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Meditation for All

Vipassanā Meditation

**The only way for:
Purification of beings,
Overcoming sorrow,
Extinguishing suffering,
Walking on the path of truth,
Realizing total liberation (*Nibbāna*).**

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Oceanside, California, U.S.A.

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About the Author

Ngon Som, who was born in Cambodia in 1930, had spent many years learning Pali and Sanskrit at the Pali High School in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. He received novice ordination at the age of 13, and then Bhikkhu ordination at the age of 20-40. He further pursued his higher studies at the Dhamma-duta College, Rangoon, Myanmar, and the Chulalongkon Buddhist University in Bangkok, Thailand. As the holder of the scholarship of the Indian Government, he spent seven years in Poona, Maharashtra state, India, where he obtained B.A. and M.A. degrees in English, Psychology, and Politics. He became a Professor of English in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. As a refugee, he came to the United States in 1975, working for the Unified School Districts in Berkeley, San Francisco, and Long Beach, where he wrote a number of books including translations for bilingual programs. "The Light of Buddhism" written in Cambodian has been his recent works. Since 2005 until present, he and his wife, Malay Som, have been the students of Vipassana meditation under the instructions of Master S.N. Goenka, a very highly qualified meditation teacher, who teaches what the Buddha taught.

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INTRODUCTION

Meditation for all

Though Gotama Buddha attained *parinibbāna* 2,550 years ago, the essentials of his teaching remain alive and also shed light on various aspects of both theory (*pariyatti*), and practice (*paṭipatti*).

This book is named “Meditation For All,” simply because the Dhamma discovered by the Buddha is the universal law, the law of nature, which can be beneficial to anyone who is able to follow strictly and diligently the Noble Eightfold Path, which summed up in three groups of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā* - morality, concentration and wisdom. Dhamma is the noble truth which never dies. Gotama Buddha, just like all the Buddhas in the past, found out this law due to his perfection (*pāramī*). Thus, the Buddha-Dhamma is not a monopoly but the possession of all, whoever one may be a Christian, a Jain, a Muslim, a Hindu, or a Buddhist.

Mr. S. N. Goenka, one of the world famous and respected Vipassanā teachers, has repeatedly stressed the emphasis on the definition of the term “Buddha-Dhamma” as follow:

The word “Buddha” means a person who is fully enlightened. “Dhamma” means nature. Hence, “Buddha-Dhamma” means the nature of an enlightened person. All persons, whoever they may be, if they are really and fully enlightened, must have the same nature: total freedom from craving, aversion and delusion. When we practise the Buddha-Dhamma, we are not getting involved in any particular sect. Rather, we are actually working to develop in ourselves the nature of a Buddha – to attain freedom from craving, aversion, and delusion. And the means by which we develop this nature is the practice of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*, which is universally acceptable to all.

To assist the readers with an access to primary sources, I have tried to confine my selection of quotations as much as possible to those found in the Mahāsatippaṭṭhāna-sutta, the Bodhipakkhiya-kathā by Venerable Ming Sess, the Noble Eightfold Path by Bhikkhu Bodhi, the Kammatṭhāna-kathā by Bhikkhu Kong Khin, the Abhidhammatthādhīpāya by Ven. Louis Em, the Aid For Awareness by Master Buth Savong, etc..

Nevertheless, mere understanding at the theoretical and intellectual level is an important aspect of the Buddha’s teaching, but it is only through actual practice that one can have a direct experience which will take one to final goal of freedom from all misery and suffering. It is usually seen that even illiterate persons, who diligently and strictly practise real meditation, can achieve better benefits than those who read a lot of books.

Vipassana meditation – the heart of the Buddha’s teaching – has been always practised in the past centuries and continued to practise until now by a large number of Buddhist monks, nuns and householders including kings and the government officials throughout Asian countries.

The history of Cambodia tells us that ancient Cambodia, known as “Funan” derived its culture and civilization from India since the beginning of the first century (A.D.). Its kings and their subjects held both Brahmanism and Buddhism depending upon social, political changes and circumstances. Innumerable Buddha statues and images in the ancient temples and museums indicate that meditation was firmly practised for centuries till now. Remarkably, during the 12th century, the ancient temples of Ta Prohm, Preah Khan and others, at the compound of Angkor Thom not far from Angkor Vat, were

served not only as the institutions for learning the law of the land but also as the meditation centers where the dignitaries of the royal court, government officials, military, etc., should have come and learn to practise *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*. That was the royal decree issued by King *Jayavarman VII*, who was regarded as the *devaraj* (god-like king) and later on as *Buddharaj* (Buddha-like king).

India, the cradle of the Buddha-Dhamma, spread its rich culture and civilization through all directions of the subcontinent, but it seemed to neglect the Buddha's teaching for many centuries due to social and political changes from time to time. However, as the truth never dies, the Buddha-Dhamma has now returned to India by way of Vipassana meditation brought and taught by Master S.N. Goenka and other meditation teachers from Myanmar, Sri Lanka and so on. It has been noted that thousands and thousands of Indian population from every walk of life including a large number of prisoners have had the opportunity to enjoy the benefits they gained from the practice of Vipassana meditation.

Today, the light of the Dhamma - the Noble truth - has become brilliant and spread throughout the entire world. When more and more people realize that Buddha-sāsana is the law of nature, they come into contact with Vipassana, especially now, when this world of misery and suffering is full of many tensions and conflicts. Dhamma teaches the art of living and also the science of mind and matter. It shows us the way to lead a successful and peaceful life in this world. For instance, it teaches mankind to avoid ill-will, hatred, violence, etc., In brief, it advises us to abstain from evil, to do good, and to purify our mind.

This book is intended to inspire those who desire to undertake the actual practice of *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*, which will enable them to come closer to the goal of full liberation.

May all beings find real happiness, real peace, real harmony and real liberation from all the miseries in life.

Ngon Som

In fact, such kinds of act or practice should not be regarded as a real or right meditation in any way, for right meditation is the practical path aiming at extinguishing craving, aversion and delusion which are the principal mental defilements of all human beings.

Chapter I

Types of meditation

From time to time, human beings all experience agitation, irritation, disharmony and suffering. The wise saintly people of the past studied this problem of human suffering, and they found a solution with different views.

Because of different ideas and different experiences, many religions have been established, and then religions have been divided into various sects. Though many faiths and religious believes are created for a better solution, human suffering is still continuing everywhere. In this material world, modern and high technology has been invented to find happiness and peace of mind. Even then, while the rich still suffer in one way, the poor suffer in another way.

Moreover, in order to relieve their pain, distress, misery, and suffering, people try to create happiness, peace and harmony through various means, such as vacation, sport, game, gambling, hunting, cinema, theatre, yoga, meditation, etc... Some have practised dancing which they claim they practise meditation. It is, of course, a kind of meditation, too, because when they dance they must concentrate on their movement and steps in time with music. The same can be said of a pick-pocket who focuses his attention on stealing something from somebody's pocket. In like manner, animals and birds usually focus their attention when they prey upon others.

Meditation in Brahmanism

In India, during the Vedic period (1500-550 B.C.), the theory of Ātman educated human beings to purify their own Ātman to be free from mental defilements so that human's Ātman would be able to go to the Ātman of Brahma, called "Brahman," within where they could enjoy the ultimate reality. This theory teaches men to be aware of themselves, depend on themselves, and be responsible for themselves. It says that oneself is the Brahman, and one's action is the action of Brahma.

During the periods of Brahmanism and Hinduism (550-10th A.D.), the theory of Upanishads explains that all reality is a single principle, Brahma, which teaches that the believer's goal is to transcend the limitations of self-identity and realize his unity with Brahman. To do so, there are two important practices called "*tapa*" and "*yoga*".

By the beginning of the Vedic period, *tapa* means the effort to worship or pray to God (Brahma) and beg for his mercy and help. But by the end of the Vedic era, *tapa* is the method to hurt God to lose any patience and comes to the worshiper. Later on, during the period of Brahmanism, the method to practise the *tapa* was completely changed to *attakilamatthānuyoga* (far extreme effort to hurt one own self uselessly), e.g., standing in the hot sun, laying down on iron nails and going fasting. When this practice became ineffective and unpopular, they have invented *yoga*, which is the discipline aimed at training the consciousness for a state

of perfect spiritual insight and tranquility. In modern time, *yoga* is considered to be a system of exercise practised as part of the discipline to promote control of the body and mind. This system is just similar to *ānāpāṇa* meditation in Buddhism, but not the same.

Ānāpāṇa or ānāpāṇassati meditation

(Awareness of respiration)

The *ānāpāṇa* meditation was also practised by Prince *Siddhattha* when he was seven years old, and reached the stage of *First Jhāna* at the time his father (*Soddhodana*) was celebrating the Sacred Furrow Ceremony. *Jhāna* is the state of mental absorption which may be attained by the practice of *samādhi*. *Samādhi* itself can bring tranquility and bliss but cannot eradicate the deepest rooted mental defilements.

Furthermore, Prince *Siddhattha*, at the age of twenty-nine, after breaking away from all ties of family and of the world, went around in search for possible teachers. He put himself under the guidance of two famous Brahmin ascetics, *Ājāra* and *Uddaka*. *Ājāra* stressed the emphasis on *ātman* (soul) and taught that the soul could attain perfect release when free from material limitation. The Prince was not satisfied with this, so he next approached *Uddaka* who stressed too much emphasis on the effect of *kamma* and the transmigration of soul. By that time, Prince *Siddhattha* had learned seven *samā-pattis* from *Ājāra*, and eight *samāpattis* from *Uddaka*, and he had become an adept in the exercise of all supernormal power, including the ability to read events of many *kappas* in the past as well as a similar period in the future. However, he realized that these were all in the mundane field that one could not get out of the conception of soul. He, therefore, asked the two teachers whether there was something else for him to learn. When he got a negative

reply from them, he then decided to leave both of them to work out his own way since his ambition was an escape from this mundane world of birth, old age, suffering and death.

Dukkara-kiriyā

(Martyrdom)

In order to search for ultimate truth, Prince *Siddhattha*, for six years, committed himself in fasting and extreme meditation in various forms of rigorous austerities and discipline till he looked almost like a skeleton. As a result, he, one day, fell down due to exhaustion. When he survived this condition, he changed his method, followed a middle path and found that the way for his enlightenment was clearer.

In his first sermon known as *Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, the Buddha proclaimed the two following philosophical practices as inferior deed or cheapness (*hīno*), of the villagers (*gammo*), of the common people (*puthujjaniko*), and not of saintly persons (*anariyo*):

- 1- *Kāma-sukhallikā-nuyoga* – the practice aimed at happiness arising from sensual pleasures.
- 2- *Atta-kilamatthā-nuyoga* – the practice involved the most difficult or superfluous deed leading to nothing but just uselessly hurts and suffers oneself.

The Buddha says that the Middle Path (*Majjhimā-paṭipadā*) is the only way to the extinction of suffering.

Moreover, the history tells us that Ancient India whose civilization came into existence about 4,000 years B.C. was the cradle of many philosophers, religious gurus, and saints.

According to the *Tipiṭaka* (the three collections of the Buddha's teaching), the innumerable previous Buddhas including saintly persons occurred in *Jambu-dīpa* (India) in the past billion years ago. It can be understood that due to the law of impermanence, even the Buddhas in the past (*atīta-buddhā*) and their teachings appeared and then disappeared on certain occasions.

Meditation, in fact, is the universal law, the law of nature. It is not created by any God, any spiritual leader or by the Buddha. But all the Buddhas only discovered it through their *pāramī* - wholesome mental quality that helps to dissolve an egoism and leads one to full liberation.

Chapter II

Real Buddhist Meditation

Human beings need rest and peace of mind, which includes living a full life. To attain the real peace of mind is to learn, to understand and to practise the values of true Buddhist meditation.

The main object of Buddhist meditation aims at the realization of the ultimate goal of life leading to *Nibbāna*. In order to attain this goal, the correct method of the practice of meditation is very necessary.

The following are the suggestions for one who wants to learn and practise the real meditation taught by the Buddha and his disciples:

1. *Guru*: Looking for an honest, faithful and respectable teacher who has a real knowledge of true meditation, has experienced in applying correctly any one of the many meditations. Above all, a meditation teacher should be a person who bears a moral character, i.e. *sīla* (precepts) in a daily life.
2. *Place*: Looking for a suitable, calm and quiet place free from all kinds of disturbances.
3. *Palibodha*: Fulfilling the tasks and duties at home or at work before going to meditation center.
4. *Sīla*: Observing the precepts strictly and carefully, since *sīla* is intended to control actions and words, and also serves as a foundation for *samādhi*.

The Buddhist meditation can be summarized into *Samatha* meditation and *Vipassanā* meditation. *Samatha* meditation is synonym of *Samādhi* meditation, which is sometimes called “*Samatha-bhāvanā*” or “*Samādhi-bhāvanā*.”

Samatha means calmness, tranquility. *Bhāvanā* means concentration of mind or mental development, or meditation. Hence, *Samatha-bhāvanā* is the development of calmness which is synonymous with *Samādhi-bhāvanā*.

Vipassanā means seeing insight, which purifies the mind corresponding to wisdom. *Vipassanā-bhāvanā* can be defined as a systematic development of insight through meditation technique of observing the reality of oneself by observing sensations within the body.

Please note that the development of *Samatha* meditation will only leads to the state of *Jhāna*, while the development of *Vipassanā* will lead to total liberation of the mind.

Moreover, the term “*Samatha*” or “*Samādhi*” is described as being calm, quiet or tranquil from five hindrances called “*nīvaraṇas*” which are the major enemies or obstacles to mental development (*Samādhi*).

Five *nīvaraṇas* (hindrances):

- 1- *Kāmacchanda* (craving)
- 2- *Byāpāda* (aversion)
- 3- *Thīna-middha* (sloth and torpor)
- 4- *Uddhacca-kukkucca* (agitation)
- 5- *Vicikicchā* (doubt)

These five hindrances always prevent mental development from the state of tranquility (*Samādhi*). When they appear in

the mind of meditator, he will lose the control of his own mind. *Samādhi* is, therefore, the result coming out of concentration which is free from the *nīvaraṇas*.

Samādhi is of three types:

- 1- *Khaṇika samādhi* (concentration sustained from moment to moment);
- 2- *Upacāra samādhi* (concentration approaching a state of absorption);
- 3- *Appanā samādhi* (attainment on concentration, a state of *Jhāna*).

Of these three *samādhis*, *khaṇika samādhi* is the sufficient preparation to begin the practice of *Vipassanā samādhi*. In Buddhism, there are 40 different methods of concentration of which the most outstanding one is *ānāpāna*, i.e., concentration on the incoming and outgoing breath, the method practised and taught by all the Buddhas.

Please see the details of *samādhi* in Right Concentration in the next chapter.

How to Practise Ānāpāna Meditation

Ānāpāna in Pali (*Sanskrit: ānāprāṇa*) has been defined as *assāsa-passāsa*, i.e., incoming breath and outgoing breath. It is the name of *ānāpāna* meditation (awareness of respiration).

In ancient time or even now, some unqualified meditation teachers have given false methods in the practice of meditation, e.g. in *ānāpāna* meditation. They advise the students to count the incoming and outgoing breaths again and again. Counting the number of breath is completely use-

less. Some instructors tell the students to look at the image of the Buddha during they breathe in and out. By misunderstanding the real fact, they guide the mediators to practise *Buddhānussati* by counting “*Buddho, Buddho,*” or “*arahaṃ, arahaṃ*,” until the Buddha appears before them. This is the false meditation that sometimes leads to nothing but nonsense and craziness. As the result of false guidance given by unqualified teachers like that, a number of students are seen to suffer from mental disorder, so that they frequently talk to the *devas* or *brahmas*, they say. Some said that they met the Buddha, *Ānanda, Sāriputta, Mogallāna*, so on and so forth. This is, indeed, a false meditation and simply an imagination.

As a matter of fact, the Buddha, the noble and saintly persons who have already attained *nibbāna* will never come into existence any more. By *Buddhānussati*, it means concentration upon the purity and perfection of not only one Buddha but also all the Buddhas in the past, the future, and the present – “*ye ca buddhā atitā ca, ye ca buddhā anāgatā, paccuppannā ca ye buddhā, ahaṃ vandāmi sappadā.*”

Ānāpāṇa meditation is a way of training the mind to become strong, pure and tranquil. Although different methods may be used by different meditators, the goal for the development of mind is the same, i.e., a perfect state of physical and mental calm.

The meditation teacher should help the student to develop the power of concentration to one-pointedness by being encouraged to focus his attention at a particular spot on the upper lip at the base of the nose, synchronizing the inward and outward motion of respiration with silent awareness of the in-breath and out-breath.

To practise the *ānāpāṇa* meditation, the mediators may be advised to understand the four categories of the breath:

- 1 - *Ojārika*: an impure breath of the ordinary persons who do not practise meditation.
- 2 - *Sukhuma*: a fine, delicate and tiny breath of mediator whose mind becomes purer and more peaceful.
- 3 - *Atisukhuma*: a very subtle breath which is almost breathless.
- 4 - *Aniccalāti*: a very quiet, immovable breath. At this stage, the breath is immovable if a piece of cotton is placed on the upper lip at the base of the mediator's nose. He is not dead because calorific element is still active while his breath is restful.

The Buddha taught us to completely purify our mind by eradicating all mental impurities, such as lust, anger, hatred, revenge, etc... To do this, we must understand our own physical and mental nature by using a pure object of concentration – natural and normal respiration.

Now, we sit down, stop moving, and close our eyes. We then begin paying attention to this reality: the breath entering and leaving the nostrils. We should not try to regulate the breath or do any breathing exercise, but should try to keep the mind fixed on the incoming breath and outgoing breath as long as possible, ignoring any other thoughts.

As soon as we try to keep our mind on the breath and stop all thoughts, a hundred or thousand things jump into the mind. Now, we realize that the human mind is very fleeting, very fickle like a monkey (*kapi-citta*). It wanders from one object to so many objects. At the same time, we worry about a pain in the back and the legs. We also find that our mind travels in two areas only: the past and future. Whenever we try to forget the past and future and concentrate on the breath

now, this time, passing through the nostrils, immediately some pleasant or unpleasant memory of the past occurs, and some hope or fear for the future also comes up. Immediately, we forget what we are trying to do.

In that manner, we keep trying patiently to bring the mind back to the breath. We fail and try again and again. After some moment, we find that the mind does stay a little longer on the object of the breath. To change the habit pattern of the mind, we must train it to remain concentrated on a single object in the present, i.e., the awareness of respiration, and not in the past or in the future. When our mind is fully concentrated on respiration (*ānāpāṇassati*), there is no delusion, no ignorance, because we do not generate craving (*lobha*) for incoming breath or aversion (*dosa*) towards outgoing breath. We merely observe the breath entering and leaving the nostrils objectively without reacting to it. In such a moment, the mind is free from craving, aversion and delusion. This moment of purity at the conscious level produces a strong impact on the old impurities accumulated in the deeper levels of the mind.

When we learn to be in equanimity in all situations, our mind will become purer and be free from hindrances. This development of a pure mind will result in real happiness, real peace, real harmony and real liberation. This very pure mind is called “*citto vimutti*” which means “being free from the hindrances due to pure mind.

Samādhi is the key to the contemplation of *anicca*. Good *samādhi* depends on perfect *sāla*. For a good experience of *anicca*, *samādhi* must be good. If *samādhi* is excellent, awareness of *anicca* will become excellent.

Chapter III

Vipassanā Bhāvanā (Vipassanā Meditation)

Vipassanā means “seeing in a special way,” which is the development of insight, especially insight into the three basic characteristics (*ti-lakkhaṇa*), i.e., impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anattā*). These three are the nature of mental-physical structure.

Vipassanā meditation or *vipassanā bhāvanā* is a systematic development of insight through the meditation technique of observing the reality of oneself by observing the sensations (*vedanā*) within the body. By the practice of *Vipassanā* meditation, the meditator will be able to gain wisdom called “*bhāvanā-maya-paññā*.”

The Buddha wants us to experience the entire field of mind and matter within ourselves. To explore both fields, he gives us four *satippaṭṭhānas* (foundations of awareness):

- 1- *kāyānupassanā* (observation of the body);
- 2- *vedanānupassanā* (observation of sensations arising within the body);
- 3- *cittānupassanā* (observation of the mind);
- 4- *dhammānupassanā* (observation of the contents of the mind – phenomena).

These four *satippaṭṭhānas* are interconnected aspects of Vipassanā meditation. *Kāyānupassanā* and *vedanānupassanā* pertain to the physical structure, while *cittānupassanā* and *dhammānupassanā* pertain to the mental structure. It is

Vipassanā that helps us understand the reality about the mind and matter that are related to each other. Since the mind and body are closely interrelated, we must use a strong concentration to examine every part of our body and mind at the same time.

In *Mahāsatippaṭṭhāna-sutta*, the Buddha highly praised the practice of the four-fold *satippaṭṭhāna* as *ekāyano maggo* “the only path for the purification of beings, for overcoming sorrow, for extinguishing of suffering, for entering the path of truth, and experiencing *Nibbāna*.”

To explore the truth about ourselves, we must examine what we are: body and mind. We must learn to directly observe these within ourselves. The Buddha says, “*Vedanā-samosaraṇā sabbe dhammā* - whatever arises in the mind is accompanied by sensations.”

Thus, observation of *vedanā* (bodily sensation) is the only means to examine the totality of our being, physical as well as mental. The outside world comes in contact with the individual only at the six sense doors: the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. As all these sense doors are contained in the body, every contact of the outside world is at the body level. According to the law of nature, with every contact there is bound to be sensation. Every time there is a contact with any of the six sense objects, a sensation will arise on the body.

Therefore, just as the understanding of *vedanā* is absolutely essential to understand the interaction between mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) within ourselves, the same understanding of *vedanā* is essential to understand the interaction of the outside world with the individual.

The *Mahāsatippaṭṭhāna-sutta* begins with the observation of the body. Here, several different starting points are explained: observing respiration, giving attention to bodily

movements, etc. It is from these points that we progressively can develop *vedanānupassanā*, *cittānupassanā*, and *dhammānupassanā*.

Therefore, in order to practise any of the four-fold *satippaṭṭhānas*, we have to develop the constant thorough understanding of impermanence known as *sampajañña* in Pali. In other word, one must meditate on the arising and passing away of phenomena, objectively observing mind and matter without reaction.

In *Samyutta-nikāya*, the Buddha explains that *sampajañña* is the constant observation of the arising and passing away of *vedanā*. Hence, the part played by *vedanā* in the practice of *satippaṭṭhāna* should not be ignored, otherwise this practice of *satippaṭṭhāna* will not be complete. This practice can be complete only when one directly experiences impermanence (*anicca*). The meditator should practise to observe the level of sensation starting from the top of the head to the tip of the toes, and then from the tip of the toes to the top of the head. In doing so again and again, one should also examine the entire body, part by part, and piece by piece.

If we continue to work patiently, diligently and equanimously without any obstacle, then some subtle reality on the part of the body will start manifesting itself. That is natural, normal bodily sensation. The Buddha wants us to continue to work by moving towards subtler and subtler reality. By observing the entire physical structure at the level of sensation, we will experience that the entire physical structure is nothing but subatomic particles called “*kalāpa*” in Pali. According to the Buddha’s teaching, these tiniest subatomic particles are not solid. They are just combustion and vibration, and we have already known this. The modern scientists have also proved that it is true that the entire material universe is composed of tiny particles which arise and vanish

trillions of times in just a second. The meditators have experienced this directly through meditation.

This self-examination usually gives the meditators many surprises. There are so many pleasant and unpleasant things. But when we meditate, we must not react to any thought, any feeling, any impression that forms in the mind. We must simply know what is happening inside us, and accept it as a reality. We must not try to avoid or change it, but merely observe it. By observing ourselves, we realize, from our own experience, that nothing remains permanently – not even the most pleasant or unpleasant things. We also understand that everything inside us is changing every moment, and in the same manner everything in the whole world outside us is changing, too. This is what the Buddha called “*anicca*” (impermanence) – the reality of change.

Undoubtedly, after we sit to meditate for a while, we find that a pain starts in the knees, in the back, and sometimes or at the same time a bad cough comes together with the pain. We hate it and want it to go away. But it loves us and wants to accompany us as long as we live (*saṅkhāra*). The more we hate it, the stronger it becomes. On the contrary, if we learn just to observe the pain, then we can see that the pain itself is changing. Every moment it changes, goes away, starts again, and changes again. But if we ignore it, and simply observe it with equanimity (*upekkhā*), it may go away quickly. This is the way we learn to liberate ourselves from suffering (*dukkha*).

Now, we continue to examine ourselves and realize that everything inside and outside us is changing every moment like this, then there is no “*I*,” no “*me*,” no “*mine*” (*anattā*). *Anattā* (egolessness) is just a phenomenon, a process which is always changing.

The goal of *Vipassanā* meditation is to purify the mind, to free the mind from misery and its causes. When the mind is freed from mental impurities and defilements, the meditators will receive an experiential wisdom (*vipassanā-paññā*), that means the understanding of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā* by the practice of *Vipassanā*, i.e., insight meditation. Moreover, *Vipassanā-paññā* leads to “*paññā-vimutti*,” meaning “being free from mental impurities due to insight.”

Vipassanā-paññā

(Wisdom in Vipassanā)

There are three kinds of wisdom: 1- received wisdom (*suta-maya-paññā*), 2- intellectual wisdom (*cinta-maya-paññā*), and 3- experiential wisdom (*bhāvanā-maya-paññā*). Of these three, only the third one can totally purify the mind. It is cultivated by the practice of *Vipassanā* meditation. Mere book-knowledge of the Buddha’s teaching will not be sufficient for the correct understanding of *anicca*. From the days of the Buddha until now and in the future, this understanding of *anicca* can be developed by everyone including the illiterate persons. If we understand *anicca* correctly, we understand *dukkha* as its corollary, and *anattā* as the ultimate truth. To understand the *anicca*, one must follow strictly and diligently the Noble Eightfold Path, which is divided into three groups: morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), wisdom (*paññā*). *Sīla* is the basis for *samādhi*. It is only when *samādhi* is good, then one can develop *paññā*.

The Buddha advises his disciples that they should try to maintain the awareness of *anicca*, *dukkha* or *anattā* in all postures, whether sitting, standing, walking or lying down. He says that everything which exists at the material level is composed of *kalāpas*. *Kalāpas* are the material units very

much smaller than atoms, which dies out almost immediately after they come into beings. Each *kalāpa* (sometimes called “*kalāpa-rūpa*”) is a mass formed of eight basic constituents of matter: the solid, liquid, calorific and oscillatory, together with colour, smell, taste and nutriment. The first four are called primary qualities, and are predominant in a *kalāpa*. The other four are subsidiaries dependent upon and spring from the former. It is only when these eight basic elements unite together, then the *kalāpa* is formed. According to Buddhism, the life-span of a *kalāpa* is termed a “moment,” and a trillion such moments are said to elapse during a wink of a man’s eye. These *kalāpas* are all in the state of perpetual change or flux.

A developed meditator in *Vipassanā* may appear that the human body is not a solid stable entity, but a continuum of *rūpa* (matter) coexisting with *nāma* (mentality). In order to know that human body is tiny *kalāpas* all in the state of change is to know the true nature of change or decay. This change (*anicca*) occasioned by the continual breakdown and replacement of *kalāpas*, must necessarily be identified as *dukkha*, the truth of suffering. When we realize the subtle nature of suffering from which we cannot escape for a moment, we become afraid of, disgusted with, and disinclined toward our very existence as *nāma-rūpa* (mentality-materiality), and look for a way of escape to a state beyond *dukkha*, and so to *Nibbāna*, the end of total suffering. It may take times to reach the end of suffering, but we must think that where there is a will, there is a way.

After *samādhi* has been developed to a proper level, the *Vipassanā* meditator should understand that *anicca* can be contemplated through the following feeling:

1- by contact of visible form with the sense organ of the eye;

- 2- by contact of sound with the sense organ of the ear;
- 3- by contact of smell with the sense organ of the nose;
- 4- by contact of taste with the sense organ of the tongue;
- 5- by contact of touch with the sense organ of the body;
- 6- by contact of mental objects with the sense organ of the mind.

Visuddhi (Purification)

Vipassanā meditator should also acquaint himself with the seven purifications (*visuddhi*):

- 1- Purification of morality (*sīla-visuddhi*);
- 2- Purification of mind (*citta-visuddhi*);
- 3- Purification of right view with clear understanding the arising and dissolution of *nāma* and *rūpa* which are the nature of change (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*);
- 4 Purification of wisdom, free from doubt with clear understanding that ignorance, craving, attachment, action, and nutriment are the cause and effect of mind and matter (*kaṅkhāvītarāṇa-visuddhi*);
- 5. Purification of wisdom with clear understanding that this is the Noble Path and this is not the Noble Path (*maggā - maggaññāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*);
- 6- Purification of wisdom which is the factor leading to the practice in accordance with the nine levels of knowledge in *Vipassanā* (*paṭipadāññāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*);
- 7- Purification of wisdom born out of *Vipassanā* leading the way to the Noble Path since the meditator concentrates upon *Nibbāna* as an object of *Vipassanā* meditation (*ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*).

Vipassanū-pakkilesa

(The ten mental impurities in Vipassanā)

1- *Obhāsa* - the bright light that occurred during the *samatha* meditation becomes brighter, so that the Vipassanā meditator may misunderstand the non-Noble Path to be Noble Path;

2- *Ñāṇa* - experiential knowledge becomes stronger than before;

3- *Pīti* - rapture becomes greater and greater than before;

4- *Passaddhi* - tranquillity appears to be more peaceful than before;

5- *Sukha* - happiness becomes greater and greater;

6- *Adhimokkha* - determination becomes stronger than before;

7- *Paggaha* - right effort becomes firmer than before;

8- *Upaṭṭhāna* - awareness becomes sharper and sharper;

9- *Upekkhā* - equanimity becomes clearer;

10- *Nikanti* - subtle craving (*sukhuma taṇhā*) makes the meditator happier in the material form as the result of Vipassanā.

These mental impurities or mental defilements are the real enemies to Vipassanā meditator, (but not to *samādhi* one). Obviously, whenever the nine levels of wisdom appear in the mind of the Vipassanā meditator, any one of the ten defilements may occur to prevent the meditator from reaching the goal of attainment. For an example, when *vipassanā-ñāṇa* is properly developed, wisdom appears, and at the meantime the brighter light is seen, and high tranquillity also becomes

higher and higher. At this stage, the meditator should take into consideration that the wisdom and tranquillity of these kinds are not the Noble Path, and then he should regard them as just mental defilements, because desire or craving is itself defilement. When he realizes that this is the Noble Path, this is not the Noble Path, it means that he cuts off defilements in Vipassanā.

The nine levels of wisdom in Vipassanā are:

1- *Udayabhaya* – wisdom of the arising and passing away of *nāma* and *rūpa* by direct observation;

2- *Bhaṅga* - wisdom of the rapidly changing nature of *nāma* and *rūpa* as a swift current of a stream of energy, in particular, clear awareness of the phase of dissolution;

3- *Bhaya* - wisdom that this very existence is dreadful;

4- *Ādīnava* -wisdom that this very existence is full of evils;

5- *Nibbidā* - wisdom that this very existence is disgusting;

6- *Muñcitakamyatā* - wisdom of the urgent need and wish to escape from this very existence;

7- *Paṭisaṅkhāra* - wisdom that the time has come to work for full realization of deliverance with *anicca* as base;

8- *Saiṅkhāruppekkhā* - wisdom that the stage is now set to get detached from all conditioned phenomena (*saṅkhāra*), and to break away from egocentricity.

9- *Anuloma* - wisdom that would accelerate the effort to reach the goal.

These nine levels of wisdom in Vipassanā are the levels of

attainment which one goes through during the practice of Vipassanā meditation. The initial object of Vipassanā is to activate the experience of *anicca* in oneself and eventually to reach a state of inner and outer calmness and balance. This is achieved only when one becomes engrossed in the feeling of *anicca* within. This experience of *anicca* is not reserved only for those who have renounced the world for the homeless life but also for the householder and everybody.

There is no special method or technique for activating the experience of *anicca* rather than the use of the mind adjusted to a perfect state of balance and attention projected upon the object of meditation – *anicca*. During the time, at least, an attempt must be made to keep the attention focused inside the body with awareness devoted exclusively to *anicca*. In experiencing *anicca* in relation to the body, it should first be in the area where one can easily get his attention engrossed, changing the area of attention from place to place, from the top of the head to the feet and from the feet to the top of the head, at time probing into the interior. At this stage, it must clearly be understood that no attention is to be paid to the anatomy of the body, but to the formations of matter (*kalāpa*) and the nature of their constant change.

There is likely to be some trouble for one who has not yet reached the stage of *bhaṅga*. It will be just like a tug-of-war for him between *anicca* within and physical and mental activities outside. In case that this is not possible, he will have to go back to respiration-mindfulness (*ānāpāṇa*), since *samādhi* is the key to the contemplation of *anicca*. To get good *samādhi*, *sīla* has to be perfect, since *samādhi* is built upon *sīla*. For a good experience of *anicca*, *samādhi* must be good. If *samādhi* is excellent, awareness of *anicca* will also become excellent.

If one attains high levels of Vipassanā knowledge, his power to understand the three characteristics of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā* will increase and he will accordingly come nearer and nearer to the goal of the noble saint. He sees *Nibbāna* with direct vision, makes it an object of immediate realization. However, in the stages of *samādhi* meditation and even *Vipassanā* meditation, the defilements were not cut off, but were only debilitated, checked and suppressed by the training of the higher mental faculties. Beneath the surface, they continue to linger in the form of latent tendencies.

Samyojana

The defilements are classified into a set of ten fetters called “*samyojana*” in Pali. They are:

- 1- *Sakkāya-dīṭṭhi* (personality view);
- 2- *Vicikicchā* (doubt);
- 3- *Silabbata-parāmāsa* (clinging to rules and rituals);
- 4- *Kāmac-chanda* (sensual desire);
- 5- *Paṭigha* (anger or aversion);
- 6- *Rūpa-rāga* (desire for fine-material existence);
- 7- *Arūpa-rāga* (desire for immaterial existence);
- 8- *Māna* (conceit);
- 9- *Uddhacca* (restlessness);
- 10- *Avijjā* (ignorance).

When the supra-mundane paths (*ariya-maggas*) are reached, they have the special task of eradicating defilements. The four supra-mundane paths each eliminate a certain layer of the defilements.

The first path, *sotāpatti-magga* (the path of stream-entry), cuts off the first three fetters, the coarsest of the set, eliminates them, so they can never arise again. *Sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (personality view), the view of a truly existence self in the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*) is cut off, since one sees the selfless nature of all phenomena. *Vicikicchā* (doubt) is eliminated because one has grasped the truth proclaimed by the Buddha, seen it for oneself, and so can never again hang back due to uncertainty. And *silabbata-parāmāsa* (clinging to the rules and rites) is removed since one knows that the deliverance can be won only through the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path, and not through rigid philosophy, or ceremonial observances.

The path is followed immediately by another state of the supra-mundane consciousness known as *phala* (fruit), which results from the path's work of cutting off the defilements. Each is followed by its own fruit, wherein for a few moments the mind enjoys the blissful peace of *Nibbāna* before descending again to the level of mundane consciousness (*lokiya-citta*). The first fruit is the fruit of stream-entry (*sotāpatti-phala*), and a person who has gone through the experience of this fruit becomes "*sotāpanna*" (stream-enterer). He has entered the stream of the *Dhamma* carrying him to the final deliverance. He is bound for liberation, and can no longer fall back into the ways of unenlightened world. He still has certain defilements remaining in his mental make-up, and it may take him as long as seven more lives to arrive at the final goal, but he has acquired the essential realization needed to reach it, and there is no way he can fall away.

After reaching the stream-entry, an enthusiastic meditator with sharp faculties does not relax his striving, but puts forth effort to complete the entire path as swiftly as possible. He

resumes his practice of the insight contemplation, passes through the ascending stages of insight-wisdom, and in time reaches the second path, *sakadāgāmi-magga* (the path of the once-returner). The supra-mundane path does not totally eradicate any of the fetters, but it does attenuate the roots of craving, aversion, and delusion. Following the path, the meditator experiences its fruit, then emerges as a "*sakadāgāmi*" (one who will return to this world at most only one more time before attaining full liberation, *Nibbāna*).

But the meditator again takes up the task of contemplation. At the next stage of supra-mundane realization, he attains the third path, *anāgāmi-magga* (the path of the non-returner), with which he cuts off the two fetters of sensual desire (*kāmac-chanda*) and anger (*paṭigha*). From that point on, he can never again fall into the grip of any desire for sense pleasure and can never arouse to anger, aversion, or discontent. As a non-returner, he will not return to the human state of existence in any future life. If he does not reach the last path in this very life, then after death he will be born in a higher sphere of the fine-material world (*rūpa-loka*) and there he will reach deliverance.

Even then, the meditator again puts forth effort, develops wisdom, and at its climax enters the fourth path, *arahatta-magga*, (the path of *arahatship*). With this path, he cuts off the five remaining fetters – desire for fine-material existence, desire for immaterial existence, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance.

This path of *arahatship* issues in perfect comprehension of the Four Noble Truths. The *arahanta*, one who in this very life, has been liberated from all bonds, has walked the Noble Eightfold Path to its end, and lives in the enjoyment of their fruits, enlightenment and final deliverance, *Nibbāna*.

Chapter IV

Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma

(The Factors of Enlightenment)

All the Buddhas, the *pacceka-buddhas*, and the noble ones in the past, in the present, and in the future, who make a search for the Four Noble Truths and see the ultimate reality (*Nibbāna*) because of the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment:

- 1- Four foundations of mindfulness (*satippaṭṭhāna*);
- 2- Four right contemplations (*sammappādhāna*);
- 3- Four bases of success (*iddhipāda*);
- 4- Five faculties (*indriya*);
- 5- Five mental strengths (*bala*);
- 6- Seven qualities to attain enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*);
- 7- Eightfold Noble Path (*ariya-magga*).

The ultimate reality or truth – *Dhamma* – is the truth of our own experience. The Buddha says that *Dhamma* is always available to anyone, and the place where it is to be realized is within oneself. It is directly and timelessly visible. But it can be reached only by understanding our own experience, by penetrating it right through to its deepest foundations.

Satippaṭṭhāna (Foundation of mindfulness)

“*Sati*” in Pali is usually translated as “mindfulness.” Mindfulness is the presence of mind, awareness. The type of awareness involved in mindfulness is profoundly different from the type of awareness at work in our usual mode of consciousness. In the practice of right mindfulness, the mind is trained to remain in the present, open, quiet and alert, contemplating the present event, and neither the past nor the future. Mindfulness serves as a guard charged with responsibility of making sure that the mind does not slip away from the object to lose itself in random undirected thoughts. It is also responsible for watching over the factors stirring in the mind, catching the hindrances beneath their camouflages and expelling them before they can cause harm.

The Buddha says that the four foundations of mindfulness (*satippaṭṭhānas*) form “the only way that leads to the attainment of purity, to the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, to the end of pain and grief, to the entering upon the right path, and the realization of *Nibbāna*.”

There are four interconnected aspects of *satippaṭṭhāna*:

- 1- *Kāyānupassanā* (Observation of the body);
- 2- *Vedanānupassanā* (Observation of sensations arising within the body);
- 3- *Cittānupassanā* (Observation of the mind);
- 4- *Dhammānupassanā* (Observation of the contents of the mind)

1) ***Kāyānupassanā* (Observation of the body):**
Observation of the body alludes to awareness of respiration

(*ānāpāṇassati*), which usually serves as the root of meditation subject, the foundation for the entire course of contemplation. Obviously, the Buddha used this *ānāpāṇa* on the night of his own enlightenment, and constantly recommended it to the *bhikkhus* (monks), praising it as “peaceful and sublime.”

Awareness of respiration can function so effectively as a subject of meditation, because it works with a process that is always available to us, the process of breathing. Meditator simply brings this process into the range of awareness by making the breath an object of observation. This meditation requires nothing but only awareness of the breath. He simply breathes naturally through the nostrils keeping the breath in the mind at the contact point around the nostrils or upper lip where the sensation of the breath can be felt as the air moves in and out. There should be no attempt to regulate or control the breath. Whenever one becomes really aware of breathing, one can be aware of it only in the present, never in the past or future.

To the Buddha’s teaching, awareness of breathing requires that a long inhalation or exhalation be noted as it occurs, and that a short inhalation or exhalation be noted as it occurs. The meditator merely observes the breath moving in and out, observing it as closely as possible, notes whether the breath is long or short. Whenever the mindfulness grows sharper, the breath can be followed through the entire course of its movement until it becomes extremely fine and subtle.

There is another practice in observation of the body which is awareness of postures. The body can assume the four basic postures – walking, standing, sitting and lying down. Mindfulness of the postures focuses full attention on the body in

whatever position it may assume, e.g., when walking the meditator is aware of walking, when standing he is aware of standing, when sitting he is aware of sitting, when lying down he is aware of lying down. And even when changing from one posture of another, he is aware of such a changing posture.

Furthermore, there is an extension of mindfulness called “*satisampajañña*” (awareness and comprehension). When the meditator performs any action, he does it with full attentiveness and clear comprehension – going and coming, looking ahead and looking aside, bending and stretching, dressing, eating, drinking, urinating, falling asleep, waking up, speaking, remaining silent, etc...

The Buddha also teaches the meditation on the body’s unattractiveness (*kāyagatā-sati*) which aims at weakening sensual desire. This kind of meditation takes one’s own body as an object. The texts mention thirty-two parts (32 *ākāras*): head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, stomach contents, excrement, brain, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, snot, spittle, synovial fluid and urine. Using visualization as an aid, the meditator dissects the body into its component and examines them one by one, bringing their repulsive nature to light. The purpose of this meditation is to extinguish the fire of lust by removing its fuel.

The other meditation deals with the body in four different elements (*dhātu-vavatthāna*). It employs mental dissection of the body into four primary elements: earth, water, fire, and air. These four elements actually signify the four principal behavioural modes of matter (*mahā-phūtarūpa*): solid, fluid,

calorific, and oscillatory. The solid element is seen most clearly in the body's solid parts; the fluid element, in the body's fluids; the calorific element, in the body's temperature; and the oscillatory element, in the respiratory process. By analyzing the body into the four elements, one can see that the body is nothing more than a particular configuration of changing material processes which support a stream of changing mental processes. Nothing in the body can be considered a truly existent itself, and nothing can provide a substantial basis for the sense of personal identity.

The last practice in the observation of the body is a series of “*asubha meditations*,” contemplations of the body's disintegration after death, which may be performed either by imagination with an aid of pictures, or through a direct confrontation with a corpse. By any one of these means, we can obtain a clear mental image of a decomposing body, then apply the process to our own body, considering: “This body, now so full of life, has the same nature and is subject to the same fate. It cannot escape death, cannot escape disintegration, but must eventually die and decompose.”

By the practice of *asubha* meditations, the meditator can see clearly that “Everything is impermanent (*anicca*).”

2) *Vedanānupassanā* (Observation of sensations):

In the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, the Buddha says, “*Yaṃ kiñci vedayitaṃ taṃpi dukkhasmiṃ*,” – Whatever sensations one experiences, all are suffering. Sensations are of three kinds:

- 1- *Dukkha-vedanā* (unpleasant sensation);
- 2- *Sukha-vedanā* (pleasant sensation);

3- *Adukkhamasukha-vedanā* (neutral sensation).

All the three kinds of sensations are suffering, because of their impermanent nature (*anicca*), the nature which is the characteristic of *vedanā*. Every pleasant sensation has a seed of *dukkha* in it, because it is bound to pass away. We are so bound by ignorance that when a pleasant sensation arises, we react to it by developing craving (*lobha*), and then cling to it. This leads to suffering: *taṇhā dukkhassa sambhavaṃ* - craving is the origin of suffering. As a matter of fact, *taṇhā* and *dukkha* are born together (*sahajāta*). When unpleasant sensation occurs, we usually respond with displeasure, fear and hate which are the aspects of aversion (*dosa*). And when a neutral sensation occurs, we generally do not notice it, or let it lull us into the state of mind governed by delusion (*moha*).

In relation to the practice of the Buddha-Damma, the term “*vedanā*” conveys the sense of *dukkha*. This is why the Buddha correctly used the word *vedanā* as a synonym for *dukkha*. Therefore, not only for *dukkha-vedanā* but also for *sukha-vedanā* and *adukkhmasukha-vedanā*, the Buddha realized and named them as *dukkha*.

Sensation arises in dependence on a mental event called “*phassa*” (contact). *Phassa* marks the “coming together” of consciousness with the object via a sense faculty; it is the factor by virtue of which consciousness “touches” the object presenting itself to the mind through the sense organ. There are six sense faculties – eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, and mind-contact – and six kinds of sensation distinguished by the contact from which they spring.

In the *Dyāyatana-sutta of Suttanipāta*, the Buddha says:

“Whenever suffering arises, it is because of sensation – this is the first *anupassanā*. With complete cessation, there is further arising of suffering – this is the second *anupassanā*.”

The first *anupassanā* is the constant observation of *vedanā* as *dukkha*. The second *anupassanā* consists of the reality which beyond the field of *vedanā* as well as beyond the field of contact (*phassa*) and of the six sense doors (*saḷāyatana*). This is the stage of *nirodha-samādhī* of *arahant* (fully liberated one), the experience of the state of *Nibbāna*. By the second *anupassanā*, the meditator realizes the truth that in the field of *nirodha-samādhī* there is no *dukkha*, since there is no *vedanā*.

Sensations (*vedanā*) are the tools by which we can practise Four Noble Truths and Noble Eightfold Path. By realizing the characteristic of *anicca* (impermanence), we can free ourselves from the bonds of *avijjā* (ignorance) and *taṇhā* (craving), and penetrate to *Nibbāna*, the ultimate truth which is beyond the field of *vedanā* as well as beyond the field of *nāma-rūpa* (mind and matter).

3) *Cittānupassanā* (Observation of the mind):

The third *anupassanā* is the observation of the mind. To be able to understand what is entailed by this observation, it is helpful to look at the Buddhist conception of the mind. In the Buddha’s word, the mind is considered, not as a lasting subject of thought, feeling, and volition, but as a sequence of momentary mental acts, each distinct and discrete, their connections with one another causal rather than substantial.

A single act of consciousness is called a “*citta*,” which we

shall render “a state of mind.” Each *citta* consists of many components, the chief of which is consciousness itself, the basic experiencing of the object; consciousness is also called *citta*, the name of the whole being given to its principal part. Along with consciousness, every *citta* contains a set of concomitants called “*cetasikas*,” mental factors. *Cetasikas* are the accompanying things that naturally come and go away with *citta*. Since consciousness in itself is just a bare experiencing of an object, it cannot be differentiated through its own nature, but only by way of its associated factors, the *cetasikas*. The *cetasikas* colour the *citta* and give it its distinctive character. Therefore, when we want to pinpoint the *citta* as an object of observation, we have to do so by using the *cetasikas* as indicators.

In his exposition of the observation of the state of mind, the Buddha mentions, by reference to the *cetasikas*, sixteen kinds of *citta* to be noted: mind with lust, mind without lust, mind with aversion, mind without aversion, mind with delusion, mind without delusion, cramped mind, scattered mind, developed mind, undeveloped mind, surpassable mind, unsurpassable mind, concentrated mind, un-concentrated mind, freed mind, un-freed mind. For the practical purposes, it is sufficient at the start to focus solely on the first six states, noting whether the mind is associated with any of the unwholesome roots or free from them. When a particular *citta* is present, it is contemplated merely as a *citta*, a state of mind. It is not identified with as “*I*” or “*mine*,” not taken as a self or as something belonging to a self. Whether it is a pure state of mind or a defiled state, a lofty state or a low one, there should be no elation or dejection, only a clear recognition of the state. The state is simply noted, and then allowed to pass without clinging to the desired ones or resenting the undesired ones.

As contemplation deepens, the contents of the mind become increasingly rarefied. Irrelevant flights of thoughts, imagination, and emotion subside, mindfulness becomes clearer, the mind remains intently aware, watching its own process of becoming. The mind itself – the seemingly solid, stable mind – dissolved into a stream of *citta* flashing in and out of being moment by moment, coming from nowhere and going nowhere, yet continuing in sequence without pause.

4) ***Dhammānupassanā*** (Observation of the contents of the mind):

“*Dhamma*” means “the law of nature” or “the law of liberation” discovered and taught by an enlightened one, the Buddha. In the Pali language, *dhamma* is singular and *dhammā* is plural. Here, on the fourth *anupassanā*, the multivalent word “*dhammā*” (here intended in plural) has two interconnected meanings. One is *cetasikas*, the mental factors. The other meaning is the elements of faculty, the ultimate experience as structured in the Buddha’s teaching.

The observation of the *dhammā* is divided into five sub-sections:

- 1- Five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*);
- 2- Five aggregates (*upādānakkhandha*);
- 3- Six inner and outer sense bases (*saḷāyatana*);
- 4- Seven factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*);
- 5- Four Noble Truths (*ariya-sacca*).

Among these, the five hindrances and the seven factors of enlightenment are *dhammā* in the narrow sense of mental

factors, while the others are *dhammā* in the broader sense of constituents of actuality. In the third section, however, on the sense bases, there is a reference to the fetters that arrive through the senses. These can also be included among the mental factors.

The five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) are:

- (1) Sensual desire (*kāmac-chanda*);
- (2) Ill-will (*byāpāda*);
- (3) Dullness and drowsiness (*thīna-middha*);
- (4) Restlessness and worry (*uddhacca-kukkucca*);
- (5) Doubt (*vicikicchā*).

These five hindrances generally become manifest in an early state of the practice of meditation, soon after the initial expectations and gross disturbances subside and the subtle tendencies find the opportunity to surface. Whenever one of the hindrances crops up, its presence should be noted; then, when it fades away, a note should be made of its disappearance. To ensure that the hindrances are kept under control, an element of comprehension is needed: we have to understand how the hindrances arise, how they can be removed, and how they can be prevented from arising in the future.

The five aggregates (*upādānakkhandha*) are:

- (1) Material form (*rūpa*);
- (2) Sensation (*vedanā*);
- (3) Perception (*saññā*);

- (4) Mental formations (*saṅkhāra*);
- (5) Consciousness (*viññāṇa*).

Material form (*rūpa*) constitutes the material side of existence, e.g., the body organism with its sense faculties and the outer objects of cognition, while the other four aggregates constitute the mental side. Sensation provides the effective tone, perception the factor of noting and identifying, the mental formations the volitional and emotive elements, and consciousness the basic awareness essential to the whole occasion of experience. The Buddha teaches:

The disciple dwells in contemplation of dhammā, namely, of five aggregates of clinging. He knows what material form is, how it arises, how it passes away; knows what sensation is, how it arises, how it passes away; knows what perception is, how it arises, how it passes away; knows what mental formations are, how they arise, how they pass away; knows what consciousness is, how it arises, how it passes away.

In comparison with the five aggregates, the Buddha says:

<i>Pheṇupiṇḍopamaṃ rūpaṃ,</i>	<i>vedanā pubbuḷūpamā,</i>
<i>marīcikūpamā saññā,</i>	<i>saṅkhārā kadalūpamā,</i>
<i>māyūpamañca viññāṇaṃ</i>	<i>desitā-diccabandhunā.</i>

Material form is in comparison with balls of bubble, sensation with floated bubbles, perception with the sun walking its children (radiant sun), mental formations with banana tree, and consciousness with hypocrisy. These are said by the Buddha whose kinship is as high as the sun.

The six inner and outer sense bases (*saḷāyatana*):

Or the disciple may instead base his contemplation on the six internal and external spheres of sense experience, i.e., the six sense faculties and their corresponding objects, and also take note of the “fettters” that arise from such sensory contacts. The Buddha says:

The disciple dwells in contemplation of dhammā, namely, of the six internal and external sense bases. He knows the eye and forms, the ear and sounds, the nose and odours, the tongue and tastes, the body and tangibles, the mind and mental objects; and he knows as well the fetter that arises in dependence on them. He understands how the un-arisen fetter arises, how the arisen fetter is abandoned and how the abandoned fetter does not arise again in the future.

The seven factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*):

- (1) Mindfulness (*sati*);
- (2) Investigation (*dhamma-vicaya*);
- (3) Effort (*vīriya*);
- (4) Rapture (*pīti*);
- (5) Tranquillity (*passaddhi*);
- (6) Concentration (*samādhi*);
- (7) Equanimity (*upekkhā*).

When any one of these factors arises, its presence should be noted. Then, after noting its presence, one has to investigate to discover how it arises and how it can be matured. When they first spring up, the enlightenment factors are weak, but with consistent cultivation they accumulate strength. Mindfulness initiates the contemplative process. When it becomes well-established, it arouses investigation, the probing quality of intelligence. Investigation in turn calls

forth effort, effort gives rise to rapture, rapture leads to tranquillity, tranquillity to one-pointed concentration, and concentration to equanimity. Thus, the whole evolving course of practice leading to enlightenment begins with mindfulness, which remains throughout as the regulating power ensuring that the mind is clear, cognizant, and balanced.

The Four Noble Truths (*caturāriya-sacca*):

During his first sermon known as “*Dhamma-cakkappa-vattana sutta*,” the Buddha taught the Four Noble Truths that form the system of thought or philosophy. In fact, the first three of the Four Noble Truths expound the Buddha’s philosophy, while the fourth (the Noble Eightfold Path which is the code of morality-cum-philosophy) serves as a means for an end. The Four Noble Truths are as follows:

- (1) Truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*);
- (2) Truth of the origin of suffering (*samudaya-sacca*);
- (3) Truth of the extinction of suffering (*nirodha-sacca*);
- (4) Truth of the path leading to the extinction of suffering (*magga-sacca*).

By a process of reasoning, the Buddha explains his disciples the range of suffering:

This is the noble truth of suffering. Birth is suffering; aging is suffering; sickness is suffering; Death is suffering; sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are suffering; association with the unpleasant is suffering; separation from the pleasant is suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering; in brief, the five aggregates are suffering.

The second Noble Truth points out the cause of suffering. From the set of defilements, the Buddha singles out

craving (*taṇhā*) as the dominant and most pervasive cause, “the origin of suffering.” Thus, he says:

This is the noble truth of the origin of suffering. It is craving which produces repeated existence, is bound up with delight and lust, and seeks pleasure here and there, namely, craving for sense pleasure, craving for existence, and craving for non-existence.

The third Noble Truth simply reverses this relationship of the origination. If craving is the cause of suffering, then we have to eliminate craving. Thus, the Buddha says:

This is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering. It is the complete fading away and cessation of this craving, its forsaking and abandonment, liberation and detachment from it.

The fourth Noble Truth shows the way to reach the end of suffering, the way to the realization of *Nibbāna*. *Nibbāna* is the state of perfect peace that comes when craving is eliminated. That way is the Noble Eightfold Path itself. The Noble Eightfold Path is as follows:

- 1- Right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*);
- 2- Right intention (*sammā-saṅkappa*);
- 3- Right speech (*sammā-vācā*);
- 4- Right action (*sammā-kammanta*);
- 5- Right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*);
- 6- Right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*);
- 7- Right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*);
- 8- Right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*).

When the mind’s eye sees *Nibbāna*, one gains a perspective from which to view the five aggregates and sees that they are *dukkha* simply because they are conditioned, subject

to ceaseless change. At the same moment, *Nibbāna* is realized, craving stops, the understanding then dawns that craving is indeed the origin of *dukkha*. When *Nibbāna* is seen, it is realized to be the state of peace, free from the turmoil of becoming.

Sammappadhāna

(Right Contemplation)

The four *sammappadhānas* are the second group of the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. The term “*sammappadhāna*” can be described as “right effort,” or “right contemplation.” The Buddha and his accomplished disciples assure us that anyone who follows the path can accomplish the goal which is not beyond our reach. But what is needed is right effort, the work of practice taken up with a strong determination: “ I shall not give up my effort until I have attained whatever is attainable by manly perseverance, energy and endeavour.”

Sammappadhāna is the nature of mental process that effects a division of right effort into four great endeavours:

- 1- to prevent the arising of un-arising unwholesome states (*saṃvarappadhāna*),
- 2- to abandon unwholesome states that have already arisen (*pahānappadhāna*),
- 3- to arouse wholesome states that have not yet arisen (*bhāvanappadhāna*),
- 4- to maintain wholesome states that have already arisen (*anurakkhaṇappadhāna*).

The unwholesome states (*akusalā dhammā*) are the defilements, and the thoughts, emotions, and intentions derived from them. The wholesome states (*kusalā dhammā*) are the states of mind untainted by defilements. Each of the two kinds of mental states imposes a double task. The unwholesome side requires that the defilements lying dormant be prevented from erupting and that the active defilements already present be expelled. The wholesome side requires that the undeveloped liberation factors first be brought into being, then persistently developed to the point of full maturity. The work of self-cultivation is neither easy nor impossible.

The Buddha simply points out the path to liberation and urges us to put it into practice ourselves. The means to do so is the practice of *Vipassanā* meditation.

Iddhipāda

(Base of success)

The four *iddhipādas* are the third group of the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment.

Iddhipāda is the Pali word used in comparison with legs supporting the body. It is the foundation, the base of success or a stepping stone to success, which depends on the four wholesome conditionings:

- 1- *Chanda* (ambition to fulfil wholesome acts);
- 2- *Vīriya* (effort to fulfil wholesome acts);
- 3- *Citta* (thoughtfulness towards the ultimate reality);
- 4- *Vimaṃsa* (experiential wisdom in the path to the ultimate truth).

All the four *iddhipādas* are here referred to wholesome acts

(*kusalā dhammā*) only, and not to the unwholesome acts (*akusalā -dhammā*) in any way. Truly, these four *iddhipādas* are considered to be the most important success leading either to the state of mental absorption (*jhāna*) or even to supra-mundane state of mind.

According to commentaries in the *Sammoha-vinodanī*, it states that those who can penetrate even one of the four *iddhipādas*, can reach the stage of enlightenment, e.g., from *sotāpana* to *arahatship*.

Indriya

(Controlling faculty)

The term “*indriya*” carries so many meanings, but in this work we refer to mean the control of five *dhammā*:

- 1- *Saddhā* or *saddhindriya* (faith);
- 2- *Vīriya* or *vīriyindriya* (effort);
- 3- *Sati* or *satindriya* (awareness);
- 4- *Samādhi* or *samādhindriya* (concentration);
- 5- *Paññā* or *paññindriya* (wisdom).

Here, the word “*saddhā*” means faith in the enlightenment of the Buddha. It is supreme because it is firmly belief in the enlightenment of the Buddha, and prevents the arising of disbelief.

Vīriya refers to the great effort which prevents laziness from happening.

Sati is the great attentiveness paid to the qualification of the Enlightened One.

Samādhi means strong concentration that prevents sloth and torpor from happening.

Paññā is the experiential wisdom that prevents delusion or ignorance.

Bala

(Mental strength)

Bala is meant as the mental strength, power, or energy. There are five mental strengths:

- 1- *Saddhā* or *saddhā-bala* (faith);
- 2- *Vīriya* or *vīriya-bala* (effort);
- 3- *Sati* or *sati-bala* (awareness);
- 4- *Samādhi* or *samādhi-bala* (concentration);
- 5- *Paññā* or *paññā-bala* (wisdom).

In the *Bala-sutta*, the Buddha gives a definition of the word “*saddhā-bala*” as the mental strength of faith in the enlightenment of the Buddha who is always known by the following qualities:

Bhagavā - He is an exalted one, because, having overcome all craving, aversion and delusion, he leads the life of the liberated person;

Arahaṃ - He is the conqueror of enemies, because he has cut off all his enemies – mental impurities;

Sammā-sambuddho - He has become a fully enlightened one by his own right efforts;

Vijjā-carāṇa-sampanno - He is perfect in both wisdom and conduct;

Sugato - He has gone to the ultimate truth, because he has become pure in body, speech, and mind;

Loka-vidū - He is the best knower of the three worlds, since he perfectly understands them through his personal experience;

Anuttaro - He becomes a noble and perfect person by *sīla* (morality);

Purisa-damma-sārathi - He is the charioteer of tameable men;

Satthā deva-manussānaṃ - He becomes the teacher of gods and men;

Buddho - He discovers the Four Noble Truths, and also directs others towards the path leading to the final end of suffering.

All these qualities signify the nature of the Buddha. And anyone who acquires these qualities will become a Buddha.

To develop the mental strength of faith in the Buddha, one must also concentrate upon the observation of the *Dhamma* taught by the Buddha under the following conditions:

Svakkhāto - *Dhamma* is well explained ;

Sandiṭṭhiko - It can be experienced in this life;

Akāliko - It gives immediate results;

Ehipassiko - It invites people to come and see;

Opanayiko - Every successive step takes one towards the final goal of full liberation;

Paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhīti - It is to be experienced by each person of average intelligence, for oneself.

Furthermore, one must remember the qualities of the *saṅgha* (community of those who have experienced *Nibbāna* which is characterized as the noble disciples of the Buddha. They are:

Supaṭipanno - Those who correctly follow the Noble Eightfold Path leading to *Nibbāna*;

Ujupaṭipanno - Those who rightly follow the Middle Path;

Ñāyapaṭipanno - Those who penetrate towards *Nibbāna*;

Sāmicipaṭipanno - Those who strictly practise *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*;

Cattāri purisayugāni - If count as couples, they are four:

1- *sotāpatti-magga* and *sotāpatti-phala*,

2- *sakadāgāmi-magga* and *sakadāgāmi-phala*,

3- *anāgāmi-magga* and *anāgāmi-phala*,

4- *arahatta-magga* and *arahatta-phala*;

Aṭṭha purisa-puggalā - They are individualized into eight characters:

1- *sotāpatti-magga*, 2- *sotāpatti-phala*,

3- *sakadāgāmi-magga* 4- *sakadāgāmi-phala*,

5- *anāgāmi-magga* 6- *anāgāmi-phala*,

7- *arahatta-magga* 8- *arahatta-phala*;

Āhuneyyo - Being worthy of invitation;

Pāhuneyyo - Worthy of hospitality;

Dakkhiṇeyyo - Worthy of offerings.

Añjali-karaṇīyo - Worthy to be saluted with folded hands;

Anuttaraṃ puññakkhettaṃ - Field of merit per excellence.

In addition to the *saddhā* as the mental power, we are advised, when we take refuge in the Triple Gems and when we honour the *Buddha*, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha*, to think of their qualities and work diligently to develop these very qualities ourselves.

Vīriya-bala: By *vīriya-bala* (power of effort), the Buddha defines his disciples:

Oh, bhikkhus! The noble disciple who has begun his efforts to overcome unwholesome states to increasingly develop wholesome conditionings, is one who possesses a strong power of effort to maintain wholesome conditionings.

Sati-bala: The Buddha, in the definition of *sati-bala*, describes that the noble disciples, whose awareness and

wisdom become perfect, might be able to reminisce about his own or someone else's long past events and experiences.

By the term “*samādhī-bala*”, the Buddha says:

Oh, monks! What is *samādhī-bala*? Herein, secluded from sense pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, the noble disciple enters and dwells in the *First Jhāna*, which is accompanied by *vitakka* and *vicāra* (initial and sustained application of mind) and filled with *pīti* and *sukha* (rapture and happiness) born of seclusion.

Then, with the subsiding of *vitakka* and *vicāra*, he enters and dwells in the *Second Jhāna*, which is free from *vitakka* and *vicāra*, but is filled with *pīti* and *sukha* born of concentration.

With the fading out of *pīti*, he dwells in *upekkhā* (equanimity), mindful and clearly comprehension; and he experiences in his own person that bliss of which the noble ones say: “Happily lives he who is equanimous and mindful” – thus enters and dwells in the *Third Jhāna*.

With the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy and grief, he enters and dwells in the *Fourth Jhāna*, which has neither-pleasure-nor-pain and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.

This, monks, is *samādhī-bala*.

For the fifth mental strength, *paññā-bala*, the Buddha says:

Oh, monks! The noble disciple, full of wisdom, might be able to identify the becoming of existence and its extinc-

tion, and he gains an excellent wisdom which can eradicate the hills of craving and lead to the cessation of suffering.

Satta Bojjhaṅga

(The Seven Factors of Enlightenment)

The seven qualities of the factors that help to attain enlightenment has been ready mentioned as the sub-section of *Dhammānupassanā*. However, it is necessary to repeat in this part in order to fit the work in this chapter. The seven Factors of Enlightenment are as follows:

1- *Sati-sambojjhaṅga* - The disciple, with excellent mindfulness and wisdom, reminisces his or other people's bodily or verbal actions done in the long past.

2- *Dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhaṅga* - With the *sati* born of *Vipassanā*, he concentrates on *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā* and sees the factor of enlightenment.

3- *Vīriya-sambojjhaṅga* - While observing such a *dhamma* with wisdom, he keeps up efforts.

4- *Pīti-sambojjhaṅga* - With rapture backed by *Vipassanā*, he produces the factors of enlightenment.

5- *Passaddhi-sambojjhaṅga* - With mind backed by rapture, he becomes peaceful bodily and mentally.

6- *Samādhī-sambojjhaṅga* - He, who attains bodily peace, can find inner peace of mind filled with *samādhī* (*cittakaggatā*), i.e., one-pointed concentration.

7- *Upekkhā-sambojjhaṅga* - Right contemplation leads to equanimity.

The Noble Eightfold Path

(*Ariya-aṭṭhaṅgika-magga*)

“*Magga*” is the Pali word which means “path” or “way” that is the method of technique of practice leading to an end of suffering. This path is called the Noble Eightfold Path because it stands at the very heart of the Buddha’s teaching.

The Noble Eightfold Path was discovered by the Buddha whose enlightenment elevated him from the status of a wise sage to that of a teacher of gods and men (*satthā deva-manussānaṃ*). He was “the arouser of the path un-arisen before, the producer of the path not produced before, the declarer of the path not declared before, the knower of the path, the finder of the path, and the guide along the path.” He gave us a full and accurate picture of the range of suffering, the causes of suffering and the cutting of the causes of suffering.

The Noble Eightfold Path is divided as follows:

- 1- *Sammā-dīṭṭhi* (Right view),
- 2- *Sammā-saṅkappa* (Right intention),
- 3- *Sammā-vācā* (Right speech),
- 4- *Sammā-kammanta* (Right action),
- 5- *Sammā-ājīva* (Right livelihood),
- 6- *Sammā-vāyāma* (Right effort),
- 7- *Sammā-sati* (Right mindfulness),
- 8- *Sammā-samādhi* (Right concentration).

The Buddha gives us full details of the Noble Eightfold Path in various *suttas*, but here we are to discuss some of the explanations taken from the *Magga-vibhaṅga* of the *Abhidhamma*.

Sammā-dīṭṭhi (Right view):

- 1) *dukkhe ñāṇa* (understanding suffering),
- 2) *dukkhasamudaye ñāṇa* (understanding its origin),

- 3) *dukkhanirodhe ñāṇa* (understanding its cessation),
- 4) *dukkhanirodhagāminīpaṭipadāya ñāṇa* (understanding the way leading to its cessation).

Sammā-saṅkappa (Right intention):

- 1) *nekkhamma-saṅkappa* (intention of renunciation),
- 2) *abyāpāda-saṅkappa* (intention of good will),
- 3) *avihiṃsā-saṅkappa* (intention of harmlessness).

Sammā-vācā (Right speech):

- 1) *musāvādā veramaṇī* (abstention from false speech),
- 2) *pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī* (abstention from slanderous speech),
- 3) *pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī* (abstention from harsh speech),
- 4) *samphappalāpā veramaṇī* (abstention from idle chatter),

Sammā-kammanta (Right action):

- 1) *pāṇātipātā veramaṇī* (abstention from killing any being),
- 2) *adinnādānā veramaṇī* (abstention from stealing),
- 3) *kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī* (abstention from sexual misconduct).

Sammā-ājīva (Right livelihood):

micchā ājīvaṃ pahāya sammā ājīvena jīvitam kappeti (giving up wrong livelihood, one earns one’s living by right form of livelihood).

Sammā-vāyāma (Right effort):

- 1) *saṃvarappadhāna* (the effort to restrain defilements),
- 2) *pahānappadhāna* (the effort to abandon defilements),
- 3) *bhāvanāppadhāna* (the effort to develop wholesome states).

4) *anurakkhaṇappadhāna* (the effort to maintain wholesome states).

Sammā-sati (Right mindfulness):

- 1) *kāyānupassanā* (observation of the body),
- 2) *vedanānupassanā* (observation of sensation),
- 3) *cittānupassanā* (observation of the mind),
- 4) *dhammānupassanā* (observation of the contents of the mind).

Sammā-samādhi (Right concentration):

- 1) *pathamajjhāna* (first *jhāna*),
- 2) *dutiyajjhāna* (second *jhāna*),
- 3) *tatiyajjhāna* (third *jhāna*),
- 4) *catutthajjhāna* (fourth *jhāna*).

It can be understood that the whole concept of the Noble Eightfold Path is summed up into the three main stages, namely, *sīla* (morality), *samādhi* (mindful concentration), and *paññā* (insight wisdom). The Buddha advises us:

- 1- to abstain from evil (*sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ*);
- 2- to do good (*kusalassū-pasampadā*);
- 3- to purify the mind (*sacittapariyo-dapaṇaṃ*).

These are the teaching of the Buddhas (*etaṃ buddhāna-sāsanaṃ*).

Whoever desires to practise the real Buddhist meditation must follow strictly and diligently the three steps of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*, which form the essence of the Noble Eightfold Path.

Sīla (morality, precepts):

- 1- Right speech,
- 2- Right action,
- 3- Right livelihood.

Samādhi (mindful concentration):

- 4- Right effort,
- 5- Right mindfulness,
- 6- Right concentration.

Paññā (insight wisdom):

- 7- Right view,
- 8- Right intention.

Note: Please see the details of the Noble Eightfold Path in Chapter V.

Chapter V

The Noble Eightfold Path in details

1) Right view (*Sammā-dīṭṭhī*)

Considered from the standpoint of practical training, the eight path factors are divided into three groups:

- 1- *Sīlakkhandha* (Moral discipline group);
- 2- *Samādhikkhandha* (Concentration group);
- 3- *Paññakkhandha* (Wisdom group).

At the very outset, it is necessary to restrain the faculties of action, to prevent them from becoming the tools of defilements. This task can be accomplished by the training in the higher moral discipline which is the main foundation for the concentration. Concentration is achieved through the training in the higher consciousness needed as the foundation for the higher wisdom. Wisdom is the direct instrument for reaching liberation. But in order for the mind to be unified in concentration, the unwholesome dispositions must be checked from time to time. The unwholesome dispositions continue to rule as long as they are allowed to gain expression through the channels of body and speech as bodily and verbal actions (*kāya-kamma* and *vacī-kamma*).

Whenever the mind has been refined by the training of the higher moral discipline and the concentration, it reaches a superior right view and right intention, which now form the proper training in the higher wisdom. Right view is regarded as the forerunner of the entire path, the guide for all the other factors. It enables us to understand our starting point, our destination, and the successive landmarks. It also involves a

correct understanding of the entire Buddha-Dhamma. But for the practical purposes, two kinds of right view are to be understood as primary. One is mundane right view, which operates within the boundaries of the world. The other is the supra-mundane right view, the superior right view that leads to liberation from the world. The first is concerned with the laws governing both material and spiritual progress within the round of becoming, with the principles that lead to higher and lower states of existence, to mundane happiness as well as suffering. The second is concerned with the principles essential to liberation. It does not aim merely at spiritual progress from life to life, but at emancipation from the cycle of recurring lives and deaths.

Right view is the ownership of action, which is stated:

“Beings are the owners of their actions, the heirs of their actions; they spring from their actions, are bound to their actions, and are supported by their actions. Whatever deeds they do, of those they shall be heirs.”

To understand the implications of this form of right view, we first have to examine the meaning of the term “*kamma*.” “*Kamma*” means “action.” In a discourse on the analysis of *kamma*, the Buddha says: “Oh! monks, it is volition that I call action (*kamma*). Having willed, one performs an action through body, speech or mind.” Volition expressed through the body is a bodily action, through speech is a verbal action, and a volition that issues in thoughts, plans, ideas and other mental states is a mental action.

We can find that action (*kamma*) is distinguished as unwholesome (*akusala*) and wholesome (*kusala*). The Buddha calls these actions as the ten courses of unwholesome action (*akusala-kamma-patha*) and wholesome action (*kusala-kam-*

ma-patha). Among the ten in the two sets, three are bodily, four are verbal, and three are mental.

The ten unwholesome *kamma* courses:

A) Bodily action (*kāya-kamma*):

- 1- Destroying life (*pāṇātipātā*),
- 2- Taking what is not given (*adinnādāna*),
- 3- Sexual misconduct (*kāmesu micchācārā*),

B) Verbal action (*vacī-kamma*):

- 4- False speech (*musāvāda*),
- 5- Slandering speech (*pisuṇāvācā*),
- 6- Harsh speech (*bharusavācā*),
- 7- Idle chatter (*samphappalāpa*),

C) Mental action (*mano-kamma*):

- 8- Covetousness (*abhijjhā*),
- 9- Ill will (*byāpāda*),
- 10- Wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*).

The ten wholesome *kamma* courses:

A) Bodily action (*kāya-kamma*):

- 1- Abstaining from destroying life (*pāṇātipātā veramaṇī*),
- 2- Abstaining from taking what is not given (*adinnādānā veramaṇī*),
- 3- Abstaining from sexual misconduct (*kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī*),

B) Verbal action (*vacī-kamma*):

- 4- Abstaining from false speech (*musāvādā veramaṇī*),
- 5- Abstaining from slanderous speech (*pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī*),

6- Abstaining from harsh speech (*pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī*),

7- Abstaining from idle chatter (*samphappalāpā veramaṇī*),

C) Mental action (*mano-kamma*):

8- Abstaining from covetousness (*anabhijjhā*),

9- Good will (*abyāpāda*),

10- Right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*).

The action is unwholesome or wholesome depends upon whether its roots are unwholesome or wholesome. The unwholesome roots are the three defilements: greed (*lobha*), aversion (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). On the contrary, the three wholesome roots are: non-greed (*alobha*), non-aversion (*adosa*), and non-delusion (*amoha*). The law connecting action with their fruits works on the simple principle that unwholesome actions ripen in suffering, while wholesome actions in happiness. To recognize this principle is to hold right view of the mundane kind. Therefore, right view is concerned with understanding, i.e., a matter of direct seeing. Through the attainment of certain states of deep concentration, it is possible to develop a special faculty called “divine eye” (*dibba-cakkhu*), a super-sensory power of vision that reveals things hidden from the eyes of flesh. Whenever this faculty is developed, it can be directed out upon the world living beings to investigate the workings of the *kammic* law. With the special vision it confers, one can then see for oneself, with immediate perception, how beings pass away and re-arise according to their *kamma*, how they meet happiness and suffering through the maturation of their good and evil deeds. (*Dīgha-nikāya* and *Majjhima-nikāya suttas*).

The superior right view (sometimes called noble right view) leading to liberation is the understanding of the Four Noble Truths. It is the first factor of the Noble Eightfold Path in the proper sense. The Buddha defines the path factor of right view like this:

What now is right view? It is the understanding of suffering (dukkha), the understanding of the origin of suffering, the understanding of the cessation of suffering, and the understanding of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

2) Right intention (*Sammā-saṅkappa*)

Sammā-saṅkappa in Pali has been translated as “right thought,” or sometimes as “right intention.” The Buddha defines right intention as threefold:

- 1- Intention of renunciation (*nekkhamma-saṅkappa*).
- 2- Intention of good will (*abyāpāda-saṅkappa*),
- 3- Intention of harmlessness (*avihiṃsā-saṅkappa*).

These three are opposed to three parallel kinds of wrong intention:

- 1- Intention governed by desire (*kāma-saṅkappa*),
- 2- Intention governed by ill will (*byāpāda-saṅkappa*),
- 3- Intention governed by harmfulness (*hiṃsā-saṅkappa*).

It is seen that right intention claims the second place in the path. Thought is the supreme master of action, directing both body and speech, stirring them into activity, using them as its instruments for expressing its aims and ideas. Whenever the intentions are right, the actions will be right, and for the intention to be right, the surest guarantee is right view. In the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, the Buddha says:

One who holds a wrong view, his deeds, words, plans, and purposes grounded in that view will lead to suffering,

while one who holds right view, his deeds, words, plans, and purposes grounded in that view will lead to happiness.

Understanding the four truths in relation to one’s life gives rise to intention of renunciation; understanding them in relation to other beings gives rise to intention of good will and intention of harmlessness. We can see that, like ourselves, all other beings want to be happy and peaceful, and again like ourselves, they are subject to suffering. This consideration causes thoughts of good will and thoughts of harmlessness to arise. As soon as the cultivation of the Noble Eightfold Path begins, the factors of right view and right intention together start to counteract the three unwholesome roots – greed, aversion, and delusion.

The intention of renunciation provides the remedy to greed. Greed comes to manifestation in thoughts of desire. Thoughts of renunciation spring from the wholesome root of non-greed (*alobha*), which they activate whenever they are cultivated. Since the contrary thoughts cannot co-exist, when thoughts of renunciation are roused, they dislodge thoughts of desire, thus causing non-greed to replace greed. In like manner, the intentions of good will and harmlessness offer the antidote to aversion. The thoughts of good will and harmlessness counteract the unwholesome root of aversion. Known as the primary cognitive defilement, delusion is opposed by right view, the nascent seed of wisdom. The complete eradication of delusion will only take place when right view is developed to the stage of full realization.

The Intention of Renunciation

In general, the people of the world imagine that they seek happiness through the way of desire. On the contrary, the Buddha states: “Desire should be abandoned not because it is

morally evil but because it is the root of suffering.” Since craving (*taṇhā*) is the origin of suffering, putting an end to suffering depends on eliminating craving, and that involves directing the mind to renunciation.

But the mind does not want to relinquish its hold on the objects to which it has become attached for such a very long time. The Buddha gives us the tool to free our minds from craving, stating that when we understand the nature of craving, when we investigate it closely with keen attention, then desire falls away by itself, without need for a struggle.

This does not mean that the Buddha demands everybody to leave household life for the monastery, or asks his followers to discard all sense enjoyments on the spot. The degree to which a person renounces depends on his disposition and situation. The whole nature of desire (*taṇhā*), with its cycle of wanting and gratification, hangs on our way of seeing things. We remain in bondage to desire, because we see it as our means to happiness. If we can look at desire from a different angle, its force will be abated, resulting in the move towards renunciation.

By considering the whole cycle of desire, we can confirm that both desire and suffering are inseparable concomitants. Whenever desire springs up, it creates pain of wants in us. To end this pain, we struggle to fulfil the desire. If our effort fails, we experience frustration, disappointment, and sometimes despair. We want the thing we get to last forever, but all the objects of desire are impermanent (*anicca*). So where there is impermanence, there is suffering (*dukkha*). Desire breeds fear and sorrow, but renunciation purifies conducts, aids concentration, and nourishes the seed of wisdom.

When we methodically contemplate the dangers of desire and the benefits of renunciation, we gradually steer our mind away from the domination of craving. The entire course of practice from start to finish can be seen as an evolving process of renunciation culminating in *Nibbāna* as the ultimate stage of relinquishment.

The Intention of Good Will

The opposite of the intention of good will is the intention of ill will. The intention of ill will breeds resentment, provokes retaliation, creates enemies, destroys relationship and thus generates unwholesome *kamma*.

The Buddha recommends the remedy to counteract ill will, which is called “*mettā*,” meaning “loving-kindness.” *Mettā* is a deep inner feeling, characterized by spontaneous warmth rather than by a sense of obligation. This kind of love which is involved in *mettā* does not hinge on particular relations to particular persons. Here we are concerned only with a mind of loving-kindness extended to all living beings without any discriminations or reservations. *Mettā* is one of the most important kinds of the Buddhist meditation, called “loving-kindness” (*mettā-bhāvanā*). This kind of meditation begins with the development of loving-kindness towards oneself. It is suggested that one takes oneself as the first object of *mettā* because the true loving-kindness for others only becomes possible when one is able to feel genuine loving-kindness for oneself. If we look into our own mind, we find that the basic urge of our beings is the wish to be happy and free from suffering. Now, as soon as we see this in ourselves, we can immediately understand that all beings share the same basic wish. The methodical radiation of *mettā* should be practised first by directing *mettā* towards individuals representing certain groups.

The radiation begins with a dear person, such as parent or teacher, then move to a friend, then to a neutral person, then finally to a hostile person. With each individual, one has to bring his or her image into focus and radiate the thought: “May he (she) be well, happy, and peaceful!” Once one gains some success in generating a warm loving-kindness towards individuals, one can then work with larger units – all friends, all neutral people, and all hostile persons. Then *mettā* can be widened into the ten directions – east, southeast, south, southwest, west, northwest, north, north-east, above and below – then it can be extended to all beings without distinction. In the end, one might be able to suffuse the whole world with mind of loving-kindness.

The Intention of harmlessness

The intention of harmlessness is the thought guided by compassion (*karuṇā*), aroused in opposition to aggressive, cruel, and violent thoughts. Compassion supplies the complement to loving-kindness. Whereas loving-kindness has the characteristics of wishing for the happiness and welfare of others, compassion has the characteristics of wishing that others be free from suffering, a wish to be extended without limits to all living beings.

In order to develop compassion as a meditative practice, one should start with someone who is actually undergoing suffering, because this kind of practice provides the natural object for compassion. One should repeat the thought, and continually contemplate until a strong feeling of compassion swells up in the heart. One should contemplate beings as the subject to old age, then to sickness, then to death, then to sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, despair, and so on.

When one has succeeded in generating compassion by the

contemplation of beings who are directly afflicted by suffering, one can then move on to examine the people who are presently enjoying happiness which they have acquired by immoral means. One can realize that such people, despite their superficial fortune, will eventually reap the bitter fruits of their evil deeds, which will bring them intense suffering. Finally, one should contemplate all beings as subject to the universal suffering of *samsāra*, driven by their craving, aversion, and delusion through the cycle of repeated birth and death.

In conclusion, we can find that the three kinds of right intention (of renunciation, good will, and harmlessness) counteract the three wrong intentions of desire, ill will, and harmfulness. To develop the right intention, the Buddha wants us to consider how all beings are tied up with worldly enjoyment, how all beings desire happiness, and how all beings wish to be free from suffering. He also gives us his assurance that the victory will be achieved by practising again and again.

3) Right speech (*Sammā-vācā*)

Right speech, the third factor of the Noble Eightfold Path is in division of moral discipline (*sīlakkhandha*). The training in moral discipline (*sīla*) is regarded as a foundation for the entire path, essential for the success of the other trainings.

The Buddha frequently urges his disciples to adhere to the rules of discipline by saying: “First establish yourselves in the starting point of wholesome states, that is, in purified moral discipline and in right view. Then, when your moral discipline is purified and your view is straight, you should practise the four foundations of mindfulness.”

The *Abhidhamma* also equates moral discipline with the mental factors of right speech, right action, and right livelihood. The Buddha divides right speech into four components as: abstaining from false speech, abstaining from slanderous speech, abstaining from harsh speech, and abstaining from idle chatter. Speech can destroy lives, create enemies, and start war, or it can give wisdom, heal divisions, and bring peace.

(1) Abstaining from false speech

(musāvādā veramaṇī)

Herein one avoids false speech and abstains from it. He speaks the truth, is devoted to truth, reliable, worthy of confidence, not a deceiver of people. Being at the meeting, or amongst people, or in the midst of his relatives, or in a society, or in the king's court, and called upon and asked as witness to tell what he knows, he answers, if he knows nothing: "I know nothing," and if he knows, he answers: "I know;" if he has seen nothing, he answers: "I have seen nothing," and if he has seen, he answers: "I have seen." Thus, he never knowingly tells a lie, either for the sake of his own advantage, or for the sake of another person's advantage, or for the sake of any advantage of whatsoever.

According to the Buddha's teaching, lying is disruptive to social cohesion. People can live together in society only in an atmosphere of mutual trust, where they have reason to believe that other will speak the truth. By destroying the grounds for trust and inducing mass suspicion, widespread lying becomes the fall from social solidarity to chaos. The Buddha states that one who has no shame in telling lie is empty of spiritual achievement. It is said that in the course of his long training for the enlightenment over many lives (*kappa*), a Bodhisatva can break all the moral precepts except the pledge to speak the truth.

(2) Abstaining from slanderous speech

(pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī)

He avoids slanderous speech and abstains from it. What he has heard here he does not repeat there, so as to cause dissension there; and what he has heard there he does not repeat here, so as to cause dissension here. Thus he unites those who are divided; and those who are united he encourages. Concord gladdens him, he delights and rejoices in concord; and it is concord that he spreads by his words.

Slanderous speech is the speech intended to create enmity and division, to alienate one person or group from another. The motives behind such speech are the intention to tear down others by verbal denigration, and also cruel intention to hurt others. When the slanderous statement is false, the two wrongs of falsehood and slander combine to produce an extremely powerful unwholesome *kamma* that can lead to an immediate rebirth in the plane of misery.

The Buddha indicates that the opposite of slander is the speech that promotes friendship and harmony. Such a speech originates from a mind filled with loving-kindness and with sympathy.

(3) Abstaining from harsh speech

(pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī)

He avoids harsh language and abstains from it. He speaks such words as are gentle, soothing to the ear, loving, such words as go to the heart, and are courteous, friendly, and agreeable to many.

Harsh language is the speech uttered in anger, intended to cause the hearer pain. Such speech can be abusive words, insult, or sarcasm. Its main root is aversion, an unwholesome action with disagreeable results for oneself and others. The Buddha teaches us to bear patience (*khanti*) – learning to tolerate blame and criticism from others, to sympathize and to respect differences in viewpoint, to endure abuse without

retaliation.

(4) Abstaining from idle chatter

(samphappalāpā veramaṇī)

He avoids idle chatter and abstains from it. He speaks at the right time, in accordance with facts, speaks what is useful, speaks of the Dhamma and discipline; his speech is like a treasure, uttered at the right moment, accompanied by reason, moderate, and full of sense.

Idle chatter is pointless talk that lacks purpose or depth. Such talk communicates nothing of value, but only stirs up the defilements in one's own mind and in the other people's mind. The Buddha advises us that the talkativeness should be curbed and restricted as much as possible.

4) Right action (*Sammā-kammanta*)

The Buddha defines right action as refraining from unwholesome deeds. There are three components of right action:

(1) Abstaining from taking life

(pāṇātipātā veramaṇī)

Herein someone avoids the taking of life and abstains from it. Without stick or sword, conscientious, full of sympathy, he is desirous of the welfare of all sentient beings.

The precept prescribes abstaining from killing any sentient being (*pāṇa* or *satta*). The Pali word "*pāṇa*" or "*satta*" is prescribed as living being endowed with mind or consciousness, i.e., human beings, animals, and insects. Plants are not considered to be sentient beings because they lack fully fledged consciousness even though they exhibit some degree of sensibility.

The Buddha teaches us to avoid the taking of life in the consideration that, like us, all beings love life and fear death, all seek happiness and are averse to pain. Abstaining from the taking of life is the development of kindness and compassion for other beings. The commitment to non-injury and concern for the welfare of others represent the practical application of the second path factor, right intention, in the form of good will and harmlessness.

(2) Abstaining from taking what is not given

(adinnādānā veramaṇī)

He avoids taking what is not given and abstains from it; what another person possesses of goods and chattel in the village or in the wood, that he does not take away with thievish intent.

The commentaries mention "taking what is not given" in a number of ways which means appropriating the rightful belongings of others with thievish intent. If one takes something that has no owner, such as unclaimed stones, wood, or even gems extracted from the earth, that act does not count as a violation even though these objects have not been given. Some of the most common may be enumerated:

- 1- stealing: taking the belongings of others secretly, as in house-breaking, pick-pocketing, etc.;
- 2- robbery: taking what belongs to others openly by force or threats;
- 3- snatching: suddenly pulling away another person's possession before he has time to resist;
- 4- fraudulence: gaining possession of another person's belongings by falsely claiming them as one's own.
- 5- deceitfulness: using false weights and measures to cheat customers.

Abstaining from stealing is honesty, which implies respect for the belongings of others and for their right to use their

belongings as they wish. The most eminent virtue is generosity, giving away one's own wealth and possession in order to benefit others.

(3) Abstaining from sexual misconduct

(*kāmesu micchā-cārā veramaṇī*)

He avoids sexual misconduct and abstains from it. He has no intercourse with such persons as are still under the protection of father, mother, brother, sister, or relatives, nor with married women, nor with female convicts, nor lastly with betrothed girls.

From the ethical standpoint, abstaining from sexual misconduct helps protect marital relations from the outside disruption and promote trust and fidelity within the marital union. From the spiritual standpoint, it helps curb the tendency of sexual desire and thus is a step in the direction of renunciation. The essential purpose of this very precept is to prevent sexual relations which are harmful to others.

5) Right livelihood (*Sammā-ājīva*)

Right livelihood is concerned with ensuring that one earns one's living in a righteous way. For a lay disciple, the Buddha teaches that wealth should be gained in accordance with certain standards. One should acquire it peacefully, without coercion or violence; one should acquire it honestly, not by trickery or deceit; one should acquire it in ways which do not entail harm and suffering for others. (*Āṅguttara-nikāya*).

The Buddha mentions five kinds of livelihood which bring harm to others and are therefore to be avoided:

1- Dealing in weapons (*sattha-vaṇijjā*), either made by oneself or asked someone to make or owned by any means and sell them as an occupation;

2- Dealing in living beings (*satta-vaṇijjā*), including raising animals for slaughter as well as slave trade and prostitution;

3- Dealing in meat production and butchery (*maṃsa-vaṇijjā*);

4- Dealing in intoxicants (*majja-vaṇijjā*);

5- Dealing in poisons (*visa-vaṇijjā*).

In *Majjhima-nikāya-sutta*, the Buddha names several dishonest means of gaining wealth which fall under wrong livelihood, such as practising deceit, treachery, soothsaying, trickery, and usury. Obviously, any occupation that violates the right speech and right action is considered to be a wrong form of livelihood, but other occupations, such as selling weapons of intoxicants, may not violate those factors and yet be wrong because of their consequences for others.

6) Right effort (*Sammā-vāyāma*)

Right effort is the sixth factor of Noble Eightfold Path. It is a part of the division of concentration (*samādhikkhandha*). From time to time, the Buddha has stressed the need for the right effort, because right concentration needs the energy provided by right effort. It also requires the stabilizing awareness provided by mindfulness.

The Buddha just points out the path to liberation, and also advises us to put the path into practice, a task that demands energy (*vīriya-bala*). This energy is to be applied to the cultivation of the mind, which forms the focus of the entire path. The starting point is the defined mind, and the goal is the liberated mind, purified and illuminated by wisdom. The power of the effort transforms the defined mind into the liberated mind. We have to practise the work of self-cultiva-

tion ourselves with a strong determination that we will not give up our efforts until we have reached our goal.

The nature of mental process effects a division of right effort into four “great endeavours” (*sammappadhāna*)

1- To prevent the arising of un-arisen unwholesome states.

Herein the disciple rouses his will to avoid the arising of evil, unwholesome states that have not yet arisen; and he makes effort, stirs up his energy, exerts his mind and strives.

The unwholesome states (*akusalā dhammā*) is the opposite of wholesome states (*kusalā dhammā*). The unwholesome states are the defilements consisting of desire, aggression, violence, and ambition, while the wholesome states are the states of mind filled with generosity, self-discipline, kindness, concentration and right understanding. The unwholesome side requires that the defilements lying dormant be prevented from erupting and that the active defilements already present be expelled. The wholesome side requires that the undeveloped liberating factors first be brought into being, then persistently developed to the point of full maturity.

The right effort aims at overcoming unwholesome states, the states of mind tainted by defilements. Insofar as they impede concentration, the defilements are usually presented in a fivefold set called “five hindrances” (*pañca-nīvaraṇa*):

1) Sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*). Sensual desire is interpreted in two ways. It is sometimes understood in a narrow sense as lust for the five strands of sense pleasure, i.e., agreeable sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches. In a broader way, it includes craving in all its modes, whether for sense pleasure, wealth, power, position, fame, or anything else it can settle upon.

2) Ill will (*byāpāda*). It comprises hatred, anger, resentment, repulsion, whether directed towards other people, towards oneself, towards objects, etc.

3) Dullness and drowsiness (*thīna-middha*). It is a compound of two factors linked together by their common feature of mental unwieldiness. One is dullness (*thīna*), manifest as mental inertia; the other is drowsiness (*middha*), seen in mental sinking, heaviness of mind, or excessive inclination to sleep.

4) Restlessness and worry (*uddhacca-kukkucca*). This, too, is a compound with its members linked by their common feature of disquietude. Restlessness is the agitation, which drives the mind from thought to thought; worry is remorse over the past mistakes and anxiety about their possible undesired consequences.

5) Doubt (*vicikicchā*). This hindrance signifies a lack of resolution, a persistent inability to commit oneself to the course of spiritual training due to lingering doubts concerning the Buddha, his doctrine, and his path.

All these hindrances grow up and over the mind preventing calm and insight, and thus block the path to liberation. The first two hindrances, sensual desire and ill will, are the strongest and the most formidable barriers to the meditative growth, representing the unwholesome roots of greed and aversion. The hindrances do not come from outside but from within the mind.

The effort to prevent the un-arisen hindrances from arising is called “*saṃvarappadhāna*” which means the endeavour to restrain. The effort has the duty to hold the hindrances in check both at the start of meditative training and throughout the course of its development. The hindrances appear because of the sense experience. The physical organism is

equipped with five sense faculties each receptive to its own special kind of data – the eyes to forms, the ear to sounds, the nose to smells, the tongue to tastes, the body to tangibles. In order to prevent the evil, the defilements, the unwholesome states from arising is to control over the senses. Thus the Buddha teaches, as the discipline for keeping the hindrances in check, an exercise called “*indriya-saṃvara*” (the restraint of the sense faculties):

When he perceives a form with the eye, a sound with the ear, an odour with the nose, a taste with the tongue, an impression with the body, or an object with the mind, he apprehends neither the sign nor the particulars. And he strives to ward off that through which evil and unwholesome states, greed and sorrow, would arise, if he remains with unguarded senses; he watches over his senses, restrains his senses.

The unwholesome states, the evil and defilements, lie in the mind. If the sense control is lacking, the mind roams recklessly over the sense fields. To restrain the senses, it requires that mindfulness and clear understanding be applied to the encounter with the sense fields. Whenever mindfulness disappears, the talent defilements will motivate a wrong consideration. In order to prevent the mind from embellishing datum with ideas born of craving, aversion and delusion, mindfulness must actively hold the hindrances in check at the levels of what is sensed.

2- To abandon the arisen unwholesome states.

Herein the disciple rouses his will to overcome the evil, unwholesome states that have already arisen and he makes effort, stirs up his energy, exerts his mind and strives.

The effort to abandon arisen unwholesome states is called in Pali as “*pahānappadhāna*” meaning “endeavour to abandon, or to destroy”:

He does not retain any thought of sensual lust, ill will, or harmfulness,

or any other evil and unwholesome states that may have arisen; he abandons them, dispels them, destroys them, and causes them to disappear..

The Buddha, in an important discourse, teaches five techniques for expelling distracting thoughts. First of all is to expel the defiled thought which is the opposite of wholesome thought. There is a special remedy for each of the five hindrances. For sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*), a remedy of general application is the meditation on impermanence, which knocks away the underlying prop of clinging, the implicit assumption that the objects clung to are stable and durable. The remedy for ill will (*byāpāda*) is the meditation on loving-kindness (*mettā-bhāvanā*), which banishes all traces of hatred and anger through the methodical radiation on the wish that all beings be well and happy. To expel the dullness and drowsiness (*thīna-middha*) is to call for a special effort to arouse energy (*vīriya-bala*), for which several methods are suggested: the visualization of a brilliant ball of light, getting up and doing a walking meditation, reflection on death, or simply making a firm determination to continue striving. A most effective remedy for restlessness and worry (*uddhacca-kukkucca*) is awareness of breathing, attention to the in-and-out flow of the breath. In the case of doubt, the special remedy is investigation, e.g., to make inquiries, ask questions, and study the teachings until the obscure points become clear. (*Dīgha-nikāya* and *Majjhima-nikāya*).

3- To arouse un-arisen wholesome states.

Herein the disciple rouses his will to arouse wholesome states that have not yet arisen; and he makes effort, stirs up his energy, exerts his mind and strives.

With the removal of defilements, the right effort is also needed to impose the task of cultivating wholesome states of

mind. This involves two divisions: the arousing of wholesome states that have not yet arisen and the maturation of wholesome states already arisen. The first of the two divisions is also known as the endeavour to develop, which is called in Pali (*bhāvanappadhāna*). To develop the wholesome states, the Buddha stresses the emphasis on the seven factors of enlightenment (*satta sambojjhaṅga*). They are:

- (1) Mindfulness (*sati*),
- (2) Investigation of phenomena (*dhammavicaya*),
- (3) Effort (*vīriya*),
- (4) Rapture (*pīti*),
- (5) Tranquillity (*passaddhi*),
- (6) Concentration (*samādhi*),
- (7) Equanimity (*upekkhā*).

In the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, the Buddha says:

Thus he develops the factors of enlightenment, based on solitude, detachment, cessation, and ending in deliverance, namely: the enlightenment factors of mindfulness, investigation of phenomena, effort, rapture, tranquillity, concentration, and equanimity.

In the preliminary stages of the path, the seven factors of enlightenment prepare the way for the great realization; in the end they remain as its components. The way to enlightenment starts with *mindfulness*. Mindfulness clears the ground for insight into the nature of things by bringing to light phenomena in the present moment. Then, when mindfulness has brought the bare phenomena into focus, the factor of *investigation* steps in to search out their characteristics, conditions and consequences.

The work of investigation requires *effort*, the third factor of enlightenment, which mounts in the three stages. The first, inceptive effort, shakes off lethargy and arouses initial enthusiasm. As the work of contemplation advances, *vīriya*

(effort) gathers momentum and enters the second stage, perseverance, wherein it propels the practice without slackening. Finally, at the peak, effort reaches the third stage, invincibility, where it drives contemplation forward leaving the hindrances powerless to stop it.

As effort increases, the fourth factor of enlightenment is quickened. This factor is *rapture*, a pleasurable interest in the object. Rapture gradually builds up, ascending to ecstatic heights, i.e., waves of bliss run through the body, the mind grows with joy, fervour and confidence intensify. With further practice, rapture subsides and a tone of quietness sets in signalling the rise of the fifth factor, *tranquillity*.

Tranquillity brings to concentration, the sixth factor, one-pointed unification of mind. Then, with the deepening of concentration, the last enlightenment factor comes into dominance. This factor is *equanimity*, inward poise and balance free from the two defects of excitement and inertia. When inertia prevails, effort must be aroused; when excitement prevails, it is necessary to exercise restraint. The mind of equanimity is compared to the driver of a chariot, when his horses are moving at a steady pace, he neither has to urge them forward nor to hold them back, but can just sit comfortably and watch the scenery go by.

4- To maintain arisen wholesome states.

Herein the disciple rouses his will to maintain the wholesome states that have already arisen, and not to allow them to disappear, but to bring them to growth, to maturity, and to the full perfection of development; and he makes effort, stirs up his energy, exerts his mind and strives.

This last of the four right efforts aims at maintaining the arisen wholesome factors and bringing them to maturity.

This is called “*anurakkhaṇappadhāna*” (the endeavour to maintain), i.e., to keep firmly in the mind a favourable object of concentration that has arisen. The work of guarding the object causes the seven factors of enlightenment to gain the stability and gradually increase in strength until they issue in the liberating realization. This is the goal of right effort.

7) Right mindfulness (*Sammā-sati*)

As we have already mentioned in Chap. IV (*Satippaṭṭhāna*), the term “*sati*” in Pali is translated as (*mindfulness*.) Mindfulness is presence of mind, attentiveness or awareness.

In the practice of right mindfulness, the mind is trained to remain in the present, open, quiet, and alert, contemplating the present event. To practise mindfulness is a matter not so much of doing but of undoing, i.e., not thinking, not judging, not imaging, not planning, not wishing, not associating. All these “doings” of ours are modes of interference, the way the mind manipulates experience and tries to establish its dominance. Mindfulness undoes the knots and tangles of these “doings” by simply noting. It does nothing but note, watching each occasion of experience as it arises, stands, and passes away. In the watching, there is no room for clinging. There is only a sustained contemplation of experience in its bare immediacy carefully, precisely, and persistently.

Mindfulness exercises a powerful grounding function. It anchors the mind securely in the present, and so it does not float away into the past and future with their memories, regrets, fears, and hopes. The mind established in mindfulness is compared to a stone that stays where it is put and at once it sinks into the water until it reaches bottom. In like manner, when mindfulness becomes strong, the mind stays with its object and penetrates its characteristics deeply.

Mindfulness facilitates the achievement of both serenity and insight. It can lead to either deep concentration or wisdom. To lead to the stages of serenity, the primary chore of mindfulness is to keep the mind on the object, free from straying. It also keeps watch over the factors stirring in the mind, catching the hindrances beneath their camouflages and expelling them before they can cause harm. To lead to insight and realizations of wisdom, mindfulness is exercised in a more differentiated manner. Its task, in this phase of practice, is to observe, to note, to discern phenomena with utmost precision until their fundamental characteristics are brought to light.

Right mindfulness is cultivated through a practice called “four foundations of mindfulness” (*cattāro satippaṭṭhāna*), the mindful observation of four objective spheres: observation of the body (*kāyānupassanā*), observation of sensation (*vedanānupassanā*), observation of the mind (*cittānupassanā*), and observation of the contents of the mind or phenomena (*dhammānupassanā*). The Buddha says:

And what, monks, is right mindfulness? Herein a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief concerning the world. He dwells contemplating sensations in sensations... states of mind in states of mind... the contents of the mind in the contents of the mind, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief concerning the world. This is called right mindfulness.

The Buddha states that the four foundations of mindfulness are “the only way” (*ekāyano maggo*) that leads to the attainment of purity, to the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, to the end of pain and grief, to entering upon the right path and the realization of *Nibbāna*. The attainment of liberation can only issue from the penetrating observation of

the field of experience undertaken in the practice of right mindfulness. Of the four applications of mindfulness, the observation of the body is concerned with the material side of existence, while the other three are concerned with the mental side. The completion of the practice requires all the four observations.

(Please see the detailed description of the four foundations of mindfulness in Chapter IV).

In addition, whenever the Buddha was asked to describe *sati* (mindfulness), his explanation invariably included the term *sampajañña*:

Katamā ca, bhikkhave, sammā-sati? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ.

And what, Bhikkhu, is right mindfulness? Here, a Bhikkhu dwells ardently, with constant thorough understanding and right mindfulness, observing the body in the body, having removed craving and aversion towards this world (of mind and matter).

From this, it becomes evident that, according to the Buddha, whenever there is *sammā-sati* or *satippaṭṭhāna*, it is always with *sampajañña*. That means it is with *paññā* (wisdom). Otherwise it is mere *sati*, which is only remembrance or awareness. This exercise, called “*sati-sampajañña*” (mindfulness and clear comprehension), adds to the bare awareness, an element of understanding. When performing any action, a meditator performs it with full awareness and clear comprehension.

The Buddha defines *sampajāno* as follows:

Kathañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sampajāno hoti? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno viditā vedanā uppajjanti, viditā uppaṭṭhahanti, viditā abbattham gacchanti; viditā saññā uppajjanti, viditā upaṭṭhahanti, viditā abbattham gacchanti; viditā vitakkā uppajjanti, viditā upaṭṭhahanti, viditā abbattham

gacchanti. Evaṃ kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sampajāno hoti.

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu understand thoroughly? Herein, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu knows sensations arising in him, knows their persisting, and knows their vanishing; he knows perceptions arising in him, knows their persisting, and their vanishing; he knows each initial application (of the mind on an object) arising in him, knows its persisting, and knows its vanishing. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu understands thoroughly.

The Buddha used the word “*bhikkhu*” (monk) whenever he held his discourse with his disciples. From the days of his enlightenment, he, first of all, taught the five bhikkhus known as (*pañca-vaggiya-bhikkhus*). Nevertheless, it can be understood that the Buddha’s teaching is applicable to one and all who wish to put it into practice, especially meditators. Moreover, all the *bhikkhus*, *sāmaneras*, in particular, ought to practise the real meditation without fail for the sake of themselves as well as to lead others.

In the above statement, it becomes clear that one is called “*sampajāno*” only when one realizes the characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), and that, too, on the basis of experience of sensation (*veditā vedanā*). If this is not realized through *vedanā*, then it is merely an intellectualization, as our fundamental contact with the world is based on sensation. It is through sensation that direct experience occurs. The statement further indicates that the *sampajāno* lies in experiencing the impermanence of *vedanā*, *vitakka* (the initial application of the mind on an object), and *saññā* (perception). The Buddha states, “Everything that arises in the mind is accompanied by sensation (*vedadā*). So, we should note that impermanence of sensation is to be realized first. According to the Buddha, *sampajañña* must be continuous. He says:

Kathañca, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sampajāno hoti? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu abhikkante paṭikkante sampajānakārī hoti. Ālokite vilokite sampajānakārī hoti. Samiñjite pasārite sampajānakārī hoti. Saṅghāṭi-patta-cīvara-dhāraṇe sampajānakārī hoti. Asite pīte khāyite sāyite sampajānakārī hoti. Uccāra-passāva-kamme sampajānakārī hoti. Gate ṭhite nisinne sutte jāgarite bhāsīte tuṅhī-bhāve sampajānakārī hoti.

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu understand thoroughly? Again, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu in going forwards and backwards understands impermanence thoroughly, in looking straight ahead and sideways understands impermanence thoroughly, in bending or stretching understands impermanence thoroughly, in wearing the robes and carrying the bowl understands impermanence thoroughly, in chewing and drinking, eating and savouring understands impermanence thoroughly, in attending to the calls of nature understands impermanence thoroughly, in walking, standing, sitting, sleeping and waking up, speaking and remaining silent understands impermanence thoroughly.

The Buddha frequently stresses the emphasis on the continuity of *sampajañña* that the meditator should not lose the constant thorough understanding of impermanence (*anicca*) even for a moment. For a meditator who follows his advice on the proper practice of *Vipassanā*, being a *sampajāno* without any interruption, the Buddha gives the following assurance: either the meditator will attain the highest stage (*arahanta*) or the penultimate stage (*anāgāmi*).

8) Right concentration (*Sammā-samādhi*)

Right concentration is the eighth and last factor of the Noble Eightfold Path. The term “*samādhi*” (concentration) is defined as a particular kind of one-pointedness of mind (*cittakaggata*) which represents an intensification of a mental factor present in every state of consciousness.

Sammā-samādhi is the factor responsible for ensuring that every *citta* or act of mind remains centred in its object. It

unifies the mental and its other concomitants in the task of cognizing the object – a sight, a sound, a smell, a taste, a touch, or a mental object. One-pointedness of mind explains the fact that in any act of consciousness there is a central point of focus, towards which the entire objective datum points from its outer peripheries to its inner nucleus.

Samādhi is the concentration in a wholesome state of mind (*kusala citta*) that collects together the ordinarily dispersed and dissipated stream of mental states to induce an inner unification. The mind untrained in concentration moves in a scattered manner which the Buddha compares to the flapping about of a fish taken from the water and thrown onto dry land. It cannot stay fixed but rushes from thought to thought, without inner control. In contrast, the mind that has been trained in *samādhi* can remain focus on its object without distraction. This freedom from distraction further induces a softness and serenity which make the mind an effective instrument for penetration.

Concentration can be developed through either of two methods. The former method is called the development of serenity (*samatha-bhāvanā*), the second the development of insight (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*). Both paths share certain preliminary requirements. For both, moral discipline (*sīla*) must be purified, the various impediments must be served, the meditator must seek out suitable instruction from a qualified teacher, and must resort to dwelling conducive to practice. The meditator on the path of *samatha-bhāvanā* must obtain an object of meditation, something to be used as a focal point for developing concentration.

If the meditator has a qualified teacher, the teacher will probably assign him an object of meditation (*kaṣiṇa*) judged

to be appropriate for his temperament. If he does not have a teacher, he will have to select an object himself, perhaps after some experimentation. The meditation manuals collect the subjects of serenity meditation (*samatha-bhāvanā*) into a set of forty, called “places of work” (*kammaṭṭhāna*) since they are the places where the meditator does the work of practice. They are:

- ten *kasiṇas* (*dasa kasiṇā*)
- ten unattractive objects (*dasa asubhā*)
- ten recollections (*dasa anussatiyo*)
- four sublime states (*cattāro brahmavihārā*)
- four immaterial states (*cattāro arūpā*)
- one perception (*ekā saññā*)
- one analysis (*ekā vavaṭṭhāna*).

The ten *kasiṇas* are

- 1- th earth (*paṭhavī*)
- 2- the water (*āpo*)
- 3- the fire (*tejo*)
- 4- the air (*vāyo*)
- 5- the blue (*nīla*)
- 6- the yellow (*pīṭa*)
- 7- the red (*lohita*)
- 8- the white (*odāta*)
- 9- the light (*āloka*)
- 10- the space (*ākāsa*).

The *kasiṇas* are the devices representing certain primordial qualities. Four represent the primary elements – the earth, water, fire, and air *kasiṇas*; four represent colours – the blue, yellow, red, and white *kasiṇas*; the other two are the light and space *kasiṇas*. Each *kasiṇa* is a concrete object representative of the universal quality it signifies. Thus the earth *kasiṇa* would be a circular disk filled with clay. To develop

concentration on the earth *kasiṇa*, the meditator sets the disk in front of him, fixes his eyes on it, and contemplates “earth, earth...” A similar method is used for the other *kasiṇas*, with appropriate changes to fit the case.

The ten “unattractive objects” are corpses (*asubhā*) in different stages of decomposition. In fact, in ancient times, the cremation ground was recommended for a lustful meditator. The purpose of this exercise aims at the application of reflective thought, the sight of the decaying corpse serving as a stimulus for consideration of one’s own eventual death and disintegration.

The ten recollections are:

- 1- Concentration on the qualities of the *Buddha* (*buddhānussati*),
- 2- Concentration on the qualities of the *Dhamma* (*dhammānussati*),
- 3- Concentration on the qualities of the *Saṅgha* (*saṅghānussati*),
- 4- Concentration on *Sīla* (*sīlānussati*),
- 5- Concentration on generosity (*cāgānussati*),
- 6- Concentration on divine-like qualities in oneself (*devatānussati*),
- 7- Concentration on death (*maraṇānussati*),
- 8- Concentration of the body (*kāyagatāsati*),
- 9- Concentration of breathing (*ānāpāṇassati*),
- 10- Concentration on *Nibbāna* (*upasamānussati*).

The four sublime states are:

- 1- Loving-kindness (*mettā*),
- 2- Compassion (*karuṇā*),
- 3- Sympathetic joy (*muditā*),
- 4- Equanimity (*upekkhā*).

These four sublime states of mind are called in the Pali language as “*brahmavihāra*” (divine-abodes). They are the outwardly directed social attitudes developed into universal radiations which are gradually extended in range until they encompass all living beings.

The four immaterial states (*arūpā*) are:

- 1- The base of infinite space (*ākāśānañcāyatana*),
- 2- The base of infinite consciousness (*viññāṇañcāyatana*),
- 3- The base of nothingness (*ākāśañcāyatana*),
- 4- The base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (*nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana*).

These four immaterial states are the objective bases for certain deep levels of absorption, and they would become accessible as objects only to those who are already adept in concentration. The one “perception” (*saññā*) is the perception of repulsiveness of food, a discursive topic intended to induce attachment to the pleasures of the palate. The “one analysis or *dhātu-vavaṭṭhāna*” is the mindfulness of the body in terms of the four primary elements – the earth, water, fire, and air, signifying the four behavioural modes of matter: solidity, fluidity, heat, and oscillation.

The manuals divide the forty subjects according to their suitability for different character types. They are six types:

- 1- Lustful type (*rāga-carita*),
- 2- Hating type (*dosa-carita*),
- 3- Deluding type (*moha-carita*),
- 4- Devotional type (*saddhā-carita*),
- 5- Wise type (*buddhi-carita*),
- 6- Discursive type (*vitakka-carita*)

Thus, the unattractive objects and awareness of the parts of the body are judged to be the most suitable for a lustful

type, the meditation on loving-kindness to be the best for a hating type, the meditation on the qualities of the Triple Gem to be the most effective for a devotional type, and so on and so forth. But for the practical purposes, the beginner in meditation can generally be advised to start a simple subject that helps reduce discursive thinking. A meditator of any temperament can benefit from a subject that promotes a slowing down and stilling of the thought process. The subject generally recommended for its effectiveness in clearing the mind of stray thoughts is awareness of breathing which can be suggested as a subject most suitable for new as well as old students. Once the mind settles down and one’s thought patterns become easier to notice, one might then make use of other subjects to deal with special problems that arise: the meditation on loving-kindness may be used to counteract anger and ill will, mindfulness of the bodily parts to weaken sensual lust, the recollection of the Triple Gem to inspire faith and devotion, the meditation on death to arouse a sense of urgency.

After receiving his meditation subject from a teacher, or selecting it on his own, the student retires to a quiet place. There he assumes the correct meditation posture – the legs crossed comfortably, the upper part of the body held straight and erect, hands placed one above the other on the lap, the head kept steady, the mouth and eyes closed (unless a *kaṣiṇa* or other visual object is used), the breath flowing naturally and regularly through the nostrils. He then focuses his mind on the object and tries to keep it there, fixed and alert. If the mind strays, he notices it quickly, catches it, and brings it back gently but firmly to the object, doing this over and over as often as necessary. This initial stage is called preliminary concentration (*parikamma-samādhi*) and the object is called preliminary sign (*parikamma-nimitta*).

Once the initial excitement subsides and the mind begins to settle into the practice, the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇā*) are likely to arise, bubbling up from the depths. Sometimes they appear as thoughts, sometimes as images, sometimes as obsessive emotions: surges of desire, anger and resentment, heaviest of mind, agitation, doubt. The hindrances are the obstacles to *samādhi*, but with patience and sustained effort they can be overcome. At times, when a particular hindrance becomes strong, the meditator may have to lay aside his primary subject of meditation and take up another subject expressly opposed to the hindrance. At another times, he will have to persist with his primary subject, bringing his mind back to it again and again. As he goes on striving along the path of concentration, his exertion activates five mental factors that come to his aid. These five factors pick up power, link up with one another, and steer the mind towards *samādhi*, which they will govern as the “*jhāna factors*,” the factors of absorption (*jhānaṅga*). They are:

- 1- Initial application of mind (*vitakka*),
- 2- Sustained application of mind (*vicāra*),
- 3- Rapture (*pīti*),
- 4- Happiness (*sukha*).
- 5- One-pointedness (*ekaggatā*).

Initial application of mind does the work of directing the mind to the subject. *Sustained application of mind* anchors the mind on the object, keeping it there through its function of examination. Initial application is compared to the striking of a bell, sustained application to the bell’s reverberations. *Rapture*, the third factor, is the delight and joy that accompany a favourable interest in the object, while *happiness*, the fourth factor, is the pleasant feeling that accompanies successful concentration. The fifth and final factor of absorption is *one-pointedness*, which has the pivotal

function of unifying the mind on the object.

When concentration is developed, these five factors spring up and counteract the five hindrances. Each absorption factor opposes a particular hindrance. Initial application of mind, through its work of lifting the mind up to the object, counters dullness and drowsiness. Sustained application, by anchoring the mind on the object, drives away doubt. Rapture shuts out ill will, happiness excludes restlessness and worry, and one-pointedness counters sensual desire, the most alluring inducement to distraction. Thus, with the strengthening of the absorption factors, the hindrances fade out and subside. They are not yet eradicated – eradication can only be effected by wisdom, the third division of the path – but they have been reduced to a state of quiescence where they cannot disrupt the forward movement of concentration. With the strengthening of concentration, the original object gives rise to another object called the “learning sign” (*uggaha-nimitta*). For a *kasīṇa*, this will be a mental image of the disk seen as clearly in the mind as the original object was with the eyes; for the breath, it will be a reflex image arisen from the touch sensation of the air currents moving around the nostrils.

When the *uggaha-nimitta* appears, the meditator leaves off the preliminary sign and fixes his attention on a new object. In due time, still another object will emerge out of the *uggaha-nimitta* (the learning sign). This object, called the “counterpart sign” (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*), is a purified mental image many times brighter and clearer than the learning sign. The learning sign is compared to the moon seen behind a cloud, the counterpart sign to the moon freed from the cloud. Simultaneously with the appearance of the counterpart sign, the five factors of absorption (*jhānaṅgā*) suppress the five hindrances, and the mind enters the stage of concentration

called “*upacāra-samādhi*” (access concentration). Here, in the access concentration, the mind is drawing close to absorption. However, more work is still needed for it to become fully immersed in the object, the defining mark of absorption.

With further practice, the factors of concentration gain in strength and bring the mind to absorption (*appanā-samādhi*). Like *upacāra-samādhi*, *appanā-samādhi* takes the counterpart sign (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*) as object. In access concentration, the *jhāna* factors are present, but they lack strength and steadiness. Thus the mind in this stage is compared to a child who has just learned to walk: he takes a few steps, falls down, gets up, walks some more, and again falls down. But the mind in *appanā-samādhi* (absorption) is compared to a man who wants to walk: he just gets up and walks straight ahead without hesitation.

Concentration in the stage of absorption is divided into eight levels, each marked by greater depth, purity, and subtlety than its predecessor. The first four form a set called “*rūpa-jhāna*” (material states or meditative absorption):

- 1- First *jhāna* (*paṭhamajjhāna*).
- 2- Second *jhāna* (*dutiyaajjhāna*),
- 3- Third *jhāna* (*tatiyaajjhāna*),
- 4- Fourth *jhāna* (*catutthajjhāna*).

The second four *jhānas* also form a set called (*arūpa-jhāna*)” (immaterial states). They are:

- 1- *Jhāna* in the base of infinite space
(*ākāsānañcāyatanaajjhāna*),
- 2- *Jhāna* in the base of infinite consciousness
(*viññāṇaṇcāyatanaajjhāna*),

- 3- *Jhāna* in the base of nothingness
(*ākāñcaññāyatanaajjhāna*),
- 4- *Jhāna* in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception
(*nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatanaajjhāna*).

The first four *jhānas* make up the usual textual definition of right concentration. Thus, in *Dīgha-nikāya*, the Buddha says:

And what, monks, is right concentration? Herein, secluded from sense pleasure, secluded from unwholesome states, a monk enters and dwells in the First Jhāna, which is accompanied by initial and sustained application of mind (vitakka and vicāra) and filled with rapture and happiness (pīti and sukka) born of seclusion.

Then, with the subsiding of initial and sustained application of mind, by gaining inner confidence and mental unification, he enters and dwells in the Second Jhāna, which is free from initial and sustained application of mind, but is filled with rapture and happiness born of concentration.

With the fading out of rapture, he dwells in equanimity (upekkhā), mindful and clearly comprehending; and he exercises in his own person that bliss of which the noble ones say: “Happily lives he who is equanimous and mindful” – thus he enters and dwells in the Third Jhāna.

With the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy and grief, he enters and dwells in the Fourth Jhāna, which has neither-pleasure-nor-pain and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.

This, monk, is right concentration.

The *Jhānas* are distinguished by way of their component factors. The first *jhāna* is constituted by the original set of five absorption factors (*jhānaṅga*): initial application of mind, sustained application of mind, rapture, happiness, and one-pointedness (*vitakka, vicāra, pīti, sukka, ekaggatā*).

After attaining the first *jhāna*, the meditator is advised to

master it. On the one hand, he should not fall into the complacency over his achievement and neglect the sustained practice; on the other, he should not become over-confident and rush ahead to attain the next jhāna. To master the jhāna, he should enter it repeatedly and perfect his skill in it, until he can attain it, remain in it, emerge from it, and review it without any trouble.

After mastering the first jhāna, the meditator then considers that his attainment has certain defects. Though the jhāna is certainly far superior to ordinary consciousness, more peaceful and blissful, it still stands close to sense consciousness and is not far removed from the hindrances. Thus, the meditator should renew his practice of concentration intent on overcoming initial and sustained application of mind. When his faculties mature, these two factors subside and he enters second jhāna. The second jhāna contains only the component factors: *rapture, happiness* and *one-pointedness*.

In the second jhāna, the mind of the meditator becomes more tranquil and more thoroughly unified, but when mastered even this state seems gross, as it induces rapture, an exhilarating factor that inclines to excitation. So the meditator sets out again on his course of training, this time resolved on overcoming rapture. When rapture fades out, he enters the third jhāna, i.e., *happiness* and *one-pointedness*, while some other auxiliary states come into ascendancy, most notably mindfulness, clear comprehension, and equanimity. But still, the meditator sees, this attainment is defective in that it contains the feeling of happiness, which is gross compared to neutral feeling, the feeling that is neither pleasant nor painful. Thus, he strives to get beyond even the sublime happiness of the third jhāna. When he succeeds, he

enters the fourth jhāna, which is defined by two factors – one-pointedness and neutral feeling – and has a special purity of mindfulness due to the high level of equanimity.

Now, beyond the four *rūpa-jhānas* as mentioned above, there are four immaterial states, levels of absorption in which the mind transcends even the subtlest perception of visualized images still sometimes persisting in the jhānas. The four immaterial states are attained, not by refining mental factors as are the jhānas, but by refining objects, by replacing a relatively gross object with a subtler one. The four attainments are named after their respective objects: the base of infinite space, the base of infinite consciousness, the base of nothingness, and the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. These states represent levels of concentration so subtle and remote as to elude clear verbal explanation. The last of the four stands at the apex of mental concentration; it is the absolute, maximum degree of unification possible for consciousness. But even so, these absorptions reached by the path of *Samatha* meditation still lack the wisdom of insight, and so are not yet sufficient for gaining deliverance.

During his search for the Noble Truth, Prince *Siddhattha* placed himself under the guidance of two renowned *Brahmin* teachers, *Ājāra* and *Uddaka*, learned the eight jhānas (*samāpatti*), and became an adept in the exercise of all supernatural power, including the ability to read events of many *kappas* to come, as well as a similar period from the past. These were all in the mundane field and they did not much concern the Prince, whose ambition was an escape from this mundane field of birth, suffering and death. To reach an end of suffering, the Buddha advises us to continue to practise *Vipassanā* after the practice of *samādhi*.

Chapter VI

Paṭiccasamuppāda-dhamma (The Law of Dependent Origination)

This law is fundamental to the teaching of the Buddha. When he emphasizes its importance, the Buddha says:

*Yo paṭiccasamuppādaṃ passati, so dhammaṃ passati.
Yo dhammaṃ passati, so paṭiccasamuppādaṃ passati.*

*One who sees paṭiccasamuppāda, sees the dhamma.
One who sees the dhamma, sees paṭiccasamuppāda.*

Paṭiccasamuppāda explains that *saṃsāra*, the process of repeated existence, is perpetuated by a chain of interconnected links of cause and effect. It also reveals the method of breaking this chain and putting an end to the process. Thus, the Buddha says:

*Taṇhādutiyo puriso, dīghamaddhāna saṃsāraṃ.
Itthabhāvaññathābhāvaṃ saṃsāraṃ nātivattati.*

The man with craving as his companion has been flowing in the stream of repeated existences from time immemorial. He comes into being, experiences various types of miseries, dies again and again, and does not put an end to this unbroken process of becoming.

The Buddha further explains that rightly understanding the perils of *saṃsāra* as the world of suffering, realizing fully craving as its cause, becoming free from craving and attachment, one should mindfully lead the life of detachment and

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with the complete eradication of craving, the state called *Nibbāna* is attained.

This is the practical aspect of the *Dhamma* (nature) discovered by *Siddhattha Gotama*, the realization that made him a Buddha, and that he in turn revealed to the world by the doctrine called “*paṭiccasamuppāda*.” According to this doctrine, twelve links form the wheel of existence. They are:

1. *avijjā* (ignorance),
2. *saṅkhāra* (volitional activities),
3. *viññāṇa* (consciousness),
4. *nāma-rūpa* (mind and matter),
5. *saḷāyatana* (six sense doors),
6. *phassa* (contact),
7. *vedanā* (sensation),
8. *taṇhā* (craving),
9. *upādāna* (clinging),
10. *bhava* (becoming),
11. *jāti* (birth),
12. *jarā-maraṇa* (decay and death).

Thus, the Buddha says in Pali:

*Avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā.
Saṅkhārappaccayā viññāṇaṃ.
Viññāṇappaccayā nāmarūpaṃ.
Nāmarūpapaccayā saḷāyatanaṃ.
Saḷāyatanaappaccayā phasso.
Phassappaccayā vedanā.
Vedanāpaccayā taṇhā.
Taṇhāpaccayā upādānaṃ.
Upādānaappaccayā bhavo.
Bhavappaccayā jāti.
Jātipaccayā jarāmarāṇaṃ.*

Dependent on ignorance there arises volitional activities.
Dependent on volitional activities there arises consciousness.
Dependent on consciousness there arises mind and matter.
Dependent on mind and matter there arises six sense doors.
Dependent on six sense doors there arises contact.
Dependent on contact there arises sensation.
Dependent on sensation there arises craving.
Dependent on craving there arises clinging.
Dependent on clinging there arises becoming.
Dependent on becoming there arises birth.
Dependent on birth there arises decay and death.

Thus, this vicious circle of misery rotates on and on. The origin of each depends on the preceding one. As long as this chain of twelve causal relations operates, the wheel of becoming (*bhava-cakka*) keeps turning, bringing nothing but suffering. This process of cause and effect is called “the Law of Dependent Origination in forward order” (*anuloma-paṭīccasamuppāda*). Every link of *anuloma* results in misery (*dukkha*), as a result of ignorance (*avijjā*) which is the base of every link.

Our task is to emerge from the wheel of becoming which is full of suffering. The Buddha explains that when one of the links is broken, the wheel of becoming comes to an end, resulting in the cessation of suffering. This is called “the Law of Dependent Origination in reverse order” (*paṭiloma-paṭīccasamuppāda*). How can that be achieved? Which link of the chain can be broken?

The Buddha discovered that the crucial link is sensation (*vedanā*). He states that “dependent on sensation, craving and aversion arise” (*vedanāpaccayā taṇhā*). *Vedanā* is the cause of *taṇhā*, which gives rise to *dukkha*. Therefore, in order to remove the cause of *dukkha* or *taṇhā*, one must not

allow *vedanā* to connect with *taṇhā*; in other words, one must practise Vipassanā meditation at this juncture so that *avijjā* becomes *vijjā* or *paññā* (wisdom). One has to observe *vedanā*, to experience and to comprehend the truth of its arising and passing away.

Through Vipassanā meditation, as one experiences *vedanā* properly, one comes out of the delusion of perception of permanence (*nicca-saññā*) by the development of wisdom of impermanence (*anicca-vijjā*) towards *vedanā*. This is practised by observing with equanimity the arising and passing away of *vedanā*. With *anicca-vijjā*, the habit pattern of the mind changes. Instead of the earlier pattern of *vedanāpaccayā taṇhā* through *anicca-vijjā*, it becomes *vedanāpaccayā paññā* (with the base of sensation, wisdom arises). As *paññā* becomes stronger and stronger, naturally the *saññā*, and with it, *taṇhā* becomes weaker and weaker. The practice of the multiplication of suffering with the base of *avijjā* then becomes the process of the cessation of suffering, with *vijjā* as the base. As this process continues, a time comes where there is the complete cessation of *vedanā* as well as *taṇhā*: “*vedanā-nirodhā, taṇhā-nirodho*” (with the cessation of sensation, craving and aversion cease).

This is a state beyond mind and matter, where both *vedanā* and *saññā* cease. One can experience this for a few seconds, minutes, hours, or days when, according to one’s own capacity, one becomes established in *nirodha-samāpatti* (the attainment of cessation) by practising *Vipassanā* meditation. After a period of *nirodha-samāpatti*, when one comes back to the sensual field of mind and matter, one again will experience *vedanā*. But now the whole habit pattern of the mind has been changed, and the continued practice leads to

the stage where one does not generate aversion or craving at all because the *anusaya-kilesa* and the *āsava* (the deep-rooted mental impurities) are eradicated. In this way by the breaking of one link, *vedanā*, the whole process is shattered and the wheel of repeated existence is broken completely.

Now, we clearly understand that we have to work at the level of *vedanā* because here the rotation of the wheel of suffering can be stopped. And from here also the wheel of the Dhamma (*Dhamma-cakka*) or the wheel of cessation of suffering (*dukkha-nirodha-gāminī-paṭipadā*) can start to rotate, leading to *vedanā-nirodhā*, *taṇhā-nirodho*: the end of craving, as a result of *anicca-vijjā* or *paññā*, leading to the cessation of suffering. By the practice of *Vipassanā*, wise persons (*sapaññā*) practise this path by not reacting to *vedanā* since they have developed the *anicca-vijjā*.

Having learned to examine the depths of his own mind, the Buddha realized that between the external object and the mental reflex of craving is a missing link: *vedanā*. Whenever we encounter an object through the five physical senses or the mind, a sensation (*vedanā*) arises. If the sensation is pleasant we crave to prolong it, and if it is unpleasant we crave to be rid of it. This is the chain of Dependent Origination that the Buddha expressed his profound discovery:

*Phassappaccayā vedanā.
Vedanāpaccayā taṇhā.*

*Dependent of contact, sensation arises.
Dependent on sensation, craving arises.*

The immediate cause for the arising of craving and of suffering is, therefore, not something outside of us but rather

the sensations that occur within us. To free ourselves from craving and suffering, we must deal with this inner reality of sensations. To do so is the practical way to emerge from suffering. By developing of *anicca-vijjā* (the wisdom of impermanence), we learn to cut the knots of our misery and witness the true nature of Dhamma. *Vedanā*, then, is the cause of our bondage when not properly observed, as well as the means of our liberation when properly observed by understanding the Dhamma, the Law of *Paṭiccasamuppāda*.

In the *Mahāsatippaṭṭhāna-sutta*, the Buddha states that whatever arises in the mind is accompanied by sensation (*vedanā-samosaraṇā sabbe dhammā*).

Therefore, observation of sensation is the only means to examine the totality of our being, physical as well as mental. Just as the understanding of *vedanā* is absolutely essential to understand the interaction between mind and matter within ourselves, the same understanding of *vedanā* is essential to understand the interaction of the outside world with the individual (*phassappaccayā vedanā*).

Chapter VII

Nibbāna

(Freedom from suffering)

Nibbāna is the Pali term (Sanskrit: *Nirvāna*) which is defined as the ultimate reality, extinction, freedom from all kinds of suffering. It is the nature or mind freed from thirst (*taṇhā*), from the defilements deeply rooted in the mind, and from the cycle of rebirth.

Abhidhamma-piṭaka describes *Nibbāna* as an extinction of thirst (*taṇhakkhaya*), extinction of aversion (*dosakkhaya*), and extinction of delusion (*mohakkhaya*). The term “*Nirodha*” (cessation) is often used as a synonym of *Nibbāna*. It is the supra-mundane wisdom (*phalaññāna*) that gives lights to noble fruition (*lokuttara-phala*). *Nibbāna* cuts off craving, aversion, delusion, wrong view, and conceit. It is the nature that eradicates all *saṅkhāras*, the nature beyond the three kinds of mundane worlds – (1) sensual world of *devas*, mankind, and lower beings (*kāma-loka*); (2) fine material world of *brahmas* (*rūpa-loka*); and (3) immaterial world of *brahmas* (*arūpa-loka*).

Nibbāna is defined as the cessation of ignorance, thirst, attachment, and action (*samucchedappahāna*). It is a form of subtle peace and tranquillity (*parama-sukha*) without suffering and misery of any kind. It has two different names:

1- *Kilesa-nibbāna* or *upādisesa-nibbāna* (the cessation of mental defilement) i.e., the attainment of *arahatship*, but the

five aggregates are still remaining. The noble persons, seeing the three worlds are full of misdeed, put forth effort to concentrate on meditation, cut off the remaining defilements and attain full liberation (*arahatship*). If they remain alive in this human world, they will attain *kilesa-nibbāna* in this world; if they attain *kilesa-nibbāna* during the time they live in the worlds of *devas* or *brahma*, they continue to live there until the end of their lives.

2- *Khandha-nibbāna* or *anupādisesa-nibbāna* (the cessation of both defilements and the five aggregates). This refers to the saintly persons whose *saṅkhāras* come to an end, and completely extinguish the five aggregates in the world. *Khandha-nibbāna* can be named as “*pari-nibbāna*” (the death of the enlightened one).

All the Buddhas and saintly persons, experiencing the taste of incomparable peace and tranquillity of *Nibbāna*, want us to see *Nibbāna* where sufferings do not exist, where old age, illness and death are unknown. Real peace and ultimate happiness in *Nibbāna* is for all the universe, for all the humans, the *devas* and the *brahmas* (celestial beings).

The people in the whole world wandered forth, looked for peace and happiness for all time before the Enlightened One made his appearance yet, because the present world we live in is full of chaos, hatred, ill will, full of sorrow and suffering, and no peace prevails wherever. So much misery occurs in every family, in every society, in every nation, and in the entire world.

If people long for real peace, they should try to understand the teaching of the Buddha through the Noble Eightfold Path and follow his advice diligently with due meekness and all

humility. Dhamma, the Buddha's teaching, is so simple, so scientific, so true – the law of nature applicable to one and all. Whether one is Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Jain; whether one is Asian, American, European, African – it makes no difference at all.

Within the period of forty-five years of his teaching, after his enlightenment, the Buddha taught nothing but the Noble Eightfold Path, which is summarized into three characteristics - *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Paññā*. The path is a pure science of mind and matter, and the interaction between the two. The Buddha wants us to be liberated at the deepest level of our own mind.

There are certain people who misunderstand or are misled that one can reach *Nibbāna* only at the presence of the Buddha. This is a wrong view, and this wrong view can lead to ignorance and frustration. The Buddha said that if one stays with the Dhamma and follows the law, one is dwelling near him (the Buddha), although physically one may be at the other end of the universe, far from him. On the contrary, if one resides near him – so close that one could hold the end of his robes with one's hand – yet, if one does not follow his advice and fails to practise the law according to his instructions, then, there is the whole distance of the universe between him and one.

Innumerable noble ones have trod the path and reached *Nibbāna*. In the same path, if we set up sufficient effort and work diligently with humility, we also will arrive at our goal, *Nibbāna*, at any time, anywhere with or without the presence of the Buddha.

By the practice of real meditation – the meditation for all, we learn the way from suffering to liberation, and naturally we feel very happy and confidence, and want others to share our peace and joy. We are regularly sending *mettā* (loving-kindness and compassion) to all beings and non-beings with wishes for their freedom from all suffering.

May all beings and non-beings be happy!
May real peace prevail in the entire world!
May all people enjoy the Dhamma!

Glossary of Pāli terms

Abhidhamma one of the three collections of the Buddha's teaching. See **Tipiṭaka**.

Abhijjhā covetousness.

Akālika the Dhamma that gives immediate results.

Akusala unwholesome. Opposite of **kusala** (wholesome).

Anāgāmi a person who has reached the third stage of enlightenment. See **ariya**.

Anattā egoless, non-self, without substance. See **lakkhaṇa**.

Añjali-karaṇīyo being worthy to be saluted with folded hands.

Anupassanā constant observation.

Anuttaraṃ or **anuttaro** he becomes a perfect person by Sīla.

Appanā-samādhi attainment on concentration, a state of *jhāna*

Arahaṃ the conqueror of enemies.

Arahant / arahat fully liberated person; one who reached the fourth and final stage of enlightenment. See **ariya**.

Ariya noble one; saintly person who has purified his mind to experience the ultimate reality (*nibbāna*). There are four levels of *ariya*: *sotāpanna* (stream-enterer), *sakadāgāmi* (once- returner), *anāgāmi* (non-returner) and *arahat* (one who will undergo no further rebirth after his present existence).

Ariya-aṭṭhaṅgika-magga the Noble Eightfold Path. See **magga**.

Ariya-sacca Noble truth. See **sacca**.

Arūpa-brahma-loka immaterial celestial plane reached by the attainment of formless *jhāna*.

Arūpa-rāga desire for immaterial existence.

Asubha impure. Opposite of **subha** (pure).

Atta-kilamathānu-yoga the most difficult deed leading to

nothing but just uselessly hurts and suffers oneself.

Aṭṭhakathā commentary of the Pāli Cannon texts.

Avijjā ignorance, illusion. Synonym of **moha** (delusion).

Ādīnava experiential wisdom that this very existence is full of evils.

Āhuneyyo being worthy of invitation.

Ānāpāṇa respiration. **Ānāpāṇassati** awareness of respiration.

Ātman self, soul. Opposite of **anatman** or **anattā**. See **anattā**.

Āyatana region, sphere, especially the six spheres of perception (*saḷāyatana*): eye and visual objects, ear and sound, nose and odour, tongue and taste, body and touch, mind and objects of mind. These are also called the six faculties.

Bala strength, power. **Sati-bala** the strength of awareness.

Bhagavā an exalted one, a liberated person.

Bhaṅga an important stage in the practice of Vipassana, the experience of the dissolution of the apparent solidity of body into subtle vibrations which are constantly arising and passing away.

Bhava the process of becoming. **Bhava-cakka** the wheel of continuing existence.

Bhavaṅga seat of birth-producing **kamma**.

Bhāvanā meditation, mental development. There are two divisions of *bhāvanā*: *samatha-bhāvanā* or *samādhi-bhāvanā* (concentration of mind) and *vipassanā-bhāvanā* (development of wisdom). See *jhāna*, *paññā*, *samādhi*, *vipassanā*.

Bhāvanā maya-paññā wisdom developing from personal, direct experience. See **paññā**.

Bhikkhu Buddhist monk.

Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma the factors of enlightenment.

Bojjhaṅga quality that helps to attain enlightenment. There

are seven factors: awareness (*sati*), penetrating investigation of Dhamma (*dhamma-vicaya*), effort (*vīriya*), bliss (*pīti*), tranquillity (*passadhi*), concentration (*samādhi*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*).

Brahma inhabitant of the higher heavens. In Buddhism, the Brahma gods are said to reside in the highest celestial spheres and subject to decay and death like all beings.

Brahman the essential soul of the Brahma god (Hinduism).

Brahma-vihāra the nature of the Brahma or a divine state of mind, in which four pure qualities are present: *mettā* (loving-kindness), *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (sympathetic joy), and *upekkhā* (equanimity).

Buddha enlightened person; one who has discovered the way to liberation, has practised it, and has reached the goal by his own efforts. There are two types of Buddha: 1) *pacceka-buddha* (one who is unable to teach others the way he has found); 2) *Sammā-sambuddha* (perfect Buddha who is able to teach others.)

Cetasika the state that comes into existence with the mind and dies out with the mind.

Cinta-maya-paññā wisdom gained by intellectual analysis. See **paññā**.

Citta mind. **Cittānupassanā** observation of the mind. See **satippaṭṭhāna**.

Dhamma the law of nature; object of mind; phenomenon; the teaching of an enlightened person.

Dhamma-cakkavattana-sutta the name of the first discourse of the Buddha within which he explained the Four Noble Truths.

Dhammānupassanā observation of the contents of mind. See **satippaṭṭhāna**.

Dhātu element; natural condition.

Dosa aversion; anger; hatred; one of the three principal mental defilements together with **rāga** and **moha**.

Dukkara-kiriya martyrdom. It refers to extreme meditation

uselessly practised for six years by the Buddha.

Dukkha suffering; un-satisfactoriness; one of the three characteristics (see **lakkhaṇa**); the first of the Four Noble Truth (see **sacca**).

Ehi-passiko a quality of the Dhamma that invites people to come and see.

Gotama family name of the Buddha.

Indriya faculty. See **āyatana** and **bala**.

Jhāna state of mental absorption or trance.

Kalāpa / kalāpa-rūpa the smallest indivisible unit of matter, composed of four elements and their characteristics.

Kamma deed; action, especially an action performed by oneself that will have an effect on one's future.

Kappa an aeon (eon); duration of one world cycle.

Kāyānupassanā observation of the body. See **satippaṭṭhāna**.

Khandha aggregate; a human being is composed of five aggregates: *rūpa* (matter), *vedanā* (sensation), *saññā* (perception), *saṅkhāra* (mental formation), and *viññāṇa* (consciousness).

Khaṇika-samādhi concentration lasting for a moment. See **samādhi**.

Kilesa mental defilement; mental impurity. **Anusaya-kilesa** mental defilement lying dormant in the unconsciousness.

Kusala wholesome, beneficial. Opposite of **akusala**.

Lakkhaṇa characteristics, sign. **Ti-lakkhaṇa** three characteristics: *anicca*, *dukkha*, *anattā*.

Lobha craving. Synonym of **rāga**.

Magga path. **Ariya-aṭṭhaṅgika-magga** the Noble Eightfold Path leading to liberation from suffering.

Magga-sacca the fourth of the Four Noble Truths.

Mahā-bhūta-rūpa the four elements, which the matter is composed of: 1) *paṭhavī-dhātu* (earth element), 2) *āpo-dhātu* (water element), 3) *tejo-dhātu* (fire element), and 4) *vāyo-dhātu* (air element).

Mettā loving-kindness. See **brahma-vihāra**. **Mettā-bhāvanā** the systematic cultivation of mind by a technique of *mettā meditation*.

Micchā-diṭṭhi wrong view. Opposite of **sammā-diṭṭhi**.

Moha ignorance, delusion. Synonym of **avijjā**. See **dosa** and **rāga**.

Nāma mind. **Nāma-rūpa** mind and matter.

Ñāṇa wisdom, knowledge. See **paññā**.

Nibbāna the ultimate reality; extinction; freedom from all kinds of misery and suffering. **Pari-nibbāna** the death of an enlightened person.

Nirodha cessation; eradication. Synonym of **Nibbāna**.

Nirodha-sacca the truth of cessation of suffering, the third of the Four Noble Truths. See **sacca**.

Nīvaraṇa hindrance, obstacle. There are five hindrances to mental development: *kāmacchanda* (craving), *byāpāda* (ill will), *thīna-middha* (dullness and drowsiness), *uddhacca-kukkucca* (restlessness and worry), and *vicikicchā* (doubt).

Oḷārika gross, coarse. Opposite of **sukhuma**.

Opanayiko every successive step takes one towards full liberation due to Vipassanā meditation.

Pāli one of the ancient Indian languages spoken in northern India during the Buddha's time; the texts recording the teaching of the Buddha.

Paññā wisdom, knowledge. The third of the three trainings

by which the Noble Eightfold Path is practised. See **magga**. There are three types of wisdom: 1) *suta-maya-paññā* (received wisdom), 2) *cinta-maya-paññā* (intellectual wisdom), and 3) *bhāvanā-maya-paññā* (experiential wisdom).

Pāramī wholesome mental quality that leads one to the liberation.

Pari-nibbāna see **Nibbāna**.

Pariyatti theory of Damma.

Paṭipatti practice of meditation.

Phassa contact.

Pīti rapture, joy.

Rāga craving, desire. Synonym of **lobha**.

Rūpa-brahma-loka celestial plane of the five material existence, attained by the first four *jhānas*.

Sacca truth. The Four Noble Truths (*ariya-sacca*) are:

- 1- *Dukkha-sacca* (the truth of suffering);
- 2- *Samudaya-sacca* (the truth of the origin of suffering);
- 3- *Nirodha-sacca* (the truth of the cessation of suffering);
- 4- *Magga-sacca* (the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering).

Sakadāgāmi once-returner. One who reached the second stage of enlightenment. This person will return to the material world for a maximum of one more lifetime. See **ariya**.

Sakkāya-diṭṭhi personality view. See **saṃyojana**.

Saḷāyatana six sense doors. See **āyatana**.

Samādhi concentration, control of one's mind. The second of the three trainings by which the Noble Eightfold Path is practised. There are three kinds of *samādhi*:

- 1- *Khaṇika-samādhi* (concentration sustained from moment to moment);
- 2- *Upacāra-samādhi* (concentration approaching a state of absorption);

3- *Appanā-samādhi* (attainment of concentration, a state of mental absorption, *jhāna*).

Samāpatti attainment; the eight *samāpattis* refer to the attainments of the eight *jhānas*. **Nirodha-samāpatti** refers to the attainment of cessation, also known as the ninth *jhāna*. This was the result of the Buddha's having included the understanding of *anicca* in the practice of *jhāna*.

Samatha tranquillity. **Samatha-bhāvanā** synonym of **samādhi-bhāvanā**. See **bhāvanā**.

Sampajañña constant understanding of the mind-matter phenomenon at the level of sensation.

Samsāra cycle of rebirth; world of suffering.

Samudaya origin; arising. **Samudaya-sacca** the truth of the origin of suffering, the second of the Four Noble Truths.

Samyojana fetter. Ten *saṃyojanas* are: 1) *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (personality view), 2) *vicikicchā* (doubt), 3) *sīlabbata-parāmāsa* (clinging to rules and rituals), 4) *kāmacchanda* (sensual desire), 5) *paṭigha* (anger), 6) *rūpa-rāga* (desire for fine material existence), 7) *arūpa-rāga* (desire for immaterial existence), 8) *māna* (conceit), 9) *uddhacca* (restlessness), and 10) *avijjā* (ignorance).

Sandiṭṭhiko quality of the Dhamma to be experienced in this life.

Saṅgha community of the noble persons who have experienced *Nibbāna*. Also community of the Buddhist monks and nuns. Members of the **ariya-saṅgha**, **bhikkhu-saṅgha**, or **bhikkhunī-saṅgha**.

Saṅkhāra mental formation. It is the *kamma*, the action, that gives future results and that is actually responsible for shaping one's future life. **Bhava-saṅkhāra** a *saṅkhāra* which is responsible for rebirth.

Saññā perception, recognition. In the practice of *Vipassanā*, **saññā** is changed into **paññā**, the understanding of reality as it is. It becomes **anicca-saññā**, **dukkha-**

saññā, **anatta-saññā**, **asubha-saññā**, i.e., the perception of impermanent, suffering, egolessness, and of the illusory nature of physical beauty.

Saraṇa shelter, protection. **Ti-saraṇa** Triple refuge, i.e., refuge in the *Buddha*, *Dhamma*, and *saṅgha*.

Sāsana the teaching, ordinance, rule. **Buddha-sāsana** the teaching of the Buddha.

Satthā teacher, master. **Satthā-deva-manussānaṃ** the Buddha is the teacher of gods and men.

Sati awareness; mindfulness. See **Bojjhaṅga**. **Ānāpānas-sati** awareness of respiration. **Sati-bala** the strength of awareness. **Satindriya** controlling of awareness.

Satippaṭṭhāna establishing of awareness.

Siddhattha the personal name of the *Gotama Buddha* that means "one who has accomplished his task." (Sanskrit: **Siddhārtha**).

Sīla discipline; morality; abstaining from physical and verbal actions that cause harm to oneself and others.

Sotāpanna stream-enterer; one who has reached the first stage of enlightenment characterized by eradication of the first three fetters: personality view, doubt and attachment to rites and rituals. This person cannot be reborn in the lower realms and will attain full liberation in a maximum of seven lifetimes. See **ariya**.

Sugata / sugato the frequent epithet of the Buddha, which means he has gone to the ultimate truth, because he has become pure in body, speech, and mind.

Sukha happiness; pleasure. Opposite of **dukkha**.

Sukhuma subtle; fine. Opposite of **oḷārika**.

Suta-maya-paññā received wisdom; wisdom gained from listening to others. See **paññā**.

Sutta the discourse of the Buddha. One of the three collections of the Buddha's teachings. (Sanskrit: **sutra**). See **ti-piṭaka**.

Taṇhā thirst, lust, greed, craving. The cause of suffering.

Tapa an effort to worship god for help (Hinduism). But in Buddhism, it refers to an effort to practise *dāna* and *sīla*.
Tathāgata literally, ‘thus-gone’ or ‘thus-come.’ One who, by walking on the path of reality, has reached the ultimate reality, the term by which the Buddha referred to himself.
Ti-lakkhaṇa (Sanskrit: **tri-lakṣaṇa**). See **lakkhaṇa**.
Ti-piṭaka literally, ‘three-baskets.’ The three collections of the Buddha’s teachings, (Sanskrit: **Tripitaka**) namely:
1- **Vinaya-piṭaka** the collection of the monastic order;
2- **Sutta-piṭaka** or **Suttanta-piṭaka** the collections of the discourse;
3- **Abhidhamma-piṭaka** the collection of the higher teachings, i.e., systematic philosophical exegesis of the Dhamma.

Udaya-bhaya experiential wisdom of reality of impermanence achieved by the observation of the constantly changing sensations within oneself.

Upanishad theory of ancient Hinduism.

Upādāna attachment; clinging.

Upacāra-samādhi concentration approaching a state of absorption. See **samādhi**.

Upekkhā equanimity; the state of mind free from craving, aversion, and delusion. See **brahma-vihāra** and **bojjhaṅga**.

Vedanā sensation, feeling. One of the five aggregates. By learning to observe **vedanā** objectively, one can avoid any new reaction, and can experience directly within oneself the reality of *anicca* (impermanence). This experience is essential for the development of detachment that leads to liberation of the mind.

Vedanānupassanā observation of sensations within the body. See **satipptṭhāna**.

Viññāna consciousness, cognition. One of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*).

Vipassanā seeing in a special way; introspection, insight which purifies the mind; especially insight into *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anattā*.

Vipassanā-bhāvanā development of insight through the meditation technique of observing the reality of oneself by observing sensations within the body. See **bhāvanā**.

Vipassanā-ñāna wisdom in *Vipassanā*.

Visuddhi purification.

Vipassanūpakkilesa mental impurity in *Vipassanā*.

MEDITATION FOR ALL

“I have read this very interesting booklet in which Mr. Ngon Som has explained clearly both the theory (*Pariyatti*) and practice (*Paṭipatti*) as expounded by the Buddha in the Tipiṭaka. The author was a former schoolmate of mine at the Pali High School in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, later pursued his higher studies abroad and received his Master Degree in various fields of education. I am very proud of having a Dhamma-friend who is highly educated and then becomes a Vipassana meditator. This booklet is intended to show the way how to uproot and eliminate the deep underlying causes of misery and suffering. It is true that the teaching of the Buddha (*Buddha-sāsana*) is not a religion, and thus Vipassana Meditation discovered by the Buddha is not, in any way, involved in any religion, any sect, any caste system, any race, or any nation. It is for all.”

- *Sau Thach*, Senior Assistant Teacher to Master *S. N. Goenka*, the Principal Acarya of Vipassana Meditation in the tradition of *Sayagyi U Ba Khin*.

“This book, written by Ngon Som, presents the essential teaching of the Buddha which is regarded as the universal law of nature, and is beneficial to everybody interested in seeking the path to overcome all kinds of misery and suffering. As a Vipassana Meditator, the author has tried to explain the technique of practical training, the factors of enlightenment, the foundation of mindfulness, the Noble Eightfold Path, and Nibbāna, etc.. I would undoubtedly recommend it would be a very good guide for which many will be wise to read.”

- *Kry Lay*, Long Beach, California, U.S.A.

“This book is Mr. Ngon Som’s wonderful gift to us all. It could be clearly understood that Vipassana Meditation is the art of living as well as the pure science of mind and matter. It is, in fact, a logical process of mental purification through self-observation which can be practised by one and all. If everybody follows the Noble Eightfold Path strictly, diligently and faithfully, then the whole world will be full of love and compassion, and real peace, real happiness and real harmony will prevail.

- *Thel Thong*, Melbourne, Australia.

