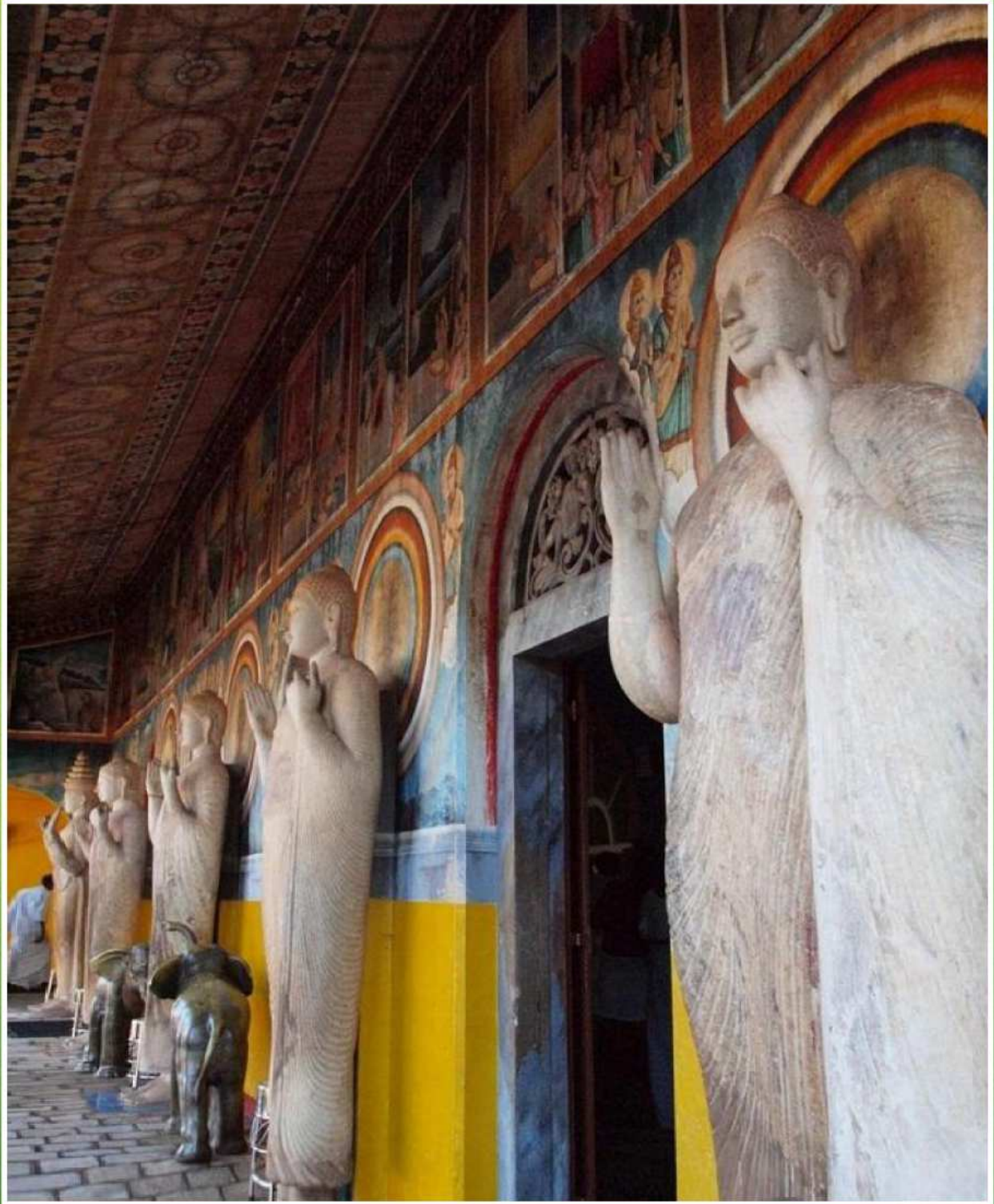


Freedom Within

*Liberation teachings on the Satipatthāna
meditation practice*



Venerable Sayadaw U Pandita

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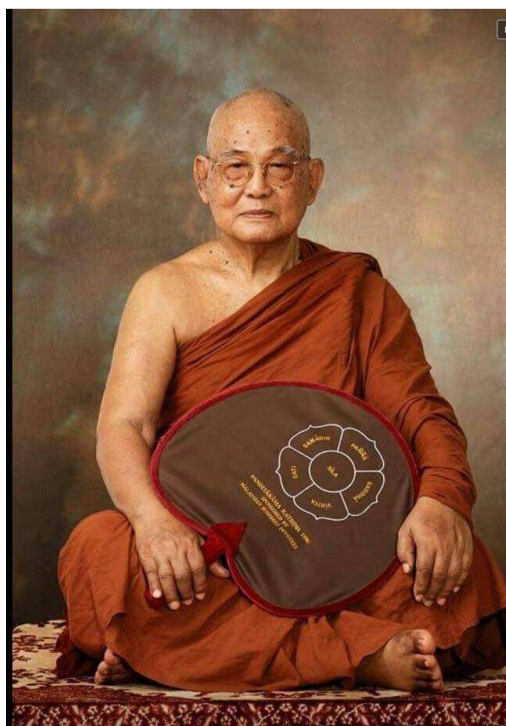
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Venerable Sayadaw U Pandita
29 July 1921 to 16 April 2016

“Here, a bhikkhu lives in dependence on the teacher or on a certain fellow monk in the position of a teacher, toward whom he has set up a keen sense of moral shame and moral dread, affection and reverence. This is the first cause and condition that leads to obtaining the wisdom fundamental to the spiritual life when it has not been obtained and to its increase, maturation, and fulfillment by development after it has been obtained”.

-The Buddha

Paññā Sutta, (AN. 8.2)

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About the Author



Sayadaw U Pandita is a revered meditation master of the *Theravada* Buddhist tradition.

He entered the Mahabodhi monastery in a remote village in Burma at the age of seven and progressed to become renowned as one of the foremost meditation masters in the tradition of the late Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw, famed for reviving and developing a rigorous meditation technique found in ancient texts.

Sayadaw U Pandita taught from direct experiential knowledge, gained through many years of dedicated practice and monastic training. His detailed study of the *suttas* is considered one of the leading authorities in the *Satipatthāna* practice as taught by Mahsi Sayadaw.

Since 1951, Sayadaw U Pandita served as spiritual adviser to retreat centers, monasteries and Buddhist organizations throughout the world and led many meditation retreats.

Formerly the head (abbot) of Mahasi Sasana Yeiktha, in 1990, he became Ovadacariya Sayadaw (head preceptor) of Panditarama Sasana Yeiktha in Yangon, Myanmar and continued to lead the center and the many branch monasteries, until his passing away at the age of 94 on 16 April 2016.

Transcriber's Foreword

To be in the midst of noble warriors steeped in the *satipatthāna* meditation practice is a blessing, to learn from them, a rare occurrence, and to realize their wisdom, an aspiration.

Freedom Within was completed in the wake of Most Venerable Sayadaw U Pandita's passing away on 16 April 2016.

Although his passing away is an incalculable loss, he continues in our midst, teaching us, guiding us in the Buddha's way through the valuable utterances of *Dhamma*, which he has shared on many occasions.

Work on this publication commenced as a mark of appreciation and gratitude to the Venerable Sayadaw, to venerate his worth as one of the most insightful meditation masters of our time, his generosity with time and tireless service.

It is now a poignant tribute, a solemn mark of respect, to recollect and venerate the meditation master, to continue to spread his teachings, so that the shimmer of his presence remains alight through the *Dhamma* he loved and taught so passionately.

All things of veneration and fortitude, such that one holds them to one's heart, as pillars of strength, bears semblance of instability and change, a testament to a common provenance of pain and suffering as one directly witnesses how all formations continue in their true nature, to only arise, persist and then, pass away.

The great teachers of our time, their utterances, their presence and their wisdom, serve as a spiritual backbone in our quest for liberation. When faced with obstacles – in those moments of distress, they bolster our commitment to the practice, inspiring us to aspire to a realization that will unfold if only we put forth effort and continue our search with urgency and immediacy, directly meeting all presently arising objects, completely and without delay, in each moment. This, no doubt, was Venerable Sayadaw U Pandita's clear message.

It is hoped that the insightful and practical teachings contained in this publication are a helpful guide to those dedicated to the Buddha's way, the direction of travel where all things uncreated and unbound are free of cessation.

18 April 2016

Editor's Foreword

Translations from Burmese into English always present a challenge, especially when communicating *Dhamma*. In these talks Sayadaw U Pandita is very clear in his explanation of *Satipatthāna* meditation practice, but we sometimes found the need to re-phrase some of the concepts which may be clear in Burmese, but not in English. There are many subtleties that if not presented properly, can lead to a misunderstanding. In our attempt to avoid some of these problems and maintain clarity, we found it necessary to rephrase some of the translations.

For ease and continuity, we list the English translated name first followed by the *Pāli* in parenthesis.

Acknowledgments

This gift of *Dhamma dāna* is a collective effort.

The teachings contained in this publication are a selection of transcribed talks given by Venerable Sayadaw U Pandita at the Tathagatha Meditation center, in San Jose, California over a number of years.

We are grateful to Tathagatha Meditation Center for making the talks available online and to Daw Caru and Sayalay Ma Vajira for their clear translation of the Venerable Sayadaw's insightful wisdom.

The work of the two editors, Kenneth Morris and Barbara Janus of the Saddhamma Foundation, USA, their suggestions, amendments and invaluable editorial corrections have not only improved readability and accuracy, but have also made the completion of this publication possible. We are further grateful to Saddhamma Foundation Board member, David Uttal for his invaluable editing comments.

Our transcriber, resident in Melbourne, Australia, remains anonymous. Her dedication in steadfastly transcribing the collection of talks and undertaking the first round of editing has laid a useful foundation for finalizing this compilation, ensuring that the talks were recorded accurately, while preserving the flow of the Venerable Sayadaw's teaching.

*Ekāyano ayaṃ, bhikkhave, maggo sattānaṃ visuddhiyā, sokaparidevānaṃ samat-
ikkamāya, dukkhadomanassānaṃ atthaṅgamāya, ñāyassa adhigamāya, nibbānassa
sacchikiriyāya, yadidaṃ cattāro satipaṭṭhānā.*

This is the one and only way, monks, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the extinguishing of suffering and grief, for walking on the path of truth, for the realisation of *nibbāna*: that is to say, the fourfold establishing of awareness

Katame cattāro? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno³ satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ. Vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ. Cितte cittānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ. Dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ.

Which four? Here, monks, a monk dwells ardent with awareness and constant thorough understanding of impermanence, observing body in body, having removed craving and aversion towards the world [of mind and matter]; he dwells ardent with awareness and constant thorough understanding of impermanence, observing sensations in sensations, having removed craving and aversion towards the world [of mind and matter]; he dwells ardent with awareness and constant thorough understanding of impermanence, observing mind in mind, having removed craving and aversion towards the world [of mind and matter]; he dwells ardent with awareness and constant thorough understanding of impermanence, observing mental contents in mental contents, having removed craving and aversion towards the world [of mind and matter].

- *The Buddha*

Maha Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (DN. 22)

Chapter 1

Benefits of the *Satipatthāna* Practice

The Buddha enumerates seven benefits to be gained by undertaking the *satipatthāna* practice.

The practice of *satipatthāna* leads to the purification of mind; overcoming sorrow and lamentation; a complete destruction of physical pain and mental distress; entering the right path and the attainment of liberation (*nibbāna*).

Foremost amongst these benefits is purification of the mind.

You must know the benefits of the *satipatthāna* practice before you commence the practice.

If you are already in the habit of *satipatthāna* meditation, knowing these benefits would serve as an encouragement to practice with faith, confidence and diligent effort.

Purification of the mind

The Buddha enumerates the *satipatthāna* practice as the only way to purify the mind (*sattānam visuddhiyā*).

Practicing diligently, mindfulness (*sati*) becomes continuous from one moment to the next and there is no room for defilements to arise in the stream of consciousness. If there are gaps in one's mindfulness on the primary object, ignorance, lust and aversion may take root. So it is necessary that *yogis* exert effort by directing the noting mind to the primary object, so that the mind's attention reaches the object, without delay.

Noting with aim and effort, mindfulness develops. All presently arising objects: the rising and the falling of the abdomen, itching sensations, hardness, softness, roughness, cohesion, fluidity, heat, warmth, coolness, lightness, stiffness, tension and movement, as well as seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, bending, turning, stretching, opening and closing of the eyes, blinking of the lashes and so forth, must be noted with aim and effort, from one moment to the next.

Protections from hindrances

When the noting mind falls calm and collected on the object, there is no restlessness (*udacca*) the mind is not distracted - as there isn't a gap between the noting mind and the object. The mind is free from worry (*kukucca*), lust or sensual pleasure (*kamacchanda*), aversion (*vyāpada*), doubt (*vicikicca*) or delusion (*moha*) as the mind is aligned with the presently arising object.

Noting presently arising objects diligently, the mind is free from laziness. Aiming and directing the mind to the object is *vitakka*. The opposite is sloth and torpor (*tīna middha*). When *vitakka* is present, the mind is open and fresh, there is no room for unwholesome thoughts to arise.

Protection from defilements

Momentary concentration (*kanika samādhi*) develops with moment to moment awareness, and the mind remains calm and collected from one moment to the next.

If there is an absence of mindfulness, defilements may arise and the mind can become agitated, distracted or scattered. With the presence of concentration, the mind is calm, collected, and unified, and defilements are kept at bay.

With mindfulness, there is protection (*ārakkhana*) from defilements, an absence of unwholesome mental states. Each moment of mindfulness guards against lust (*rāga*), aversion (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). It may not be possible to purify the mind completely, and fully at once, but with moment to moment mindfulness, the mind remains pure and cleansed of defilements.

Both forms of impurities - the ordinary form of impurity (momentary anger) and the stream form of impurity (for example, continuing and uncontrolled anger) can be overcome by the practice of *satipatthāna*.

Factors to attain supra-mundane knowledge

Having the opportunity to meet with a virtuous friend (*kalyāna mitta*), one needs to be endowed with five factors to attain supra-mundane knowledge.

Firstly, one must have faith and confidence in the Buddha, confidence in the *Dhamma* and the *satipatthāna* practice. Secondly, one must be in sound health, be able to eat normally, have good digestion, and be able to sleep. Thirdly, one must be honest, not hide one's weakness or shortcomings in conduct and in the practice, be honest with pitfalls when reporting one's meditation to the teacher, not to pretend success when one hasn't

realized any benefits or progressed. The fourth factor is diligent practice, to exert diligent effort towards developing mindfulness to an outstanding and steadfast quality. Finally, one must be endowed with knowledge into the arising and passing away of objects.

If you are endowed with these qualities, you can attain supra-mundane knowledge in this very life.

What is satipatthāna?

The term, *satipatthāna* is generally rendered as the four foundations of mindfulness. Its meaning can be revealed by compartmentalizing the word into its constituent parts and examining the elements, both individually and in combination.

Sati, as a mental factor signifies "presence of the mind, attention to the present, awareness, wakefulness and heedfulness."

Patthāna or *upatāna* means "close, firm and steadfast establishment, application," that mindfulness is firmly established on the object. In the term, *patthāna*, "pa" means, outstanding. It is not just ordinary mindfulness, but of an outstanding quality - it must be intensive and persistent; when the object arises, mindfulness rushes to the object in great momentum, with courage and immediate awareness of the object. This must be done without hesitation, thinking, reflection or analyzing.

There must be a firm grasping or seizing of the object and the noting and observing mind must cover the object of observation completely, spreading over the entire object, grasping it in its entirety. The object should be noted from the beginning, through its middle, to its end.

In practice, this means to continuously note and observe the arising objects; one moment of mindfulness should be connected to the next, moment to moment. The noting and observing, or mindfulness of the objects, should not have gaps, but be continuous. Immediately, when the object arises, with effort and aim, the mind's observing power must be directed to the object.

Knowing the benefits of the *satipatthāna* practice, exerting the three forms of effort (initial, sustained and fulfilling application of ardent (*ātāpi*) effort, one is able to develop strong and steadfast mindfulness and concentration, to develop knowledge into mind (*nāma*) and matter (*rūpa*) and progress in insight knowledge, stage by stage, towards enlightenment.

Chapter 2

Observing power of *Satipatthāna*

The Buddha not only made reference to *sati*, but also to *satipatthāna*.

Anu is repeated, and *passanā* is observation.

Anupassanā is repeatedly and closely observing the four fields of observation, the presently arising body (*kāya*), feeling (*vedanā*), mind (*citta*) and mind objects (*dhammas*), so that the mind becomes pure.

In the same way that it is difficult to calculate the number of steps involved in climbing a mountain, it is not possible to specify the number of times one must observe in this manner; what is required is continued striving in the practice, to keep on going.

One who knows the benefits of the *satipatthāna* practice will make the requisite effort to repeatedly observe the object, so that *sati* develops. The aim of the practice is purification of the mind, to weaken mental defilements (*kilesa*), to block their arising and to develop wholesome mind states.

When noting is continuous, even if one sees an attractive object, the mind will quickly return to the present object, thus, the distraction is only fleeting. This is the power of *satipatthāna*.

An impure mind generates coarse behavior. One becomes gentle and lovable, when the mind is pure. Keen on developing a wholesome and pure mind, one automatically becomes respectful towards the practice, developing moral shame and moral dread towards the arising of *kilesa*.

The four fields of observation

Yogis must observe the four fields of observation, body (*kāya*), feeling (*vedanā*), mind (*citta*) and mind objects (*dhammas*) repeatedly, closely, with penetrative discernment.

Observe bodily action and deportment, carefully and closely, becoming aware of sitting, standing up from the sitting posture, the fastening and unfastening of clothes, or washing the body, becoming aware of all activities, attending to them slowly.

In the rising and falling of the abdomen, “rising” is a label, although the experience is one of stiffness, tension, contraction, hardness, coarseness, softness, or the sense of being collected. These experiences cannot be separated. Although the air element (*vāyo*

dhātu) is most prominent, also present are: hardness and softness in the earth element (*pathavi dhātu*), temperature in the heat element (*thejo dhātu*) and the quality of connectedness in the water element (*āpo dhātu*), as well as color, smell, taste and nutriment. These are the components of physicality.

Close and repeated observation of bodily activities - sitting, standing, bending, stretching, moving and lying down is *kāyānupassanā*. In “rising,” the act of rising is *kāya* and observing it is *kāyānupassanā*.

Observing the stiffness, heat, contraction, hardness or coarseness, the character of the four elements is also *kāyānupassanā*. The physical acts of the four postures are *kāya* and their observation is *kāyānupassanā*.

Rising is due to a cause - breathing in, and falling is due to a cause - exhaling. One takes an in-breath because one intends to do so, there is an intention to inhale; and one intends to exhale, so falling of the abdomen occurs, as one breathes out.

In “rising,” there are many units of stiffness and tension and repeated observation of this is *anupassanā*. Rising comprises many acts of rising, occurring one after another. It is like observing a line of ants crawling across the road. From afar, the line appears static, but looking closer, there is vibration, and moving even closer, the line is actually individual ants, one ant following another.

The concept of “rising” disappears, when the individual risings, or the stiffness or tension of “rising” becomes apparent. Continuous noting is essential for this observation, so that the mind sticks to every act of rising and falling, repeatedly - and in time, comes to see its true nature.

Repeated observation of presently arising feelings, pleasant, unpleasant and neutral is *vedanānupassanā*. Observing the mind and the mind connected with greed or hatred, or the scattered mind is *cittānupassanā*. Repeatedly observing mind objects, sensual desire, doubt, resentment or aversion, or restlessness is *dhammānupassanā*.

Essentially, the whole body and the mind are a field of our observation, from one moment to the next.

Quality of Anupassanā

Mere glancing at an object, to see it fleetingly is not *anupassanā*. What is required is repeated (close) observation or focus on the object.

The essence of *anupassanā* is described by the Buddha through the words *ātāpi, sampajañño* and *satimā* – developing the power of effort to repeatedly direct the mind onto the

presently arising objects, so that we come to know the true nature of phenomena, clearly, distinctly and completely. Without ardent effort (*ātāpa viriya*), *sati* won't develop and failing to develop collectedness of mind, knowledge will not arise.

Usually, if an object cannot be seen with the naked eye, we require the assistance of a magnifying glass, or if the object is at a distance, a telescopic view might assist. Here, a panoramic view of presently arising objects is possible with repeated observation, so when "rising" occurs, with close observation, we see the stiffness, tension, vibration, contraction and so on.

Anupassanā requires ardent and brisk effort, not observing in a casual, relaxed or sluggish manner. Effort needs to be made to direct the mind's attention to the object, so that *sati* sticks to the rising and falling, immediately, without delay. It is not enough that we note a single rising or a single falling – repeated noting is required. It is not to think or reflect on the object, what's going to arise or why it arises, but to directly and clearly pay attention to the rising and falling process.

When energy is repeatedly applied, it develops as a power, becoming durable and strong and when mental energy gains momentum, one's consciousness becomes free of unwholesome *dhammas*; laziness is overcome and the mind is unconnected to greed (*lobha*), anger (*dosa*), so there is control over seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and so on.

With applied effort to note every rising and falling, the moments of effort are connected, one after another. Purity of mind is developed, and each time ardent effort is applied, *sati* sticks to the rising and the falling, there is protection from *kilesa*, as *sati* blocks the arising of *kilesa*, so that they don't precipitate in the mind.

Continued effort ensures that *sati* sticks to the rising and falling, so the mind falls collected on the object, not missing it, or wandering after desire or resentment. The mind falling collected on the object is concentration (*samādhi*) – with continuous noting, momentary concentration, *khanika samādhi* develops over each rising and falling and one is free of sensual desire in wanting to see good things, hear pleasant sounds or experience good taste, plus there is no feeling of resentment, doubt or restlessness in the mind.

With every rising, the mind is directed to observing it and falls on the quality of stiffness, or tension, to thoroughly know its quality. There is no misperception in the observation, one knows correctly, directly and clearly. By applying effort repeatedly, *sati* continues to stick to the object, falling calm and collected, bringing about knowing the nature of arising objects. This is clear comprehension, *sampajañña*.

One comes to know rising and falling completely and distinctly, for oneself. When objects are seen distinctly and correctly for oneself, it becomes clear that the experience of

stiffness is different from tension. The Buddha used the word *sampajañña* to describe this knowing, to completely, distinctly and correctly know for oneself.

Anupassanā is ardent effort (*ātāpa viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom – clear comprehension (*paññā*) and its benefit is to know correctly, clearly in order to see the true nature of phenomena.

Whenever an object arises, effort is applied repeatedly to observe it closely, there is collectedness of mind and one comes to know its nature distinctly and accurately. Without mindfulness (*sati*), the mind will be scattered and without observing the object with aim and effort, there is no collectedness of mind in order for knowledge to arise.

So it is necessary to repeatedly and closely observe presently arising objects, from one moment to the next, to develop continuity of awareness, collectedness of mind so that direct knowledge can arise.

Chapter 3

Explanation of the *Vipassanā* Practice

Well-developed mindfulness and concentration are the lens through which one sees the detail of objects clearly (including the detail in very small objects), as if one is seeing through a microscope. To do this, the arising activities of body, all aspects of physical deportment and posture must be observed closely and accurately, as they are. Be it sitting, standing, walking, lying down, bending, stretching, leaning, or the opening and closing of the eyes, it must be observed closely, so their true nature: the stiffness, coarseness, heat, coolness, heaviness or lightness is discerned, clearly.

Close observation of the body

The taste of food can be experienced on the tongue when we eat, as we chew the food, grind it with our teeth and come to know whether the taste is sweet, sour, bitter, hot or salty.

For close accurate observation of bodily acts, ardent and brisk effort must be applied, continuously, and without delay. Continued application of energy is necessary for repeated observation of the object, so that the mind reaches the object in time. One shouldn't be cool or casual in noting and must apply energy continuously, so that *sati* is firmly established on the object.

Developing steadfast mindfulness is necessary for correct, distinctive and complete observation, for knowledge to arise, and knowing (*sampajañña*) becomes possible when ardent effort is exerted, continuously. When effort is aligned, *sati* sticks to the object, the mind does not wander. When the mind is collected, one comes to know the true nature present at that time.

In the rising and falling of the abdomen, the stiffness, tension, contraction and expansion is observed; in walking, the hardness or stiffness of the touch of the feet on the ground; lifting of the foot, its movement or heaviness in placing on the ground is observed. Knowing in this way, the mind doesn't wander, and comes to know clearly what transpires in the present moment.

Applying ardent energy to meet the object without delay

Continuous exertion of energy from one moment to the next develops a collected and unified mind – the observation power of a concentrated mind is very strong. Unified energy is well boosted, like many strands of metal woven together to produce a hard and firm wire. With continuous ardent effort, the mental energies become firmly collected on the object and allow for true knowledge to arise.

As the heat of ardent energy is applied, the mind becomes supple, malleable and workable, and when knowledge arises, the mind is clear and bright. The factors of effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom make the mind firm and steadfast to block the arising of *kilesa*.

So, one comes to know correctly, continuing to observe the presently arising object, accurately and completely without craving or clinging, aversion or ill will.

One develops a balanced mind which does not sway, or desire pleasant objects, nor rejects that which is unpleasant. As the mind stays neutral, there is no greed or sorrow as every arising physical object is observed with mental power and defilements are absent. Practicing like this, bodily activity is observed without a gap, every arising, falling, sitting, touching, lifting, moving, placing, bending and stretching is observed without hesitation. Because defilements are absent, purity of mind is present.

The true nature of phenomena (*sabhāva lakkhana*) may not be evident in the beginning as the mind's observation power does not go past the form or shape of the belly, or the manner of its rising (expansion) or its falling (collapsing). *Yogis* must note the object with a label and clearly communicate what has been observed or experienced to the teacher, be it stiffness, tension or movement displaying the character of the air element in the rising and falling process.

Although we commence with an observation of bodily activity (physical phenomena), presently arising feelings must also be observed closely, whether they are pleasant or unpleasant or neutral; become closely aware of the mind and mind objects, aware of thinking, planning, imagining and the arising consciousness. As *yogis*, our task is to observe presently arising mental and physical phenomena, closely and accurately, without delay.

This is the *vipassanā* practice.

Chapter 4

Exerting Effort

Noting the object continuously, mindfulness will remain with the object, the mind doesn't wander and falls collectedly on the object. This is *samādhi*, concentration. When *samādhi* is present, knowledge develops and we are able to see the true nature of phenomena, clearly.

Effort is necessary to develop mindfulness and with continuous mindfulness, concentration develops. With the presence of concentration, knowledge develops.

Effort to reach a goal in the practice

There needs to be a goal for our practice. *Yogis* must aim towards a realization of the first level of path and fruition consciousness, to reach, at least, the stage of *sotāpanna* in the practice.

If we don't develop to the stage of *sotāpanna*, unwholesome acts that we have committed in the past could result in us being reborn in a lower realm. To be born as humans and to have the present conditions for (meditation) practice means we have done many wholesome deeds. But, due to an unfortunate incident from a past deed, it is possible for us to fall into the lower realms upon death. So we must make the effort necessary to gain a firm footing in the practice.

Moral restraint is not possible without the practice of *satipatthāna*, as it is the power of observation that keeps the mind in control, to know what is suitable and what isn't; when knowledge develops, one makes the correct choices in life, knowing what is beneficial and what isn't. When the practice is undertaken meticulously together with ardent effort, one's mind can be purified, sheltered from hindrances and defilements.

If I lived my life, other than through the practice, I would've missed the opportunity to upgrade my life, to develop knowledge and may have had the potential of rebirth in a lower realm in a future birth. I thought about this when I was young and made a determination to improve myself and sought refuge in the practice.

Our effort to cultivate the practice must be continuous, diligent and meticulous; it is not about gazing here and there, thinking and reflecting, stopping and then starting again, but to continue noting without a gap.

Three levels of effort

The Buddha makes reference to three levels of effort. The first level is initial effort (*ārambha dhātu*), making the effort to develop a mind that is beneficial, to develop knowledge. With this strong desire to develop a wholesome mind, one attends retreats by coming to a meditation centre.

Having commenced the practice, after some time, we may feel tired, experience discomfort, bodily aches and pains, itching, or feeling sluggish. At this stage, we need stepped up effort (*nekkhama dhātu*), to overcome these internal obstacles.

With boosted energy, we must make a strong resolve to not change our posture, or get up from our sitting and instead, continue amidst the discomfort and pain, in order to develop momentum in effort.

Having overcome feelings of laziness or discomfort, one needs to strive towards developing knowledge and this requires progressive effort (*parakkama dhātu*) to continue the practice.

One boosts one's effort stage by stage, until one reaches the goal.

Although initial effort requires much work, as the practice progresses, energy builds up, gathers momentum and supports the practice as one strives toward the higher states.

Benefits of effort

Applying effort, stage by stage in the practice, sloth and torpor are absent and one observes every rising and every falling, thoughts, imaginations or whatever phenomena that arises. Because effort develops and bolsters mindfulness, the mind becomes collected and focused on the object and with developed concentration, knowledge arises.

Application of effort in this way is praiseworthy as it brings about beneficial results.

Sati blocks *kilesa*, keeping the mind firm from being attacked, retaining the mind with the object. Each noting is supported by one application of effort, and there is one moment of mindfulness. When mindful moments are connected, one after the other, *sati* is firmly established on the object and protects the mind from defilements. Practicing like this, momentary concentration (*kanika samādhi*) comes about automatically.

A *yogi* is one who applies the three levels of effort.

Looking around, gazing here and there, stopping and starting, leaving gaps in the development of mindfulness, one is not guaranteed results in the practice.

Without continuous effort, there is no guarantee of progress and one isn't a true *yogi*.

In order to develop effort in the practice, one must behave as if one is blind. A blind person does not wander about, there is nothing projected through the eyes. Even if the eyes are open, one behaves as if one cannot see through them, without following the visual sights gained through the eye, wandering here and there.

Secondly, as a deaf person ignores sounds, whatever sounds received through the eardrum, note them as "hearing, hearing."

Thirdly, always have a beginner's mind, even if you are endowed with much worldly knowledge, just be as if you know nothing, following the teacher's instructions, clearly and humbly.

Fourth, even if you are healthy and strong, do things slowly, as if you are a sick person, for example, if you had a bad back, you would sit down slowly, carefully, making sure that you wouldn't hurt your back. In the same way, do all activities, slowly and mindfully.

Finally, practice as if you are a corpse, in the same way that a corpse lying on the ground doesn't react to the pulling by a dog or attacks from birds, don't react to physical pain and discomfort. By direct observation, through one's continuous noting, avoid the internal chatter of reasoning and questioning that arise due to our worldly knowledge.

These instructions are not to make us blind, deaf and to feel as if we are incapable or lacking in strength, but they are the way to develop concentration, so that knowledge can arise. So we must adopt these attitudes in the practice to develop knowledge. *Yogis* behaving in this manner are able to develop concentration and knowledge in just a few days.

If you fail to act in this way and instead look around, sitting and standing up abruptly, even if you practice for many days, there is no hope of gaining the benefits of the *satipatthāna* practice.

Chapter 5

Field of Defilements and Wisdom

Anupassanā is repeated observation of presently arising objects in the four fields of observation (*kāya*, *vedanā*, *citta* and *dhammas*).

Many bodily acts occur in a given moment, some obvious and others less obvious.

We commence the practice by becoming mindful of the obvious physical acts, and when the energy of *satipatthāna* develops, more detail can be seen as if we are seeing through a microscope or through the lens of glasses where blurry vision no longer obstructs clarity of vision.

If we fail to immediately observe presently arising phenomena, defilements can sully the mind, leaving room for unwholesome mind states (*akusala cetasika*) to arise. Our minds may become scattered when mindfulness is not present, lacking in moral shame or moral dread (fear regarding defilements). Then, greed, aversion and delusion can arise in the mind and when we see something attractive we may be filled with desire towards it, or develop envy towards it, or generate pride as a result of what we see.

Cultivating a vipassanā bhūmi

One who fails to practice *satipatthāna* has a mind like a plot of land with overgrown weeds (*kilesa bhūmi*).

We fail to see *nāma* and *rūpa* distinctively, how mental and physical processes are separate but are related as cause and effect, that *nāma* and *rūpa* arise and pass away; they are unsatisfactory and devoid of an inherent self.

Based on *nāma* and *rūpa*, we allow unwholesome mind states to arise because we lack control due to an absence of mindfulness, so there is no room for wisdom to develop.

When the weapon of *satipatthāna* is at hand, we come to know *nāma* and *rūpa* correctly and cultivate *vipassanā* knowledge in our plot of land (*vipassanā bhūmi*).

When mindfulness is absent, one fails to observe the base, striker and spark elements of sensory contact, how external objects strike the internal bases to give rise to sense experience, the knowing of sensory consciousness, sensory contact and feelings. There will

be attraction to and desire for a pleasant object, or aversion towards that which is unpleasant.

When one fails to observe *nāma* and *rūpa* as they arise, with effort (*virīya*), mindfulness (*sati*) and concentration (*samādhi*), the nature of mentality and physicality cannot be discerned, so misconceived conclusions are drawn from sense experience.

In a moment of "seeing," if we are mindful, we see the physical base (the eye) receiving a visible object which strikes the eye and gives rise to sight, seeing-consciousness, seeing-contact and the corresponding feelings that arise.

The process of hearing is also the same. We hear because sound waves strike the ear base and give rise to hearing consciousness, hearing contact and the resultant feelings.

Smelling also takes place in the same way. A smell or fragrance strikes the nose - there is the spark of smelling consciousness, smelling contact and feeling.

Food particles may strike the tongue and one may experience sourness, sweetness, blandness, bitterness, the salty taste in the food and so forth. One knows the taste is taste consciousness, taste contact and the resultant feelings.

When the body touches something coarse, touch consciousness, touch contact and feelings arise. One comes to know the tangible phenomena; it could be stiffness, tension, softness or warmth touching the body.

When mental objects strike the mind base, one thinks or imagines.

If our observation of the presently arising object is accurate and the mind is aligned with the object, we are aware of the elements in sense experience. Knowing correctly, knowledge and wisdom arise.

We cultivate *vipassanā* in our plot of land.

Dispelling the wrong view of self

In conventional terms, there are gender classifications of male and female.

There is also misperception that the mind is somehow connected to a self.

Indian texts describe *atta* (self) as the base for knowledge, for knowing. They say that there are two kinds of self: *jīva atta* (individual self or soul) and *parama atta* (a supreme being), that a supreme being has created everything, both living and non-living, and

this creator god governs all. The doctrine of self, prevalent in India at the time of the Buddha, held that a permanent soul varied according to the being and its size. Even though the physical body is destroyed upon death, the self or soul was believed to travel to a new body.

When mindfulness is absent, we believe in mistaken views resulting from sense experience. There is an assumption that a self exists in us, or that a self is experiencing sense contact or a soul is connected with the mind that knows when seeing and hearing take place.

When the Buddha became enlightened, he declared the doctrine of *anatta* – the absence of self, that in each physical and mental process there is mentality (*nāma*) and physicality (*rūpa*) connected as cause and effect, that a self is absent in the mental and physical process.

An example might serve to explain this. If we are listening to a *Dhamma* sermon, sound waves impinge on the eardrum and there is the knowing of sound, sound consciousness and the contact between the ear and the sound, giving rise to a good or bad feeling. The sound and the ear base are both physical aspects (*rūpa khanda*) and the hearing consciousness, hearing contact and feelings of good and bad are mentality (*nāma khanda*). If the sensory process of hearing is not observed correctly, it can be taken as a man or a woman hearing or listening to sound and we may bolster our misperception of self.

To hold a mistaken belief in a self or a supreme being is misplaced faith.

Knowing wrongly, unwholesome mental states take root in the mind. Based on mind and matter, unwholesome mental states arise and there is no moral shame or fear of *kilesa* arising, and the mind becomes scattered.

Consider the example of one's transition from the standing posture to the sitting posture. There is a series of mental intentions (*nāma*) and a series of physical sitting movements (*rūpa*) as one sits down. In sitting, what sits is the body, the intention to sit is the mind, there is no gender involved, or a being, but a mental intention to sit and the physical sitting process that follows. It is like when we press a button, electricity flows and the fan turns on, or the bulb generates light.

With continuous observation, the mind falls calm and collected, it can be seen that sitting occurs due to a cause, an intention to sit. It is not because a supreme being is commanding that we sit, but because there is an intention to sit, the bodily process of sitting takes place. There is no soul to be found in this process. All that is involved is just men-

tality (cause) and physicality (effect); a belief in a creator or a self is eliminated naturally.

With meticulous practice, by accurately observing presently arising objects immediately and without delay, one can observe how *nāma* causes *rūpa*, *nāma* causes *nāma*, *rūpa* causes *nāma*, or how *rūpa* causes *rūpa*. One can observe how these mutual cause and effect relationships between *nāma* and *rūpa* continue in each mental and physical process.

Knowing correctly by mindfully seeing the processes, informed (verified) faith is developed.

Developing a state of mind that is beautiful

In an uncultivated plot of land, weeds will sprout and take over. It won't be a pleasant sight. If we make the effort to landscape this, it might be attractive and we may benefit from the plants, we may even build a house on the land and make use of it.

Our plot of land becomes useless if we fail to cultivate it. To the extent we cultivate the land, it is valuable. Our lives are the same; to the extent that we cultivate and nourish our minds, our lives become very valuable.

Failing in mindfulness, to note and to know, we leave room for defilements (*kilesa*) to creep in.

We can fall victim to sense experience if the observing power of *satipatthāna* is absent, not knowing the processes of seeing, hearing, smelling and so forth. As a result, we will be left in ignorance (*moha*) of the way things are.

Knowing wrongly, we will lack moral shame or moral fear regarding defilements, the mind may just wander as it wishes, remain scattered and without protection. As we do with habit, we might chase after an attractive object when it catches the eye, or develop aversion towards an unpleasant sight. If there is no mind control, the mind is left to grow wild, like a plot of neglected land with overgrown weeds.

If our moral fear and moral shame are not in check, we may transgress morality and cause harm to others through our actions and speech. Due to a lack of consideration for others, we might even become cruel and overborne with thoughts of harming others or steal what others possess.

In the practice, we apply *sati* to note the object accurately. With the presence of *sati*, the mind doesn't wander. Practicing in this way, the field of defilements is kept in check. The mind becomes clean and pure and knowledge will gradually develop.

First there is the knowledge of mind and matter, and then, we observe how they are related by cause and effect and are impermanent, unsatisfactory and without a self.

As the practice deepens and *vipassanā* knowledge develops in stages, the rapid arising and passing away of mental and physical phenomena can be seen and one may experience tranquility, feeling joyous and happy.

One's life becomes valuable as these developments occur, like a beautiful, well-cultivated plot of land. Realizing the *Dhamma*, directly, the *Dhamma* pulls one along to the destination and there is no need for a teacher to encourage one to continue.

It is through the *satipatthāna* practice that one can observe the arising of *nāma* and *rūpa* in oneself. If presently arising objects are observed repeatedly, without delay, even if knowledge hasn't arisen, defilements are kept at bay and instead, effort (*virīya*), mindfulness (*sati*) and concentration (*samādhi*) take their place. Every moment of noting is profitable.

With moral restraint (*sīla*) one comes to possess cultured and refined physical and verbal behavior. When *sati* sticks to the object and the mind becomes collected, from one moment to the next, obsessive defilements won't arise and even if they do arise, one becomes aware that they have arisen, straight away.

One's behavior becomes clean, pure and refined with moral restraint, concentration and wisdom. Carefully and respectfully listening to the *Dhamma*, taking it to heart and learning the method of practice is necessary to overcome defilements. It is by applying effort and practicing meticulously to note arising objects that one develops mindfulness, concentration and wisdom to eliminate defilements. As a *yogi*, your only task is to apply effort and aiming so that the mind meets the object directly.

Through this practice, we can protect ourselves from defilements, and develop our lives in a beautiful way. Every act we perform in a given moment is fertile ground for *kilesa* to arise. It is only by observing all acts of body and mind that *kilesa* can be culled or tempered.

So, it is necessary to carefully listen to the instructions, how effort is to be applied, then direct and aim the mind to the object with accurate aim as soon as the object arises.

To create this foundation, one must have a mind that values the benefits of the practice, faith in the practice and the desire to reap results from the practice.

Close observation of feelings

In a session of sitting meditation, the body experiences many pleasant and unpleasant sensations, there can be discomfort caused by contact with a hard object or something sharp, or contact with something pleasant.

In the beginning, *yogis* tend to become aware of unpleasant contact and feelings, in particular, when bodily pains arise due to a long period of sitting. It is necessary to observe the pain that has arisen with patience, bravery and courage. If you back off from unpleasant sensations, effort drops and may obstruct the development of mindfulness and concentration. Then, *kilesa* will take root.

The noting mind must actively become aware of feelings. Feelings condition craving and when a pleasant feeling arises, failing to note it might lead to desire, wanting more, or one may develop aversion towards an unpleasant feeling, craving for pleasant feelings to arise, instead. *Yogis* may even develop craving towards neutral feelings when the mind becomes calm and collected in the higher stages of the practice, wishing to prolong the tranquil and calm feelings.

All feelings, good, bad and neutral are to be observed, repeatedly and to do this, courageous effort must be applied, and one must not change one's posture when unpleasant feelings manifest. Then, one will have collectedness of mind in order to observe the presently arising feeling. Giving in to the unpleasant sensations, trying to change one's posture, one fails to transcend it, developing aversion and craving by wishing for a better sensation.

Defilements will not precipitate in the mind when pain is met directly with courageous observation. The painful sensation may intensify, become unbearable, but, *yogis* must patiently observe it, making a firm resolve, "I will not move. I will observe this patiently."

When the pain becomes unbearable, one can reduce active noting and observe the pain in a more relaxed manner. When the pain subsides, go back to note more actively. The pain may once again intensify, becoming unbearable, at which time, observe it again in a relaxed manner. When it subsides, actively note the primary object. Continuing like

this, backing down and advancing at other times, there is continuity of mindfulness; the mind doesn't wander or become distracted.

Eventually, one will come to know the pain clearly. When one's observation of pain is continuous, it will no longer be felt in a particular part of the body and instead, just the characteristics and manifestation of pain will be evident – just unpleasant feeling and the mind that knows it.

Knowing how to work with it, one may even challenge pain to arise.

Those with little patience and fear of pain will constantly change posture, without developing the endurance to practice in the way to overcome pain in the practice.

Observing the unpleasant feeling, knowing its nature, it becomes evident how pain makes the mind tired, saps up all the energy and functions in a way that the mind retreats, manifesting like a thorn that pricks and pierces the skin if it is not removed, hurting us, time and again.

Neither in the texts nor in history is it found that an observation of painful feelings leads to illness or death. Instead, many have cured disease by patiently observing painful feelings.

So apply these instructions and as much as possible, note the unpleasant feelings that arise in the body, with patience and courage.

Chapter 6

Clear Comprehension and its Benefits

Physical phenomena are the most obvious of the four fields of observations, so we begin with body (*kāya*) as an object to commence the practice.

Repeatedly noting the arising physical objects with ardent effort, *sati* becomes firmly established on the object, the mind becomes calm and collected and knowledge arises.

It is in a calm and collected mind that clear comprehension (*sampajañña*) into the arising of physical and mental phenomena, their cause and effect relationship, their impermanence, unsatisfactory and non-governable nature can be discerned.

Only a concentrated mind can see the true nature of physical phenomena, feelings, mental states and mental formations. In the progress of insight, knowledge begins with distinctive knowledge into the presence of mental (*nāma*) and physical (*rūpa*) phenomena and their cause and effect relationship. Along with the presence of this knowledge, one has the light of clear awareness (seeing clearly, correctly and distinctly), and the darkness of ignorance is dispelled.

Clear comprehension (*sampajañña*) is knowing correctly, distinctly and completely, for oneself. It is to see for oneself the true nature of physicality and mentality, their causal relationship, their arising and passing away (*anicca*), their unsatisfactory nature (*dukkha*), an absence of self (*anatta*), that their true nature is not beneficial or pleasant (*asubha*).

As one begins to see these attributes one dispels the misperception of permanence and satisfactoriness, one sees that what is presently arising is just phenomena, an empty process, lacking an inherent self and is not beautiful. At that moment, craving (*tanhā*) does not arise.

One is able to observe the cause and effect relationship of physical phenomena in the rising and falling of the abdomen; due to an in-breath, rising occurs, and as we breathe out, the falling of the abdomen occurs. Without an in-breath, there is no rising of the abdomen and without an out-breath there is no collapsing of the abdomen.

When rising occurs, the knowing mind arises to observe the rising object. When rising doesn't occur, the knowing mind does not arise either. In this way, we come to see how the object observed and the mind observing, are connected as cause and effect.

Both the observing mind and the object are separate. So too are the rising and falling processes - they operate separately. One begins to see that rising is not a single rising, but a series of individual risings. It is like a line of ants observed at a distance. What at first appeared as a static line, upon closer observation, can be seen as individual ants moving in line, one after another.

Sampajañña is not a random occurrence. The nearest cause for such knowledge is concentration, the collectedness of mind.

When one has steadfast mindfulness, concentration (*samādhi*), the collectedness of mind is present, thoughts of sense desire are eliminated and momentary concentration (*kāṅkha samādhi*) develops, preventing defilements from entering the mind.

At this stage, a *yogi* develops shame and restraint regarding the possibility of defilements entering the mind, applying effort to note every arising object. The mind is wholesome because moral shame (*hiri*) and moral fear (*otappa*) are present. With the mental control of concentration (*samādhi*), knowledge arises.

When the mind is concentrated, moral shame and moral dread repel against the arising of defilements: greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*), and one develops strong effort (*virīya*), taking meticulous care to continuously note the object.

To become aware of all presently arising objects, one must move slowly and have control of one's faculties. Restraining the faculties requires *hiri* and *otappa*. Effort (*virīya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) overcome greed, hatred, and with correct knowing, there is no delusion. When knowledge arises, the *vipassanā* mind develops.

From one moment to the next, the *vipassanā* mind gathers momentum, distancing the mind from defilements with the presence of effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. There is purification of the mind when defilements are kept at bay.

It is essential that one has faith. Without faith, one lacks the motivation and desire to exert effort in order to develop mindfulness and concentration. As a result, without faith, wisdom will not arise.

The fundamental benefit we gain through the *satipatthāna* practice is purity of mind. With purity of mind, we have mastery over ourselves and we don't commit aggressive acts towards anyone.

Having a strong desire to purify the mind, we make effort in the practice, developing mindfulness and concentration, so that knowledge can develop.

Practicing like this, one's life is uplifted, living benevolently with the aim of developing path and fruition knowledge (*nibbāna*).

If we don't practice, we will not develop knowledge. Defilements (greed, hatred and delusion) will take root in our consciousness in the same way that an uncultivated plot of land becomes a plot of entangled weeds. So we must undertake the *satipatthāna* practice to clear the weeds of defilements (*kilesa bhumi*) and cultivate a wholesome plot of land, developing a life that serves as a foundation for *vipassanā* to arise (*vipassanā bhumi*).

Chapter 7

Jhānic Factors

Repeated (close) observation of objects requires one to be endowed with ardent effort.

If we practice with ardent effort, note objects without delay, we don't experience sloth and torpor (*tīna middha*), unwholesome mind states are removed, and we keep ourselves pure due to continuous (uninterrupted) noting of the object. This is very precious. Knowing its value, we must exert effort meticulously to cultivate mindfulness, concentration, and to develop knowledge, stage by stage.

Hindrances (*nīvarana*) are the internal enemies that obstruct the practice. But, with the presence of the concentration (*jhānic*) factors, hindrances can be overcome.

When the noting mind is direct and concurrent with the object, and rubs against the object, the mind is secluded from the hindrances and there is joy and happiness in the mind falling calm and collected on the object and one cultivates the *jhānic* factors.

In the beginning, laziness, sloth and torpor hinder the practice, operating as the most potent internal enemy. Aiming and directing the mind to the object (*vitakka*), retaining the mind directly on the object and discerning its nature obstructs the arising of sloth and torpor (*tīna middha*).

When the noting mind rubs against the object, the noting (*vitakka*) is effective, sloth and torpor are absent and due to sustained application (*vicāra*), skeptical doubt (*vicikicca*) is removed. When the mind rubs against the object, knowing it clearly, there is certainty, no more doubt. It is when balanced effort (*ātapi viriya*), noting (*vitakka*) and knowing (*vicāra*) are present that repeated observation (*anupassanā*) of the object is possible.

With continuous mindfulness, clear comprehension (*sampajañña*) develops and one can discern whether something is beneficial or not, know what is suitable and unsuitable, noting all presently arising objects and knowing distinctly and correctly, so that doubt is removed.

Knowing what is beneficial (or not) and suitable (or not) applies to worldly life. Having favorable conditions to practice, suitable teachers, suitable weather, one must know the benefits of the practice and the benefits of noting; and practice diligently with ardent effort to become mindful of every presently arising object, without delay, to cultivate knowledge.

Ardent effort and sustained mindfulness are necessary to discern clearly.

Gaining seclusion from the hindrances (*vivekajhan pīti sukhan*), there is joy and rapture (*pīti*), happiness (*sukha*), one-pointed awareness (*ekaggathā*) and concentration (*samādhi*). When the *jhānic* factors of joy, rapture and happiness are present, there is no ill will or aversion (*vyāpāda*). There is an experience of happiness as the mind falls calm and collected on the object, away from restlessness and worry (*udacca kukucca*) and the *jhānic* factor of collectedness of mind - unified mind, is experienced (*ekaggathā*).

Momentary concentration (*kanika samādhi*) develops, when the mind falls calm and collected on the object and is detached from sensual objects. There is no sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*) and there is protection and seclusion from the hindrances when the mind is directly aligned with the object.

When attaining *jhāna*, it is necessary for the mind to be one-pointed. As the mind falls calm and collected on the object, it becomes strong; the mind sinks into the object and it seems the object of meditation and the subject are one. There is continuous arising of one-pointed awareness, like a stream of currents, free from the disturbance of hindrances.

When the *jhānic* factors are developed: first, initial application (aiming and directing the mind to the object (*vitakka*), followed by sustained application (the mind rubs against the object (*vicāra*), resulting in joy, rapture (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*); ill will (*vyāpāda*) and restlessness (*udacca kukucca*) are removed. At this stage, there is one-pointed awareness (*ekaggathā*), giving seclusion and protection from the hindrances.

When I used to play marbles as a young boy, in the beginning, I used to miss the target easily. Being too eager in throwing the marbles, I used to overshoot the target. At times, when I didn't put forth enough effort, it fell short of the target. Over time, I became skillful in aiming at the marble and when it hit the target, I felt joyous and happy, calm and at ease. This example is comparable to the practice.

Vipassanā jhāna is the experience of *jhānic* factors - joy, rapture and the one-pointed mind experienced when the noting mind falls calm and collected, aligned with the object. Noting is effective as the mind remains concurrent with the arising object, and one experiences joy (*pīti*), goose bumps and thrills in the body. Happiness (*sukha*) also arises. It is essential that *yogis* note these experiences as they arise.

When higher knowledge is realized, concentration is stronger, the mind is one-pointed and there is an experience of more joy and rapture. Hindrances (*nivāraṇa*) that pollute the mind are removed or the mind gains seclusion from their arising, becoming serene, clean and pure. The true nature of arising objects can be seen distinctly and clearly.

Knowledge is cultivated stage by stage as one continues to discern *nāma* and *rūpa* and removes the wrong view of self and belief in a creator. It is natural for a *yogi* to feel encouraged to strive in the practice when knowledge is cultivated in this manner, discerning cause and effect in *nāma* and *rūpa*, is verifying one's faith based on experiential knowledge.

Next, one begins to see the arising and passing away of phenomena (*samassana nāñña*) and clarity, rapture, faith and comfort begins to pervade the mind. There is no thinking or reasoning, rather, one sees the triple aspects of impermanence, suffering and non-self, directly. In the progress of insight, the fourth insight knowledge is insight into the rapid arising and passing away accompanied by an experience of rapture, tranquility and happiness (*udayabbaya nāñña*). Following this, one can see the cessation of *nāma* and *rūpa*, there is a calm, peaceful happiness that cannot be brought into words or description.

Absorption levels (*samatha jhāna*) existed before the Buddha's enlightenment and those immersed in such absorption, free of sensual pleasure, were reborn in the *brahma* realms.

It is said that the wisdom factor is what disappears when the Buddha's teachings become extinct. The three trainings in morality (*sīla sikkha*), concentration (*samādhi sikkha*) and wisdom (*paññā sikkha*) also become extinct. The progress of insight is what discerns the Buddha's teachings from *jhāna* practices.

These experiences and developments cannot be guaranteed to a *yogi* who fails to note continuously, practicing and then stopping, gazing around and then coming back to the object. Such *yogis* are like chameleons, those lizards that come running after food, then stop, become distracted, wander here and there and never get the food, or finally get to it, stopping, being distracted and returning after a number of times.

Chapter 8

Khanika Samādhi

As a *yogi*, you have only one duty, to continuously note the object with aim and effort, so that the mind falls calm and collected on the object.

Effort is necessary to note the object and by exerting effort continuously the noting mind comes directly face to face with the object.

All presently arising objects must be noted with aim and effort. Noting the object, defilements, *rāga* and *dosa* have no room to enter the stream of consciousness. The mind is pure, clean, falling calm and collected on the object, from one moment to the next and with continuous noting of the object, momentary concentration (*khanika samādhi*) develops.

One moment of momentary concentration is not that strong, although if it continues to develop, from one moment to the next, it will build up momentum, becoming stronger and lasting longer. It is like a rope that is made of many fibers. Relying on one piece of fiber alone will not work as it won't be strong, but when they are woven together, it can be used and relied upon, it is strong and stable.

Momentary concentration becomes strong when objects are noted without a gap. Mindfulness must also be continuous and without gaps. With continuous, well-developed mindfulness, there is energy in momentary concentration.

Khanika means lasting a moment. When the object arises, such as the rising of the object, concentration only lasts for the moment (*khanika samādhi*). The same with the falling of the abdomen, *khanika samādhi* only lasts for a moment. There are two other forms of *samādhi*: neighborhood concentration (*upacāra samādhi*) and attainment concentration (*arpanā samādhi*). *Upacāra samādhi* arises as neighborhood concentration in those practicing *jhāna* and is preliminary to *arpanā samādhi*.

When the *jhānic* factors are fulfilled, one attains absorption, the mind becomes calm, stable, unified and attainment concentration (*arapanā samādhi*) develops.

In the *vipassanā* practice, one develops *khanika samādhi*.

Samatha samadhi has a concept as its object and *vipassanā samadhi* has presently arising *nāma* and *rūpa* as the objects.

The Buddha described *khanika samādhi* as concentration that lasts for a moment, where the mind is one-pointed for a moment as it observes the presently arising mental and physical processes. As soon as the object arises, it should be noted so that mindfulness is sustained on the object. Actively and continuously noting the object, the mind falls calm and collected on the object. There is no time for thinking or reflection, but just noting the object as the mind falls calm and collected.

Khanika samādhi keeps the mind calm and stable on the object in the same way that *arpanā samādhi* can keep the mind aligned with the object. In *samatha samādhi*, the mind fixes on a single object and is calm and collected in a uniform manner.

Khanika samādhi has the capacity to allow the mind to fall calm and collected on presently arising objects, from one moment to the next, lucid, sharp and continuous. It is *khanika samādhi* that needs to be developed to attain path and fruition knowledge (*magga phala nāṇa*)

With the presence of continuous *khanika samādhi*, the mind is secluded from the hindrances, calm and stable, allowing knowledge to arise. There is no wishing for pleasant sights, sounds or good tastes, comfort or ill will in the mind; the mind is alert and ready with meticulous, thorough and efficient noting of the presently arising object. It is not lazy or sluggish and is free of doubt as to the Buddha's teachings.

In order to retain seclusion from the hindrances, which obstruct the purity and clarity of mind, *khanika samādhi* must be like a stream of (electrical) current, continuous from one moment to the next.

With continuous momentary concentration on various objects, the mind is calm and steady, aligned with the presently arising objects, in the same way that *arpanā samādhi* continues fixed with the object.

When changing posture, be mindful and note the intention to change posture and note every movement, one by one. First, note the intention, then, note the physical movement that follows. Objects continuously arise in the mind and the noting must follow each movement, continuously, slowly and mindfully with aim and effort.

Yogis must note respectfully, meticulously and thoroughly, without a gap.

Apart from the time spent sleeping at night, *yogis* should become mindful of all postures, all physical activities, all change of posture and movement without failing. The concentration developed needs to be continuous on every object, without any gaps.

Each moment of mindfulness in the practice is precious as it doesn't allow defilements to creep in, so we must note with aim and effort, respectfully, continuously and meticulously.

Chapter 9

Experiencing the Four Noble Truths in the Practice

The noble eightfold path is invariably included in any discussion of the four noble truths.

What is *dukkha sacca* – the truth of suffering? How do we see this in the practice?

Four broad categories are enumerated by the Buddha for our observation: the body, physical phenomena (*kāya*), feelings (*vedanā*), the states of consciousness (*citta*) and mental objects (*dhammas*).

The most tangible object, *kāya*, includes the group of physical phenomena, so the Buddha discussed physical phenomena first, followed by an observation of pleasant, unpleasant and neutral feelings. Thirdly, the mind and mental fabrications, both wholesome and unwholesome acts that precipitate in the mind, and finally, the Buddha instructed us to observe *dhammas* (*sense-spheres*).

It is by moment to moment awareness of presently arising objects in the four fields of observation that we gain true knowledge into presently arising phenomena.

When *sati* (mindfulness) falls on the object, knowledge arises. This is direct knowledge. We are not imagining it; it is not something we read or hear about from a teacher.

Developing practical experience oneself and comparing one's experiential knowledge with what is stated in the scriptures is the way of practice.

In the practice of *Vipassanā*, we begin with the gross, most tangible object for our observation, to become aware as it arises, with effort, accuracy and aim.

Among the four fields of observation, *kāya* is mentioned first as it is most tangible.

Following a focus on the breath as an object of meditation, we are instructed to diligently observe the four postures: walking (*gaccantovā*), sitting (*nissinovā*), standing (*titovā*) and lying down (*sayānovā*). To observe the natural phenomena of the postures as they occur.

In the process of sitting (as well as standing, walking and lying down), mental and physical phenomena accrue as a pair. They are inseparable. An intention to sit precedes the physical process of sitting, the bending and moving downwards, bit by bit, towards

a seat or the floor. There needs to be diligent observation of the sitting process; our observation must be accurate, and aligned with the object.

An analogy will help clarify this diligent observation. During a rain storm, lightning flashes across the sky, it lights up the sky and dispels darkness. Lighting up the sky is the characteristic or nature of lightning and it functions to dispel darkness.

Its manifestation might appear as twisting - it may appear crooked or bent, as it flashes through the sky. In this manner, with close attention, lightning, its function, character and manifestation can be observed.

When preparing to sit, we may observe the body moving downwards or experience it as heavy, or soft. Sometimes, we become aware of the intention to sit, first.

It is not possible to be aware of the sitting (physical) process and the intention to sit, at the same time. Although the mental and physical process of sitting cannot be separated, only one aspect, either mental or physical, can be observed at a time.

When standing up, do it slowly, as if you are sick or an invalid. Moving quickly in changing postures makes it difficult to discern the physical process, and the intention that precedes it.

Intending to sit is the mental aspect of the truth of suffering, and sitting is the physical form of the truth of suffering. Both aspects of mental and physical suffering happen concurrently.

When unaware of the mental and physical aspect of the truth of suffering in a moment of sitting, knowing is muddled, so we think, "I am sitting" or "sitting is me" or that there is a supreme being commanding that I sit or there is a soul that sits.

To know the truth of suffering in sitting, observe the sitting process as it happens, follow it, and know it. By becoming aware of the mental and physical form of the truth of suffering in sitting or any of the other three postures, we are practicing as the Buddha instructed.

Know the truth of suffering in *nāma* and *rūpa*. By being aware of *nāma* and *rūpa* in sitting, any misperception of the existence of a soul is dispelled. There is no opportunity for the cause of suffering to arise or to take pleasure (or displeasure) in the mental and physical aspect of the sitting process. The cause of suffering is dispelled.

Eliminating the cause of suffering is not that we are trying to get rid of it. We eliminate it by not giving it an opportunity to arise. Attentively, observing the truth of suffering

in sitting, its cause is dispelled. There is no ignorance, craving (*tanhā*), longing or clinging in observing the object directly. Ignorance (*avijja*), craving (*tanhā*) and grasping (*upādāna*), come to a halt. This is cessation, the truth of cessation in a moment of noting, in being mindful of the object.

Defilements are absent as we are mindful from one moment to the next, in each change of posture.

Undertaking the practice is not performing ordinary wholesome deeds that lead to rebirth. The cycle of result (*vipāka vatta*) does not revolve. There is momentary cessation (*tadanga nirodha*) of the cycle of *kamma* and *vipāka*, cause and effect.

With accurate and aligned focus on the object, the true nature of mental and physical phenomena is known and the path factor of wisdom is cultivated. So we see how in any given moment of mindful attention, the truth of suffering can be known, the causes that give rise to suffering can be dispelled, the cessation of suffering is realized and the path leading to an end of suffering (enlightenment) is developed.

For one who observes the truth of suffering as one sits, stands up, moves and lies down, becoming aware of the mental and physical aspects of the truth of suffering in each process, the other three truths are also available. If one analyzes the process, it becomes apparent that the noble eightfold path is also developed. So, just consider for yourself how valuable this is.

Sīla (morality), restraint in intention (*cetanā sila*) and right speech, right action and right livelihood are cultivated in a moment of noting. Because effort is exerted to note the object immediately, as it arises, there is right effort. Directing the mind to an object, as it arises, there is right mindfulness and when mindfulness falls calm and collected on the presently arising object from one moment to the next, and the mind becomes unified in one-pointed awareness, there is right concentration.

A valuable opportunity is missed if we are not wakeful to the process of sitting, failing to observe the presently arising mental and physical objects in each posture. When mindfulness (*sati*) is absent, concentration (*samādhi*) is dispersed. Without accurate aim (noting), the object is missed and knowledge will not arise; the mental and physical processes of suffering are not understood, the cause of suffering is not dispelled, the cessation of suffering is not realized and the path leading towards an end to suffering is not developed.

In sitting, there is a series of intentions followed by physical movements. Standing up from sitting involves many physical movements (and intentions that precede each physical process). In each change of posture, we can observe the movement of limbs and how they support one another, stiffness, tension, heaviness, softness, expansion and contraction and the characteristic of elements. What is required is well-aligned mindfulness to meticulously observe all these aspects.

In each posture, a series of intentions precede the physical action. Aim to pay attention to even the smallest or subtlest of actions, such as the opening and shutting of eye lids.

While lying down one can observe: stretching of the body, the stiffness on one side, rolling over from one side of the bed to the other, or the heaviness or lightness of the body. One can also observe that there is an intention to roll over, and the stretching that follows.

Walking can be observed as stepping of the feet - "right" and "left," or in two parts as "lifting and placing," or in three parts, "lifting, moving and placing." By being skilled and precise in aiming, the lifting, pulling, bringing, letting go, putting down and pressing of the feet can be clearly observed.

Intending to lift the feet, "lifting" takes place; intending to move the foot, "moving" takes place; intending to place the foot, the foot is placed on the ground. With each movement, the mental and physical phenomena accrue as a pair.

Accurate and precise aim, aids to observe how the foot is pushed up from the bottom, becomes light as it is lifted, and in moving, is pushed from behind and pulled from the front. The heaviness, stiffness or hardness must be felt, when the foot is placed on the ground.

All natural characteristics of each process of lifting, moving and placing can be seen and there is no taking pleasure in the lifting, moving and placing; the cause of suffering is dispelled and the path is developed. Noting and knowing, defilements are absent from the stream of consciousness.

Carefully undertaking the practice, just like lightning that dispels darkness, knowledge arises to dispel ignorance. With the presence of knowledge, there is an absence of greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*); the root causes of defilements (*kilesas*) are eliminated, and one's mental, physical and verbal behavior becomes clean and pure. This is possible with meticulous practice.

Chapter 10

Discerning Mind and Matter in Sensory Contact

The process of walking can be observed as the stepping of each foot, “stepping, stepping,” or in two parts, as “lifting and moving,” or in three parts as “lifting, moving and placing.”

A series of intentions precede the physical lifting, as the foot separates from the ground. In moving, the foot becomes light, and following this, there is tension as the foot is placed on the ground. In lifting, there is the physical process of lifting, and the knowing of “lifting” occurring.

Lifting, moving and placing involve mental and physical phenomena and to see this, one must become aware of the lifting process at its inception. Observe the physical process and the intention preceding it. In the lifting process, there is no individual person or an “I.”

In moving, what moves is the physical aspect and there is an intention preceding it. There is no personality in the process. In the physical process of movement, we can observe a pushing from the back of the foot or a pulling at the front; whatever our mental intention, a physical movement follows. In placing, there is an intention to place the foot on the ground, followed by the placing, the foot going downwards and becoming heavy as it is placed on the ground. The hardness, softness, heaviness or lightness in each step, is observed.

Even if knowledge (*nāñña*) hasn't developed yet, the mind doesn't wander and stays on the lifting, moving or placing. In this way we come to know the true nature of mental and physical phenomena in bodily deportment and in each posture. At first we might come to know only the form of the leg, its shape or the positioning of the legs. As knowledge develops, we come to know the true nature of mental and physical phenomena.

Three kinds of feeling

Feelings (*vedanā*) are threefold: pleasant, unpleasant and neutral. A *yogi* may experience a pleasant feeling, when the body contacts something soft and gentle, or discomfort or

pain, as the body contacts something sharp or hard. Contact with extreme heat or cold causes discomfort, but when the wind blows or a fan circulates, there is coolness. Extreme stiffness feels sore, but stretching out can be relaxing and pleasant. There is also neutral feeling, but it is difficult to become aware of neutral feeling at the beginning.

When we observe presently arising feelings, we are free from *loba* and *dosa* at that moment. There is no anger or aversion (*dosa*) towards unpleasant feeling, nor is there craving (*loba*) towards pleasant feeling.

Observing feelings is contemplating on presently arising feelings (*vedanānupassanā*). Feelings must be observed by noting them as they arise by applying a label (such as pleasant, pleasant or pain, pain, etc.).

Observing mental states arising in the mind

There is the scattered mind and the doubting mind and many other mental states that we experience.

Primarily, there are two forms of mind: clean and pure mind and the impure mind.

With direct observation, an impure mind can be freed of desire, aversion and delusion. Correct observation (*sati*) purifies the mind from impurities of mind that have arisen.

Whatever mind states arise, thinking, reflecting, desiring, rejecting, note it with a label and simply observe it the way it is immediately. We must continue to observe the main object (rising and falling of the abdomen) with ardent effort, so that the mind doesn't wander. If the mind wanders, become aware of the wandering, immediately.

Striker, receptor and spark element in sensory contact

Contact involves a striker, base and ignition (spark) element. There are six forms of objects that can be known: sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touch of tangible objects, plus mental objects, striking at the base of the six receptors: the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and the mind.

An object strikes one of the six bases, say, for example, the eye (receptor) catches a sight (the striker); at first there is a mental spark, (seeing-consciousness), followed by seeing contact and feelings. Seeing-consciousness, seeing contact and feelings are the mental

components that arise in “seeing.” Form striking the eye base is the physical component of seeing.

The same occurs in each of the other sense doors. Sounds strike the ear, smells impinge on the nose and mental objects strike the mind along with the relevant consciousness, be it hearing consciousness, mind consciousness; hearing contact and mind contact are followed by the arising of associated feelings.

In a moment of “seeing,” visible form is what is seen, the eye is the receptor and seeing consciousness, seeing contact and feelings are the spark; all these components combine with each act of seeing. In order to see the process of mental and physical phenomena, our attention must follow through immediately, as soon as “seeing” occurs. When we observe “seeing” at its inception, we can see the separate but distinct arising of mental and physical phenomena.

Later we come to see that it is due to a visible object that seeing occurs; the eye base receives form, seeing-consciousness, seeing contact and feelings arise. So, the causal relationship in sensory contact can be seen directly.

To know the base element of the sense door, the striker and the spark (ignition), resultant mental consciousness, mental contact and feeling, we must observe the process (be it hearing, seeing, tasting) immediately, without delay, with effort and accurate aim in order to know the mental and physical aspects that are present.

The process of “hearing” is the same. A sound wave strikes the ear base and there is hearing. Whether it is the sound of rain or the wind or a speech, the sound strikes the ear base, and through hearing consciousness, hearing contact and feelings, one comes to know “hearing”.

It is possible that we observe hearing in a number of ways, becoming aware of the ear base where the hearing takes place or the sounds striking the eardrum, or it can be what is known in the mind as bare hearing, or the mental contact of sound on the ear base, or the pleasant or unpleasant feelings that have arisen due to contact.

A fragrance may travel to the nose base and “smelling” occurs and a pleasant feeling might arise, or due to a rotten or bad smell, an unpleasant feeling may arise. The fragrance striking the nose (receptor) is the physical aspect and the smelling consciousness, smelling contact and feeling are the mental components of smelling. Due to physical and mental components in the striker, receptor and the spark, we know smelling and this can be observed by being aware of smelling as it occurs.

There are six flavors (sour, bland, bitter, salty, hot or sweet) to experience in the food that strikes the tongue base. With each morsel of food, when the food mixes with saliva, one becomes aware of a number of tastes, one after the other. Knowing taste consciousness (contact of taste on the mind), the food physically contacting the tongue, and the feeling as to whether the taste is preferable or unpleasant. For example, any distaste, i.e., if you don't like too many chilies in your food, is an observation of the mental components of tasting. When noting and knowing in each moment of eating, there is no opportunity for lust (*rāga*) or anger (*dosa*) to arise; there is just observation and neutral feeling.

In a moment of touching, there are mental and physical components. In the rising and falling of the abdomen, the air strikes the body and one experiences stiffness, tension, hardness, softness, heat or cold. Basically, there is the earth element, heat element and the air element in one's experience.

All actions involve a tangible object striking somewhere on the body. Whether it is the rising and falling of the abdomen, sitting or walking, lying, bending, stretching, the opening or shutting the eye lids, the tangible object that can be felt is the striker and it strikes anywhere in the body when there is moisture (the element of cohesion).

At the time of contact between the tangible object and body base, one knows hardness, softness or stiffness. This is touch consciousness, touch contact and feeling: the spark.

If one opens the eyes and stares at something for a long time, stiffness occurs. This is because water on the surface of the eye dries up and there is a feeling of discomfort, an unpleasant feeling arises and an intention to close the eye and to open it follows. The base, striker and the spark are occurring at that moment.

In touching, mental and physical aspects operate as a pair, the object touching the body is the physical aspect and the touching consciousness, touching contact and the pleasant or unpleasant feelings are the mental aspect.

One develops mindfulness (*sati*), when one applies ardent effort. Mindfulness keeps the mind clean of defilements (*kilesa*), and because of *sati*, the mind falls calm and collected on the object; it is clear and clean, there is no obstacle of sense desire, occurring. The clean mind comes to know its true nature, that only mental and physical components (*nāma* and *rūpa*) are accruing as a pair.

One knows by applying continuous effort to observe each arising object and due to this effort, mindfulness arises (the mind stays with the object). When the mind becomes calm and collected, knowledge arises.

Knowledge of non-self in sensory contact

With the knowledge of mental and physical phenomena, self-view is dispelled as one realizes that a self (or a creator) cannot be found in a cause and effect process of mental and physical phenomena. Seeing that there is only a base, a striker and ignition (spark) element in the process of sensory contact, one no longer holds a view of self.

One now understands that there is no solid, enduring self and with this knowledge, becomes free of doubt. Having understood this, if one continues to practice, one is destined to develop deeper *vipassanā* knowledge.

Try to observe the base, striker and spark element in each process of noting and knowing each time an object arises. When effort is strengthened and mindfulness gathers momentum, uninterrupted, momentary concentration (*kanika samādhi*) develops and become strong. With continued practice, it can be seen that every experience is just mental and physical phenomena related by cause and effect, and bears the characteristic of impermanence, leaving no room for continued belief in a self.

In each bodily posture, mental and physical phenomena accrue as a pair. In sensory contact, all aspects of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking, there is a mental and physical process and the unfolding of each event can be seen as it is; this knowledge arises naturally. The knowledge gained is not what one has imagined. It is verifiable, direct experiential knowledge.

Chapter 11

Impermanence, Characteristics and its Insight

Sensory contact is the interaction of mental and physical phenomena in the base, striker and spark factors. Knowing how they interact can be observed through the *satipatthāna* practice. If we don't observe this correctly, we take the interaction as a collective, and see it through the lens of a self, a being (*jīva attā*).

Cause and effect in mental and physical process

A belief in a self arises when we attach to *nāma* (mind) and *rūpa* (matter). This is because we fail to see how mental and physical phenomena are related by the cause and effect relationship. Without this understanding, we believe in a creator, thinking that an omnipotent god or the *Maha Brahma* created the world.

In the *satipatthāna* practice, we are working to observe the mental and physical components in sensory experience and their causal relationship, with immediacy and without delay; it is through this observation, the belief in a self (and creator) is dispelled. When all presently arising phenomena are observed as they are, the delusion of wrong view is dispelled.

In the progress of insight, with careful observation, the arising and passing away (impermanence) of mental and physical phenomena can be seen. Because they pass away, they are inherently unsatisfactory. They arise due to causes, and have no inherent nature of their own.

The *Visuddhimagga* provides words of encouragement to careful *yogis* who have seen the cause and effect relationship of mental and physical phenomena. It is said that *vipassanā yogis* with acquired knowledge into cause and effect can breathe easily in the Buddha's teachings.

Before this knowledge was gained, one may have had doubts that a god exists, or that a creator has command of this world, or that a confession to god of one's faults would result in forgiveness, or a belief in god would mean that one could be taken to heaven, or that there is nothing required of oneself in terms of realization.

On the other hand, if the god doesn't like you, you might be fearful of punishment, remaining in servitude, not being able to breathe easily. You may even kill animals or human beings to appease god. But when the cause and effect relationship of mental and physical phenomena is seen in the practice, one realizes the true nature of sensory experience; thus a belief in an external god or a creator is dispelled through direct, verifiable knowledge.

Knowing in this manner, there is a foothold in the teachings of the Buddha, a place to stand, an assurance that upon death, rebirth will not be in a lower realm.

A *yogi* with knowledge into the cause and effect of mental and physical phenomena is a *culasotappana* and will not be reborn in the four lower realms. Still, one has to continue with the practice to reach the final goal.

If we know in error or hold wrong view of a fictitious cause and fail to see the causal relationship in *nāma* and *rūpa*, we miss the mark and continue in intense delusion. It is only by seeing the true nature that we are able to overcome delusion.

Each moment of wrong view in seeing mental and physical phenomena as existing in oneself is a compounding of delusion. Continuing in this way for years on end, the layer of ignorance becomes very thick. In each hour that passes, another layer of ignorance adds on to the previous moment of delusion and becomes an intense delusion. Because of this there is confusion and a lack of clarity interfering with one's ability to make decisions. Due to intense ignorance, a false belief in a self or a creator is bolstered. It is difficult to dispel such wrong view without careful, moment to moment, observation.

When (immediately) observing presently arising phenomena (either mental or physical), it becomes evident that due to the eye capturing form, seeing-consciousness, seeing contact and feelings are experienced; the ear capturing sound is the experience of hearing-consciousness, hearing contact and feeling.

Continuously observing each and every arising object with ardent effort and accurate aim, *sati* is directed to the object and the mind falls collected on the object. In each second that the mind falls collected on the object, it is secluded from hindrances – there is no sensual desire (*kāmaccanda*), no aversion (*vyāpada*), no retraction of the mind, no experience of sloth and torpor (*tinha midha*), no worry or scattering of the mind (*udacca kukkucca*), or restlessness from wavering (*vicikiccā*).

In each noting, the mind is clear of hindrances. In this clear mind, knowledge can arise. There is no laziness, because *sati* is developed and the mind is protected. There is freedom from the hindrances. In a calm and collected mind, knowledge arises.

Impermanence of presently arising phenomena

With well-aligned and sharpened mindfulness, one can see the arising and passing away of physical and mental phenomena, the old disappearing, being replaced by the new. In each moment of noting, one sees that mental and physical phenomena are a causal relationship; they arise and pass away.

One may hear a sound and observe its disappearance. The physical stimulation of the ear that receives the sound also diminishes in time. The knowing of hearing also disappears and the contact between the mind and the sounds at the ear base also disappear as do pleasant and unpleasant feelings. Nothing remains. Everything disappears. Mental and physical processes arise, but do not stay the same way, they disappear.

Observing the passing away of phenomena is *aniccānupassanā*, contemplation of impermanence. Knowledge of the arising and passing away of mental and physical phenomena (*aniccānupassanā nāñña*) is gained with continued observation of mental and physical processes.

The misperception of permanence is overcome through direct observation of the arising and passing away of physical and mental objects. Knowledge into the arising and passing away of phenomena develops when one sees the arising of the object, notes and labels it, then sees how it passes away.

With well-aligned, steadfast mindfulness, the arising and passing away of phenomena can be observed directly, in each moment of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking. Gaining an insight into impermanence, the perception of permanence is dispelled.

There is direct discernment of the mental and physical components of sensory experience, how *nāma* and *rūpa* are related as cause and effect, their arising and disappearance.

Anicca + Anupassanā

Teachers of the past make reference to *aniccānupassanā* being made up of two words: *anicca* and *anupassanā*. *Anupassanā* is repeated (close) observation. Impermanence (*anicca*) can be observed by seeing the mental and physical components that arise in every process of seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, bending, stretching, opening and closing of the eyes; seeing how they persist in their time, then, disappear. One comes to understand that this quality of impermanence is common to all phenomena.

All phenomena have this characteristic of arising and passing away. Impermanence is their true nature; what arises, doesn't stay the same. Seeing occurs and disappears. Hearing occurs and disappears. All phenomena follow the same pattern and have the common characteristic of impermanence.

The characteristic of arising and passing away is *aniccalakkhanā*, the sign of impermanence. Disappearance of an object is its true nature and that is *aniccalakkhanā*. Observing the disappearance of an object that has arisen is a contemplation of impermanence, *aniccānupassanā*.

A *yogi* who carefully exerts ardent effort, develops continuous mindfulness and concentration, is able to discern *nāma* and *rūpa* and how they are related as cause and effect and then comes to see that all mental and physical phenomena that arise, pass away.

Knowing the true nature of phenomena clearly, there is no clinging and craving is dispelled. One's consciousness is clear of defilements and a series of wholesome mind states arise from true knowing. What is being observed is direct knowledge into the nature of phenomena and one's observation becomes a field of *vipassanā* (*vipassanā bhūmi*).

When knowledge is clear, the path is clear and the true nature of all phenomena can be known clearly and directly.

Chapter 12

Five Qualities for Realizing *Nibbāna*

At the onset of *vipassanā* knowledge (*vipassanā nāñña*), one's concentration (*samādhi*) is strong, the noting is continuous and one sees mental and physical phenomena arising and passing away, fleetingly. One sees light, and if one's *sīla* (morality) is sound, this light is followed by an experience of rapture (*pīti*), tranquillity (*passadhi*) and happiness (*sukha*). When these experiences surface, a *yogi* feels encouraged to continue with the practice; one's mindfulness continues sharp and keen.

Yogis experience various forms of rapture at this stage in the practice. With the experience of *ubbega pīti* one feels as if one is floating in air, the body feels light, and it feels as if it is rising up to the sky. In the experience of *parama pīti*, rapture spreads across the entire body, the feeling is good and one doesn't feel like stopping the practice or getting up from the sitting.

Tranquility pervades the entire body and the mind and body feels light and agile, there is a feeling of gentleness and one becomes skilled and adept in noting. The mind becomes pliable and with a feeling of well-being in both body and mind; one feels comfortable. One's mind and body becomes upright and because the mind is upright, one's moral compass is strong, and all flaws, wrongdoings are admitted, without hesitation. One's straightforward candor is very evident. There is no deceit in conduct or any pretense of possessing qualities that one doesn't have.

Throughout this experience, one continues to develop *vipassanā* knowledge into the mental and physical phenomena of the sensory process and how they are related by cause and effect. Through seeing the impermanent nature of mental and physical phenomena, one's unsatisfactory and self-less nature becomes clear.

Knowing this, one's faith is distinct and decisive - there is confirmation that the method of practice is correct because knowledge has arisen due to the application of the *satipatthāna* meditation method. When faith is bolstered, effort (*virīya*) is balanced and one's zeal and desire to practice is neither too strong nor too weak. One's effort is just right.

As one continues to practice mindfulness, effort steadily increases. Mindfulness (*sati*) is strong and boosted by energy; it sticks firmly to the object. Events of the past can appear clearly in the mind. One may even develop the capability to become aware of the

mental states of others. Equanimity (*upekkha*) is apparent and the quality of the mind is that of aiming without effort being exerted, the mind is right on target with the object; both the noting mind and the object are concurrent.

However, *yogis* may mistakenly identify this stage as a realization of path and fruition (*nibbāna*), taking the experience gained to be more than what it is.

So, a teacher's guidance is critical for *yogis* at this stage of the practice, to navigate them properly so that they may be able to continue to strive towards the goal.

Yogis striving in this way are possessed with five qualities for realizing *nibbāna*.

Faith and reverence towards the Buddha and the Dhamma

Arriving at this stage in the practice, one feels great reverence to the Buddha, gratitude to the Buddha and the *Dhamma*, knowing that the knowledge experienced is due to the method of practice taught by the Buddha. One has faith in the special qualities of the Buddha, knowing directly that the results are consistent with the way of practice as the Buddha instructed (*svākkata*). This is the first quality developed by a *yogi*.

The quality of the Buddha's realization of the *Dhamma*, the teaching of the *Dhamma* after having verified it for himself, becomes apparent as one takes decisive refuge in the Buddha's teachings. *Yogis* experience gratitude for the compassion and loving kindness with which the Buddha taught the *Dhamma*.

Comparing the Buddha's realization with one's direct experiences, which are verifiable, clear and direct, one develops enormous faith and a complete acceptance of the practice (*okappana saddhā*, informed knowledge). This faith (*saddhā*) arises due to one's direct knowledge gained in the practice.

Sound physical health

The second quality for realizing *nibbāna* is that *yogis* need to be in good health, sufficient to undertake the practice. Everyone has some form of ailment, so it is not necessary for one to have perfect health. Due to strong rapture, tranquility and happiness experienced by *yogis* who have reached the stage of observing the rapid arising and passing away of phenomena, health conditions that they had been experiencing such as stomach conditions, lung problems, menstruation or even cancer, may be cured due to the puri-

fication of blood circulation at this stage of the practice. In this way, *yogis* are also able to cure themselves through the practice.

Straightforward candor

The third quality is that one becomes mentally upright. Earlier, one may have pretended to be better than others, or to be possessed of qualities that one did not have, pretending to be without fault so that others think highly of them. At the stage of realizing insight knowledge into the rapid passing away of phenomena (*udayabbaya nāñña*), *yogis* become mentally upright, and there is no pretense or deceit on their part; one admits to wrongdoing without hesitation and confesses to a senior *yogi*. This third quality of being upright and straightforward is very important.

Aligning right effort

The fourth quality is exerting the requisite effort to strive in the practice. At the beginning of the practice, effort wavers; sometimes it is too much, at other times, too little.

Effort had to be applied to note the object. At this stage of practice, when one observes the rapid passing away of mental and physical phenomena, one's effort is on target and gathers its own momentum.

Due to the work done previously to align effort to a right quantity, effort is now on target and with continued practice, is uplifted (*paggaha viriya*). Because effort is aligned, unwholesome mind states no longer arise. With continuous mindfulness, wholesome states multiply and proliferate in the mind and one develops the courage necessary to continue to strive towards the goal. This is the fourth quality of one who strives towards a realization of liberation in this very life.

Knowledge into the rapid passing away of phenomena

When the fourth quality is completed and one's effort is on target, one directly observes the rapid arising and passing away of phenomena. This knowledge is direct and is not due to imagination or what one has read about. It is direct, verifiable knowledge. There is clear knowing, through direct observation that mental and physical phenomena are related by cause and effect. They arise due to causes and are dependent on causes, and

the disappearance of the object is also due to a cause: that with cessation of the cause, all presently arising phenomena pass away.

As taught by the Buddha, as long as the cause remains, there will be a new arising. Knowing phenomena in the way the Buddha taught, it becomes clear how further arising is due to a cause. Seeing the clear distinction between *nāma* and *rūpa* it is apparent there is no self in a being. Witnessing the rapid arising and passing away of mental and physical phenomena, self-view is dispelled and one comes to see that upon death, there is neither annihilation nor any soul or self which exists or travels from one life to the next.

Continuing to practice, the objects disappear in one's awareness and the fearsome nature of existence, the oppressive nature of continuous disappearance of objects, becomes apparent to the *yogi*.

With continued practice, the stage of equanimity towards all formations (*sankhāra uppekkhā nāṇa*) is realized, where the mind is completely balanced towards whatever objects that arise. One's noting is very smooth and comfortable at this point. Following this, the mind inclines towards a realization of the four noble truths and *nibbāna*.

Having realized the first stage of path and fruition consciousness, one is assured of not being reborn into the lower realms. Because of the clear knowledge gained, one's observance of the five precepts will be firm and will not be broken.

Yogis will only have faith in the teachings of the Buddha.

One would want to encourage those near and dear to them to also practice, urging them to strive and realize path and fruition consciousness, having realized the fruits of the practice for oneself.

As long as there are *yogis* practicing in the way taught by the Buddha, the teachings of the Buddha will not disappear. There will be peace in the world if we all developed the practice in this way.

May you benefit from these teachings and make serious effort to develop the *sāsana* within you.

Chapter 13

Two Forms of Happiness and a Realization of *Nibbāna*

In each process of rising, falling, bending, stretching, tasting, hearing, seeing and touching, a continuous stream of mental and physical phenomena accrue as a pair, like an ever-flowing stream.

With accurate aim, the mind falls collected on the object and one distinguishes between mental and physical phenomena, seeing that their arising is due to a cause and then pass away with the cessation of the cause.

Mental and physical phenomena continue to arise and pass away according to their true nature without an inherent self, and as a result are unsatisfactory. One begins to see the absence of a soul or a self in this experience in that it is a process of mental and physical phenomena accruing as a pair, arising and passing away, the old continually being replaced with the new.

At the stage of *udayabbaya nāṇa*, one develops insight into the rapid arising and passing away of phenomena. Mental energy is mobilized as one is enriched by the nourishment of *Dhamma* one directly realizes for oneself. Continuing with the practice, the cessation aspect of mental and physical phenomena can also be observed. Crossing over the current of phenomena, a cessation or absence of mental and physical phenomena leads to a realization of path and fruition consciousness, *nibbāna*.

The *satipatthāna* practice leads to a purification of the mind; a freedom from gross mental defilements of greed, hatred and delusion. There are seven benefits to be gained through the *satipatthāna* practice and this can be developed by reading, discussing and listening to the *Dhamma*. Practicing respectfully, a fulfillment of training is achieved and one's physical, verbal and mental behavior becomes refined, cultured and pure.

At the stage of practice in *udayabbaya nāṇa*, one's faith is strong and decisive and develops as a power (*saddhā bala*), firm and resolute, it cannot be destroyed or shaken. With resolute faith, one develops the courage to strive in the practice and step up one's effort due to the power of faith. Effort also develops to a power (*virīya bala*). Because effort is aligned, mindfulness is strong and one has the ability to observe continuously and with clarity, without either reducing or exceeding in quality.

With *sati* developing to a power, the mind falls collected and powerful as the true nature of phenomena are clearly known and the power of wisdom arises. One is ashamed and fearful of unwholesome mental states arising in the mind, there is shame and fear of wrong doing and their consequence. Due to the nourishment of *Dhamma*, mental powers develop in the mind and mental strength is increased.

In the same way that we are able to physically withstand extreme heat or cold, by developing mental powers, we become strong in our mind and are able to respond to worldly *Dhamma* with wisdom. There is no longer any elation in success or praise, nor sadness in loss.

We develop more resilience in withstanding life's changing conditions. We increase our capacity to endure and we will be born only in the higher realms. By knowing the *Dhamma* clearly, it becomes our refuge.

Developing one's observation fully, there is no break in one's observation of the object, there is no stopping, no rest in observing mental and physical phenomena and how they are related as cause and effect. The knowing mind continues with the arising object like an ever-flowing stream. Continuing this way, one may reach a point when there is no longer an object to observe or a mind to observe it.

Cessation of the object of observation and the knowing mind is *nibbāna*. There is no *nāma* or *rūpa*, there is no pleasant feeling associated with good sights, sounds, or tastes or any taking pleasure in it or any pleasant feeling, no touch like the gentle breeze of a fan, no touch of soft fabric, no tangible object. Experiencing this, one has happiness not dependent on sense experience.

The texts make reference to two kinds of happiness, *vedhaitha sukha*, which involves sense experience through the six types of sense objects, and *avedhaitha sukha*, a peaceful form of happiness that does not involve the experience of sense objects.

Seeing pleasurable objects, hearing pleasant sounds, smelling a nice fragrance and taking delight in good tastes or the pleasure associated with touch are due to sense objects. Sensory experience is what worldlings refer to as happiness.

Take the example of a wealthy lay person who goes to work in the morning and returns home, tired and hungry. Returning home, he must choose between sleep and the appeasing of hunger – which of the two requirements would be given priority? In spite of the hunger, he might fall into a deep sleep. His chef, feeling sorry for the tired master, might cook something delightful and take it to him, trying to wake him up, announcing

that dinner is ready to be served. Would the master receive this invitation happily? Or would he be unhappy?

Assume the master gives preference to sleep; he sleeps well and wakes up at his own time, feeling fresh and bouncing with physical energy, with an alert mind, exclaiming, "what a good sleep I had!" Why is it that this person, without any food, having felt hungry, wakes up from his sleep, energetic and refreshed? How can he explain that the sleep was good when there was no experience of pleasant sight, sounds, smells or tastes; there was no thinking, seeing, hearing, smelling or tasting that gave pleasure? Yet, he has enjoyed his sleep, willing to give up pleasurable sense objects for a good sleep. His experience cannot be denied or explained.

Similarly, the happiness one gains from *nibbāna* is far better than any sense experience. Continuing the practice after the stage of *udayabbaya nāṇa*, one is destined to realize true happiness, a happiness that is devoid of sense experience (*avedhaitha sukha*), and although one realizes the first stage of enlightenment, there are still defilements lurking in one's consciousness. One may continue to experience the happiness of eliminating the *kilesas* for 24 hours, or even up to 7 days.

On realizing *nibbāna* (the first stage of enlightenment) one may rejoice at the peace, the happiness felt when defilements are eliminated, *albeit*, not fully. Imagine eliminating and uprooting all defilements, fully - the experience of *sukha* will be of an outstanding quality.

Developing morality, concentration and wisdom, the noble eightfold path leads one to eventually find true peace, to be completely free of defilements.

Chapter 14

Four Levels of Enlightenment

Unless one is asleep, effort needs to be made to observe all postures and bodily processes: sitting, walking, lying down, standing and the presently arising phenomena in one's mind.

When effort is applied time and again, the mind becomes clean and knowledge develops, stage by stage. When knowledge matures, one realizes *nibbāna*.

The happiness of *nibbāna* is *avedaitha sukha*, which does not involve contact with sense objects. It is difficult to conceptualize or to believe the experience of this realization unless it is experienced for oneself.

Commencing with a discernment of mental and physical phenomena, *vipassanā* knowledge develops, stage by stage, until the noting mind and the object become subtle and objects become fewer and faint in one's awareness. Noting every arising object with continued effort, one eventually crosses the stream of knowing the object; it becomes faint and finally ceases entirely in one's awareness.

Dispelling three fetters through realization

A *sotāpanna* (stream enterer), realizes the first stage of enlightenment, and fully dispels and discards three fetters. Firstly, self-view (*sakkāya dhitti*), a belief in a permanent self or soul is dispelled. Secondly, doubt about the Buddha and the *Dhamma* is dispelled.

One comprehends that it is due to applying the method taught by the Buddha that one has realized path and fruition consciousness. There is no more skeptical doubt (*vicikicca*), as one has practiced according to the correct method and realized the first stage of *nibbāna*. Thirdly, one no longer believes in rites and rituals or other belief systems, (i.e., that a creator will lift us up to heaven after death).

In the sensual realm, beings are engulfed in strong greed (*lobha*), aversion (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*), which can pull them towards the lower realms (*apāya*).

Experiencing the stage of stream entry, a *yogi* is freed from rebirth in the lower realms. This person is now considered an *Ariya*, a person who has calmed defilements (*kilesa*),

tempered their arising through the first stage of realization. It is at the final stage of enlightenment, liberation as an *arahant* (a fully enlightened being), the fourth stage of *Ariya*, that one fully eliminates and uproots defilements.

Self-view is a collective of many aspects of mental and physical phenomena. For example, carefully examining the clenching of our fists, we can evidently see that there is a series of intentions causing the act, a group of phenomena present.

If we fail in our noting, we are not able to see that many aspects of physical movement, (tightening, hardness, heat and any feelings of discomfort) are due to numerous forms of mental and physical activity, collectively appearing to generate a false sense of self.

Not knowing the collective is ignorance and to believe in a self, based on the collective is wrong view, so we say, "I am clenching" or "I am relaxing," wrongly assuming that a person exists in the myriad of mental and physical phenomena that arise.

Because skeptical doubt is overcome and faith in the Buddha and the *Dhamma* is decisive when one sees the true nature of mental and physical phenomena, there is no recourse to rites and rituals. The false assumption of a self, self-view, or inherent being is convincingly and completely eliminated, to the point of no return. Greed (*lobha*), aversion (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*) are tempered, becoming less prominent in one's awareness. One who accomplishes this reduces the gross *kilesa* that pulls one down to the lower realms.

At the second stage of enlightenment (*sakadagāmi*), the stage of the second *Ariya*, the chains of *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha* are significantly weakened. Thoughts connected with greed, hatred and delusion do not arise often in the mind, and when they do, they are not obsessive and are no longer coarse.

Practicing further, one matures to *anāgāmi*, the third stage of realization where craving or greed for sense objects is eliminated along with aversion to a point of no return. There is no more anger, aversion or hatred; these defilements are completely culled. This is the third kind of *Ariya*.

At the fourth stage of realization (full enlightenment), one completely uproots all mental defilements, and becomes an *arahant* (fourth *Ariya*); defilements (*kilesa*) are eliminated, there is no more becoming and no more arising.

Eliminating defilements through realization

Due to sense desire, the concentration developed in the first two stages of enlightenment is of a lesser quality. Both a *sotāpanna* and a *sakadagāmi* experience fruition to some extent, but are yet to eliminate sense desire.

An *anāgāmi* and an *arahant* can enter into the absorption of fruition completely, a cessation state of mental and physical phenomena (*nirodha samāpatthi*). In this cessation, there is no suffering caused by the arising of mental or physical phenomena. There is no longer any desire towards objects, so the concentration developed at the third and fourth stages is very strong allowing them to enter into absorption more fully.

Being born, we slowly age, are afflicted by disease and in the end, die; there is mental suffering alongside physical suffering and sorrow and lamentation are experienced. So we can now see how suffering is connected to mental and physical phenomena. *Nibbāna* is their cessation, the cessation of mental and physical phenomena. The experience of cessation is peace.

For an *arahant*, there is no sorrow (*asoka*) in the deprivation of possessions, in health or being separated from friends or family.

For an ordinary person, *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha* follow in turns. Sometimes the defiling tendencies are strong and at other times, weak, but their root causes continue. In *nibbāna*, there is no mental dirt, as defilements are uprooted (*virajan*) fully and there is no fear (*khema*). These are the qualities of *nibbāna*.

The path of the practice has three stages, the root (*mula*), forerunner and noble (*ariya*). There is only one way, but these three stages to develop on that path. *Mula* or root path is the right view of cause and effect (*kamma* and *vipāka*), a wholesome mind keenly aware that good actions reap good results and bad (unwholesome actions) reap bad results.

We know that eating unhealthy food can cause illness and eating healthy food provides nourishment, so we wisely choose what we eat. Similarly, knowing the effects of *kamma* and *vipāka*, one is careful about not performing unwholesome (*akusala*) acts.

By understanding *kamma* and *vipāka*, we arrive at the forerunner path (the practice of *satipatthāna*). This is the precursor to the noble (*ariya*) path, which requires the application of continuous effort to develop mindfulness and concentration; observe presently arising objects, so that the mind meets the object directly, setting the foundation for

knowledge to arise. The root path has to be opened for us to travel on the forerunner path that leads us to the noble path.

Progressing along the path is as if we are driving along a road. We need to obey the road rules, monitor our speed, stay on the correct lane and slow down as we approach a curve, stop at red lights, and proceed with caution when the green light gives us the go ahead. If we make any mistakes, we might hurt ourselves and others by causing a road accident, because we are not driving properly.

Similarly, if we follow the method, exert effort and meticulously observe presently arising objects, continuously and carefully, we arrive at the home stretch, the noble (*ariya*) path, which, if we are traveling steadily, follows naturally from the forerunner path.

Maintaining *sīla*, our physical and verbal behavior is clean and without blame. When *sati* sticks to the object and the mind falls calm and collected, there is no room for defilements to arise. It is the purity of mind and the elimination of defilements that makes one noble, exalted, and it is from this purity of mind that knowledge and wisdom arise.

Continuing to progress on this path, the destination is in sight and in time, defilements will be uprooted completely.

As enumerated by the Buddha, only in the Buddha's teachings could a noble eightfold path be found. It is by cultivating the noble eightfold path that beings are able to completely uproot defilements (*kilesa*).

Chapter 15

Noble Eightfold Path

We travel the noble eightfold path in the practice. The first part is the root (*mula*) path, the requisite knowledge of cause (*kamma*) and effect (*vipāka*), leading to the forerunner path (practice of *satipatthāna*), which leads to the noble (*ariya*) path, to reach the destination.

Following the *mula* path, it becomes clear that by performing an unwholesome act, one would reap corresponding results. Knowing this, one knows how to navigate along the path to reach one's goal in the practice. To travel the path, one must know the rules, the speed limit and be aware that the speed needs to be reduced when one approaches a bend or a curve at an intersection.

Driving and following the road rules is similar to progress on the forerunner path, we can't be distracted by views or look around, but adhere to the road signs and the speed limit, stay focused, take the correct turns and drive towards the destination.

The forerunner path leads to the noble (*ariya*) path. In order to progress beyond the middle section and to reach the *ariya* path, *yogis* are permitted to sleep at night, but must continue to turn the wheels, in their wakeful moments by applying mental and physical effort so that the destination can be reached.

Traveling along the forerunner path and developing *vipassanā* knowledge, stage by stage, one progresses towards the final destination. *Vipassanā* knowledge matures when there is cessation of mental and physical processes in our awareness.

The noble eightfold path has three groups of training: training in morality (*sīla sikha*), training in concentration (*samādhi sikha*), and training in wisdom (*paññā sikha*). Applying these trainings, the three grades of defilements (*kilesa*), gross, medium and refined, are systematically overcome. Overcoming *kilesa* is the meaning of *ariya*. We suffer due to defilements, *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (aversion) and *moha* (ignorance), so overcoming defilements leads to freedom from suffering.

With each noting, we are eliminating *kilesa* on three different levels - gross, medium and the refined level. By eliminating *kilesa*, we are not performing unwholesome *kamma*, instead, we perform wholesome *kamma* leading to a cessation of suffering. Progressing on the path, one's mind is purified as *kilesa* are eliminated and wisdom develops. The

Buddha revealed this path over 2,500 years ago, having tread the path himself and eliminated the cycle of *kilesa*.

When the ascetic *Subaddha*, heard of the Buddha's imminent passing away, he realized that it is a rare occurrence to find an enlightened being (free of defilements) with correct knowledge on how those defilements can be eliminated. Therefore, *Subaddha* earnestly wished to visit the Buddha before his demise (*paranibbāna*).

Subaddha had doubts regarding the beliefs prevalent in India at the time and had faith that the Buddha was the only being capable of resolving his questions. He immediately went to *Kusinara*, the kingdom of the Mala princes, where the Buddha was to enter *parinibbāna*.

He met with Venerable *Ananda* and requested that he be allowed the opportunity to visit the Buddha. Venerable *Ananda* didn't allow *Subaddha* to approach the Buddha, informing him that the Buddha was weak and therefore, should not be disturbed. *Subaddha* repeated the request for a second time and was again denied permission by Venerable *Ananda*, saying that the Buddha is weak and should not be disturbed. *Subaddha* requested a third time and Venerable *Ananda* again denied permission. Having overheard the conversation, the Buddha instructed that Venerable *Ananda* allow *Subaddha* to come in.

Subaddha approached the Buddha, paid homage and sat by the Buddha's side. He questioned the Buddha about the six main teachers at the time, whether they really knew what they were talking about or whether they didn't know, but taught anyway and he wished to verify the accuracy of their teachings, to know whether they were true and correct.

The Buddha didn't respond to *Subaddha's* question and instead, explained that a correct teaching enumerates the eightfold path and the four foundations of mindfulness (*sātara satipatthāna*) which eliminate defilements. At the first stage a stream enterer (*sotapatti*) exists, and at the second stage a *sakadhagāmi* exists, and the third stage, an *anāgami* exists. At the fourth and final stage an *arahant* exists (one who has finally uprooted all defilements). In other words, there exists a method of practice, which when applied correctly, brings results. When one practices in accordance with this method, one can verify these stages for oneself.

It is only in the *Dhamma* and *vinaya* that there is a noble eightfold path; *Dhamma* is the method of practice through which one realizes the benefits of the practice and *vinaya* includes the rules to be followed.

What is meant by the noble eightfold path is the method of practice and the discipline. If one practices effectively, one will eliminate *kilesa*, progressing from one stage to the next. At the first stage, one becomes a *sotāpanna*; continuing the practice, one further eliminates *kilesa* to become a *sakadhagāmi*; and practicing further, eliminates lust and aversion to become an *anāgami*; then, by completely uprooting the final defilements (*kilesa*) becomes an *arahant*.

The Buddha's teaching is one that can be validated through one's practice and if one progresses on the noble eightfold path with meticulous practice and discipline, one will eventually uproot defilements, completely. So the Buddha exclaimed, like a roaring lion, speaking bravely, that the noble eightfold path guarantees the elimination of *kilesa* and the progressive stages of enlightenment.

"If *bhikkhus*, *bhikkhunis*, *upāsakas* and *upāsikas*, live and practice as I have taught, the world will not be devoid of those freed from defilements. Of those striving on the path, there will be those with purity of mind, those who have reached the *ariya* path (those who have reached fruition knowledge), and therefore, the world will not be devoid of beings who have freed themselves of defilements."

Each of us in the fourfold assembly of practitioners has the responsibility to continue progressing on the noble eightfold path. Knowing one's responsibility, one should not allow worldly business to take up one's time or to stop one from committing to their goal.

Practicing according to the correct method, we are able to free ourselves of *kilesa*.

The Buddha has guaranteed that his teaching, *Dhamma vinaya* (the noble eightfold path) leads to an uprooting of defilements.

With that in mind, make the requisite effort to follow the method of practice wholeheartedly.



“Let no human being neglect his own spiritual development for the sake of others, however important they may be. Realizing what is for one’s own benefit, let him attend to it earnestly.”