever-changing, one of the three characteristics or *lakkhanas*

Anuloma ñāna (P) – the 13th and highest level of *vipassanā ñāna* (ñāna means wisdom)

Anussati (P) – recollection, contemplation, meditation

Apāya (P) – the four abodes of the under world

Āpo (P) – water, the property cohesion

Arahanta (P) – holy man, the highest stage of *ariya*, having attained the now-and-here Nibbāna

Āramana (P) – object, sense objects of sight, sound, smell, taste, touch or thought

Āramanika (P) – the substance that receives the impression of object, *phoṭṭhabba* (please edit)

Ariya (P) – holy person, one who has attained a level of *magga-phala*

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Ashin phaya, Ashin phara (M) – formal reverent address to the Buddha and the venerable monks
A-saṅṅassa bhumi (P) – the highest Brahma realm for holy men; once there, the traveler goes nowhere, up or down, but to enter Nibbāna
Asubha (P) – loathsomeness, foulness
Bhāvanā (P) – work of mental development, meditation
Bhumi (P) – realm, land, country
Bikkhus (P) – monks, ordained members of the Buddhist Order
Bing(a) (P) – loss in sight, disappearance
Brahma (P) – beings of highest purity, residents of the twenty realms of Brahma
Dagar (M) – honorific address to devotees by monks
Dhamma (P) – the natural Law of all phenomena, corporeal or mental, all tenets of the Teaching of the Buddha
Dhātu (P) – element, ultimate constituents of a whole; the elements of *pathavi, tejo, āpo, vāyo*
Ditthi (P) – view, belief, speculative opinion
Dosa (P) – hatred, anger
Ekaggatā (P) – complete concentration, one of the five parts to *jhāna* (absorption)
Ijjhattarupa-nāma (P) – in-born material body and mind, matter and mind sought inward, insightful understanding of matter and mind internal to one's own body kāya
Jhān(a)- abhiññān(a) (P) – Short for *jhāna-abiññāna*, 4 levels of purity in absorption and supernormal knowledge (supernormal power)
Jardu (H) – Waste, reject
Kalapas (P) – the infinitesimally smallest material units

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definable and attached with the Four
Kamma (P) – actions, deeds in three ways – verbal, bodily and mental commitments
Kamma, citta, utu, ahāra (P) – past and current deeds, the mind, seasons (body heat, etc.), and nutriment
Kammattān(a) (P) – meditation, *samatha* and *vipassanā* meditation
Kankhāvitāraṇa visuddhi (P) – purification by overcoming doubt
Kasina (P) – a samatha method of mental concentration, by way of an external object
Kāya (P) – the material body of beings
Kāyanca (P) – on account of the body kāya
Khanika - or *khana* (short form), an infinitesimally short duration of time
Khandhā āyatana (P) – the five groups of nāma-rupa (or existence), and the six groups of sense receptors (*dvāras*)
Kusala (P) – wholesome activity
Kyat (M) – a unit of Myanmar currency
Kay-si (M) – a decorated triangle gong, made of brass, struck with a wooden hammer
Lakkhanā (P) – Characteristics, signs
Lobha (P) – greed, passion, desire
Loka (P) – world, the three spheres of existence: the sensuous world (*kamma-loka*), the fine material world (*rupa-world*), the immaterial world (*a-rupa-world*)
Magga and phala ñāna (P) – the sighting and fruition of the Ultimate Wisdom of Nibbāna (4 levels each)
Magginga (P) – The Path – *magginga, magga(-phala)*

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ñāna (4 levels, starting with *sotapana*)
Maggā vithi citta (P) – consciousness of *maggā ñāna* or (here and now) *Nibbāna*
Mahāvijī niraya (P) – the deepest realm of hellish existence
Mettā (P) – loving kindness, love or good will for all living beings without passion or attachment
Moha (P) – delusion, ignorance of the Truth
Nāma (P) – the mind, mentality, name
Ñāna (P) – knowledge, comprehension, intelligence, insightful wisdom
Nibbāna (P) – Extinction of all defilements, freedom from desire and clinging
Nimitta (P) – mark, sign, image, object
Niraya (P) – the downward path, the infernal world, hell
Pali, also *Māgada* (P) – an ancient language of North-central India (now extinct), believed to be common and widely used, the original language in which the Buddha preached
Paññā (P) – understanding, knowledge, wisdom, insightful knowledge
Paramattha (P) – the Truth in the ultimate sense, the Objective Truths of *citta*, *setasiika*, *rupa* and *Nibbāna*
Parami (P) – perfection, the Ten Qualities that lead to the Buddhahood: *dāna-parami* (Giving), *silā-p* (Morality), *nekkhamma-p* (Renunciation), *paññā-p* (Wisdom), *viriyā-p* (Energy), *khanti-p* (Forbearance), *saccā-p* (Truthfulness), *adhithāna-p* (Resolution), *mettā-p* (Loving Kindness), *upekkhā-p* (Equanimity)
Pariyatti (P) - Scriptural learning

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Patipatti mission (P) – propagation of the actual practice of the Buddha's teaching, particularly the vipassanā meditation as the only way for *Nibbāna*
Patibhāga nimitta (P) – signs seen as index to a state of mind concentration
Patisambhidā (P) – analytical knowledge or discrimination of Meaning, of the Law (dhamma), of Language, and of Ready Wit
Pātimokkha samvara sila (P) – morality consisting of restraints with regard to the Disciplinary Code of Conduct as has been laid down by the Buddha (*vinaya pitaka*)
Patipatti mission (P) – propagation of the actual practice of the Buddha's teaching, particularly the vipassanā meditation as the only way for *Nibbāna*
Phala (P) – fruition, result; Path Result in Fruition of magga-ñāna
Phassa (P) – sense impression, sense of contact between object and sense receptor (sensor)
Phassa, vedanā, tejo, vāyo, udayavaya, banga (P) – the sense impression of contact (object and sense receptor), sensation, heat, air, becoming/vanishing of *rupa-nāma*, sense of non-becoming, respectively
Phaya (M) – a revering address to monks, similar to "sir" but intended most for veneration
Phoat, petas, tissays (M) – ghost-like beings
Phothabba (P) – the coming into contact of sense object and sense receptor
Pice (H, M) – one-sixty fourth (1/64) of a Indian rupee or that of Myanmar kyat
Piti (P) – rapture, joy

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Rupa (P) – matter, corporeality
Sagadāgām(i) (P) – the second of the four stages of attainment in holiness on the Path
Sādhu (P) - saying “well done! or, well said!”
Sakkāya (P) – personality, self-centeredness
Samādhi sāsana (P) – concentration, the mental state of being firmly fixed, the pursuit of *samatha*
Samatha-vipassanā (P) – mind concentration and by insight meditation
Samattha (P) – practical methods of mind concentration
Samsāra (P) – round of rebirth, perpetual wandering
Sāsana (P) - mission of propagating Buddhist Teaching
Satipathāna (P) – the four foundations of mindfulness
Satipathāna (P) – the four foundations of mindfulness
Saya (M) – teacher, trainer, mentor
Sotāpana, sagadāgāmi, anāgāmi (P) – the lower three levels of attainment on the Path
Sukhā (P) – pleasure, happiness, enjoyment
Taung-whay (M) – walking stick made of cured bamboo, cane of turned hardwood
Tehtat (M) – a type of poem, sung in melodious, repeated waves of rhymes
Tejo (P) – fire, the property of heat and cold
Udaybbaya ñāna (P) – the fourth level *vipassana ñāna* (begins to see the three characteristics)
Uggaha nimitta (P) – A second degree *nimitta* in which signs are clearly “seen” but less stable than those with the more stable *patibhāga nimitta* at which point *samattha* may be stopped and switched over to *vipassanā*
Upād(a), thi, bang(a) (P) – infinitesimally short durations

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of time, in which *rupa* and *nāma* appear, stay and disappear - *thi* is stay, not apparent, being shorter-lived than *upāda* and *banga*
Vāyo (P) – air, the property of pneumatic action, expansion and contraction
Vicāra (P) – discursive thinking, staying stage of thought consequent to *vitakka* (catching)
Vicikicchā (P) – skeptical doubt
Viññān(a) (P) - consciousness
Visuddhi magga (P) – the path to Freedom by purification
Vipassanā (P) – insight meditation, method of inward, as against exterior, search for the Four Noble Truths – the Four Noble Truths: *dukkhasaccā, samudhaya saccā, nirodha saccā, magga saccā*
Vitakka (P) – thought conception, “catching of sense impression” before *vicāra* pulls it up for analysis
Wallah (H) – worker, man
Wizza, zawji, tapathi (M) – men said to have some supernatural powers
Yogi (P, M) – practitioner of meditation

Abbreviations: P for Pali, M for Myanmar, H for Hindi

(Footnotes)

¹ *Kyay-si* (M) - a decorated triangular gong, made of

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brass, struck with a wooden hammer

² *Dagar* (Myan) – honorific address to devotees by monks

³ *Samatha-vipassanā* (P) – mind concentration and by insight meditation

⁴ *Satipathāna* (P) – the four foundations of mindfulness

⁵ *Samādhi sāsana* (P) – concentration, the mental state of being firmly fixed, the pursuit of samatha

⁶ *Paññā sāsana* (P) – achievement of wisdom and a mission of propagating insight meditation

⁷ *Sādhu, sādhu* (P) - well done, well done (well said, well said)!

⁸ *Phaya* (Myan) – a revering address to monks, similar to “sir” but intended most for veneration

⁹ *Mettā* (P) – loving kindness

¹⁰ *Ānāpāna samādhi* (P) – Work of mind concentration by focusing awareness on the passing (rush) of the streams of in-breath and out-breath at the tip of the nose

¹¹ *Kāya* (P) – the material body

¹² *Phassa, vedanā, tejo, vāyo, udayavaya, binga* (P) – the making of contact (object and sense receptor), sensation, heat, air, becoming/vanishing of rupa-nāma, sense of non-becoming, respectively

¹³ *Samatha* (P) – the practice of metal concentration, 40 methods including *ānpāna, mettā* and *kasina*

¹⁴ *Vipassanā* (P) – insight meditation, method of inward, as against exterior, search for the Four Noble Truths

¹⁵ *Kasina* (P) – a samatha method of mental concentration, by way of an external object

¹⁶ *Dhamma* (P) – the natural Law of all phenomena, corporeal or mental, all tenets of the Teaching of the

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Buddha

¹⁷ *Phaya* (P,M) – a revering address to monks in Myanmar

¹⁸ *Taung-whay* (M) – walking stick made of bamboo, cane or turned hardwood

¹⁹ *Bikkhus* (P) – monks, ordained members of the Buddhist Order

²⁰ *Tehtat* (M) – a type of poem, sung in melodious, repeated waves of rhymes

²¹ *Mahāviji niraya* (P) – the deepest realm of hellish existence

²² *Patipatti* mission (P) – propagation of the actual practice of the Buddha’s teaching, particularly the vipassanā meditation as the only way for *Nibbāna*

²³ *Pariyatti* (P) - Scriptural learning

²⁴ *Paramattha* (P) – the Truth in the ultimate sense, the Objective Truths of *citta, setasiika, rupa* and *Nibbāna*

²⁵ *Magga and phla ñāna* (P) - the sighting and fruition the Ultimate Wisdom of *Nibbāna* (4 levels each)

²⁶ The Path – magginga, magga(-phala) ñāna (4 levels, starting with *sotapana*)

²⁷ *Sotāpana, sagadāgāmi, anāgāmi* (P) – the lower three levels of attainment on the Path

²⁸ *Apāya* (P) – the four abodes of the under world

²⁹ *Ariya* (P) – holy person, one who has attained a level of magga-phala

³⁰ *Kamma* (P) – actions, deeds in three ways – verbal, bodily and mental

³¹ *Kusala* (P) – wholesome activity

³² *Samsāra* (P) – round of rebirth, perpetual wandering

³³ *kalappas* (P) – groups of the smallest unit definable

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with the Four Elements of pathavi, tejo, āpo, vāyo

³⁴ “died at ease and in peace” – Traditional statement is “to die of 96 ailments,” not specific as to cause of death. *Dhammacariya U Htay Hlaing* described Sayāgyi’s attainment on the Path as *Anāgāmi*. (Inserted by translator)

³⁵ *Ājivatthamaka sila* (P) – abstention from killing, stealing, wrongful sex, lying, rough language, slandering, idle talk, and wrongful livelihood (eight in number)

³⁶ *Pātimokkha samvara sila* (P) – morality consisting of restraints with regard to the Disciplinary Code of Conduct as has been laid down by the Buddha (*vinaya pitaka*)

³⁷ Permission for *kammathān* – an etiquette, Buddha being sole authority of the prescribed meditation methods

³⁸ *Ashin phaya, Ashin phara* (M) – formal reverent address to the Buddha and the venerable monks

³⁹ *Khandhā āyawana* (P) – the five groups of *nāma-rupa* (or existence), and the six groups of sense receptors (*dvāras*)

⁴⁰ The Three Gems are Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha; the Five Great Mentors, the Three Gems plus Parents and Teachers.

⁴¹ *Wizzas, zawjis, tapathis* (M) – men said to have some supernatural powers

⁴² *Phoat, petas, tissays* (M) – ghost-like beings

⁴³ *Jhān- abhiññān* (P) – Short for *jhāna-abhiññāna*, 4 levels of purity in absorption and supernormal knowledge (supernormal power)

⁴⁴ *Uggaha nimitta* (P) – A second degree *nimitta* in which signs are clearly “seen” but less stable than those with the more stable *patibhāganimitta* at which point *samattha*

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may be stopped and switched over to *vipassanā*.

⁴⁵ Pali text: “*kāyañca phuddabēca paticcakāya viññānau pajjati*.”

⁴⁶ *kalāpas* (P) – the infinitesimally small material units definable with the Four Elements of pathavi, tejo, āpo, āyo

⁴⁷ *Kamma, citta, utu, ahāra* (P) – past and current deeds, the mind, seasons (body heat, etc.), and food

⁴⁸ *A-ssaññassa bhumi* (P) – once there, the traveler goes nowhere, up or down, but to enter *nibbāna*.

⁴⁹ *Ijjhattarupa-nāma* (P) – in-born material body and mind, matter and mind sought inward, insightful understanding of matter and mind internal to one’s own body *kāya*

⁵⁰ *Upād(a), thi, bang(a)* (P) – infinitesimally short durations of time, in which *rupa* and *nāma* appear, stay and disappear. *Thi* or stay, although present, is not apparent.

⁵¹ *Udaybbayañāna* (P) – the fourth level *vipassanañāna* (begins to see the three characteristics)

⁵² *Anulomañāna* (P) – the 13th and highest level *vipassanañāna* (*ñāna* means wisdom)

⁵³ *Kankhāvitarana visuddhi* (P) – purification by overcoming doubt

⁵⁴ *Visuddhi magga* (P) – the path to Freedom by purification

⁵⁵ *Magga vithi citta* (P) – consciousness of *magga* or (here and now) *Nibbāna*.