

# TREASURE MINDFULNESS CONSCIENTIOUSLY



SAYĀDAW U PAÑÑĀTHAMI

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*Published by*

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## Preface

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In the year 2002, my indefatigable meditation master, the Most Venerable Ovadācariya Sayādawgyi U Paṇḍitābhivamsa (Paṇḍitārāma Sayādawgyi) assigned me to conduct a special *Vipassanā* meditation retreat for the first time at Tathāgata Meditation Centre (TMC), San Jose, the United States of America. Before that, I just accompanied Sayādawgyi to assist him in interviewing the *yogīs* or meditators. A spiritual task I needed to shoulder to the best of my capability whereby my fluency in English was not up to the mark at that time.

I commenced this two-week intensive retreat from 4 May to 18 May 2002 by reciting the Great Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness (*Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*). This was the discourse delivered by the Buddha at Kammāsadhamma, a market-town of the Kuru people 2,550 years ago. To gain purification of mind and finally the bliss of *Nibbāna*, every striving *yogī* has to be endowed with ardour, clear comprehension and mindfulness (*sati*). The essence of this *Vipassanā* meditation is to develop constant, uninterrupted, powerful and sustained mindfulness. To be mindful of any physical and mental phenomena, one has to practise non-judgmental observation, that is the ability of the mind to observe things impartially without criticism. Only then can one see things as they really are by realising the three characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and selflessness.



Rare indeed is to be born in this world as a human coupled with the blessed fortune of meeting the Buddha's Dispensation (*Sāsana*). As such, we should seize this golden opportunity to appreciate and value this priceless Triple Gem deeply with diligence and meticulousness. Moment-to-moment bare attention and unremitting heedfulness ought to be cultivated continuously until our mind reaches a state of complete detachment. By bearing this in mind while delivering my meditation talk in this centre, may this *Dhamma* book be aptly entitled "Treasure Mindfulness Conscientiously".

As easy as ABC,  
As busy as a bee,  
Yogīs at TMC,  
Treasure mindfulness conscientiously!

May you be happy and healthy,



Sayādaw U Paññāthami  
April 2013



# Acknowledgements

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Humbly, allow me to express my endless gratitude to both my illustrious meditation masters, the late Most Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw and Most Venerable Paṇḍitārāma Sayādawgyi for all their competent guidance and erudite knowledge in the field of *Vipassanā* meditation.

I would also like to extend my profound appreciation to the Board of Directors of Tathāgata Meditation Centre (TMC), San Jose, California for the kind invitation, warm hospitality and meditation recordings.

My heartiest salutations and profuse thanks to the following Penang *yogīs* for the team effort in producing this lovely gift of *Dhamma* in print:

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For all the time, munificence and capability, there is no appropriate word to describe your wholesome deeds except to utter, “*Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!*”

With boundless *mettā*,  
Sayādaw U Paññāthami





# 1

---

## *7 Benefits and Basic Instructions*

*Namo, tassa bhagavato, arahato, sammā sambuddhassa*  
(recite 3 times).

Last December I went back to Myanmar to assist my teacher, Sayādawgyi U Paṇḍitābhivaṃsa. Before I went back to Australia, he told me that I had to go to San Jose, America, then go to Europe to teach meditation on his behalf. He could not go to America and Europe that year. Whenever Sayādawgyi asks me to do something, I dare not say no. I always say, "I will try." That is why I come here. Before coming here, I had mixed feelings. One was happiness, another apprehension. I am happy to meet again some of my *Dhamma* friends whom I know are here and also meet some new *Dhamma* friends who practise meditation here. So I am happy. However, I am nervous. I do not know why I am nervous, but one thing is very clear, that is I do not read newspapers. It is better not to read. If I read, my fear will increase. Another reason for my apprehension is that this is the first time I am conducting this meditation retreat. Other times, I just follow Sayādawgyi to assist him in interviewing the





*yogīs*. I do not have other duties or responsibilities to the *yogīs*. To be solely in charge is another reason for my fear. But I will try to help our *yogīs* during these two weeks. At that time, when Sayādawgyi sent me to the Blue Mountains Insight Meditation Centre in Australia, I could not speak English well. I was in England studying English. But Sayādawgyi still sent me to Australia. I thought that I would take that opportunity to study English with the *yogīs*. So every night I gave a talk. They tried to understand my English. Now I want to study and improve my English with the *yogīs* here. So I hope all of you can understand my English.

This morning our *yogīs* and Sayādaw recited *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. Whenever I conduct a retreat, I normally begin with the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. So when the *yogīs* recited this morning, I was happy. Now I will explain what *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* is. I will try to explain the benefits of practising meditation. At first I will recite in Pāli, the original Pāli words used and spoken by the Buddha. "*Ekāyano ayaṃ, bhikkhave, maggo sattānaṃ visuddhiyā, sokaparidevānaṃ samatikkamāya, dukkhadomanassānaṃ atthaṅgamāya, nāyassa adhigamāya, nibbānassa sacchikiriyāya, yadidaṃ cattāro satipaṭṭhāna.*" This morning you recited, "This is the only way, *bhikkhus*, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for reaching the noble path, for the realisation of *Nibbāna*." Before we practise meditation, the Buddha expounded the benefits of practising meditation. At the present time, we have read of the many benefits of meditation published in books or religious texts and how these



benefits help people. The Buddha clearly understood the truth by expounding these seven kinds of benefits. "This is the only way, *bhikkhus*, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for reaching the noble path, for the realisation of *Nibbāna*."

At first the Buddha taught '*Ekāyana*', this is the only way, no other ways. There are no branches or other methods to attain enlightenment or *Nibbāna*. This is the original Pāli words of the Buddha. So when some devotees hear this word, they do not like it or disagree. When I was in Singapore, one night I gave a talk to the new *yogīs*. I started with the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* and the benefits of practising meditation. In the audience, there was a monk. After the *Dhamma* talk, he said to me, "Sayādaw, don't use 'this is the only way' because they don't like it." So I told him, "This is not my word, this is the Pāli word spoken by the Buddha. I don't change what the Buddha taught." We cannot attain *Nibbāna* by just performing charity. When we take only precepts, we cannot attain enlightenment. By just practising *Samatha* meditation, we cannot attain enlightenment. If we really want to attain enlightenment by reaching *Sotāpatti magga phala*, *Sakadāgāmi magga phala*, *Anāgāmi magga phala*, *Arahatta magga phala*, we have to practise *Vipassanā* meditation. That is why the Buddha taught '*Ekāyana*', this is the only way, no other ways. So I told him I had to use this Pāli word even though they did not like it. The *Dhamma* given by the Buddha does not criticise other teachings.

So for our *yogīs* here, I do not need to explain much



and I understand you practise meditation according to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. The first benefit is for the purification of beings if we can train our mind. We are called *puthujanna*, the unenlightened ones. We still have defilements such as greed, anger and delusion. We have defilements. Our mind is tainted and contaminated by defilements. This morning you started to meditate. When you practise meditation according to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, you cross your legs, keep your upper body upright and focus your mind onto the abdomen. You pay attention to the rising and falling of the abdomen and you note it carefully. In the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, the Buddha taught '*ātāpa*', that is to put forth effort.

You make a mental note of the rising and falling carefully. Even though when you note it carefully, does your mind stay onto the abdomen all the time? If you are very mindful while observing the rising and falling, you may be able to note two or three times. Soon, the mind goes away thinking, wandering or imagining about other things. Thus, the mind is not stable. This shows that we have defilements. Defilements pollute our mind. If we want to purify our mind, we have to practise meditation. The Buddha said that the mind itself is pure and clear. Because of the defilements, our mind is not pure. If we want to purify our mind, we have to practise accordingly.

*'Sokaparidevānaṃ samatikkamāya'*, sorrow and lamentation will be overcome. We often experience sadness and grief. When we feel sad, how do we overcome it? When we feel great sadness, how do we overcome it? If we do not understand what the



Buddha taught or if we do not practise *Vipassanā* meditation, it is not easy to overcome sorrow and lamentation. However, the Buddha taught us how to overcome such afflictions. When we practise meditation ardently and energetically, we can overcome sorrow and lamentation. There are many stories during the Buddha's time pertaining to sorrow and lamentation. When Kisāgotami lost her only son and Paṭācārā lost her sons, husband and parents, they felt inconsolable. But when they met the Buddha and listened to the *Dhamma*, they were able to overcome their sorrow. Nowadays we also come across many people who can overcome their sorrow and lamentation. It does not mean that they have attained this or that, but because of their practice, they can control their feeling of sadness.

I would like to relate an incident about a *yogī*. When I was in Australia, a lady came to practise meditation for one month. When she came for her interview, she always cried. I did not ask her why she cried at the beginning because I was not close to her. I dared not ask her why she cried. Later, she told me about her experience. So I advised her to note the unpleasant object closely. I related the story of Kisāgotami and Paṭācārā. I could not help her because she could not note the unpleasant object. Soon, she talked openly about her husband. Her husband wanted to divorce her. I encouraged her to practise meditation. So she practised for more than one month. After that, at least she could control her sadness. If we really practise meditation ardently and energetically, we can overcome our sorrow and lamentation.

'*Dukkhadomanassānam atthaṅgamāya*', the disappearance of pain and grief will be the result. Pain is physical pain. Grief is mental pain. If we really want to cope with physical pain, we have to practise this kind of meditation. At the beginning of the practice, we cannot endure this physical pain. If you are a beginner, after about twenty minutes, pain arises somewhere in your body. You have to be patient with the pain when it arises. If you have no patience, you cannot tolerate it. So you have to be patient. If you cannot bear the pain, you can change your position or posture. When you change, you have to be mindful by saying to yourself mentally or note "changing, changing, changing". Do not change immediately. You have to be patient and mindful if you really want to deal with the pain. When your mindfulness is getting better, you can put up with the pain. The disappearance of grief or mental pain can also be experienced.

'*Nāyassa adhigamāya*', the experience of reaching the right path and fruition occurs. When we practise meditation accordingly and with effort, we can experience the right path and fruition. The last benefit is one can attain *Nibbāna*. So there are seven benefits of practising *Vipassanā* meditation.

What are the Four Foundations of Mindfulness? *Kāyānupassanā*, contemplation of the body, *vedanānupassanā*, contemplation of the feeling, *cittānupassanā*, contemplation of the consciousness and *dhammānupassanā*, contemplation of the *dhamma* or mental object. These are the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. When we note the rising and falling of



the abdomen, this is the contemplation of the body. When we note the pleasant object, this is the contemplation of the feeling. For thinking, wandering and imagining, this is the contemplation of the consciousness. Then, we have to note seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. This is the contemplation of the *dhamma*.

Now I will teach you how to practise meditation; how to note the rising and falling of the abdomen. When we note the rising and falling of the abdomen, we have to pay close attention to the rising and falling. The Buddha taught '*ātāpī sampajāno satimā*', ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful. Without ardent effort, we cannot notice the rising and falling of the abdomen clearly. That is why our late Most Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw explained that the breathing must not be too hard or too slow. If we breathe too hard, we tire fast. If we are tired, we cannot practise meditation. If we breathe too slow, we cannot notice the rising and falling clearly. We must breathe normally. When we breathe normally, the rising and falling can be clear. Sometimes I instruct the *yogīs* to take full breaths. When we take full breaths, the rising and falling can be noted clearly. For some *yogīs* who cannot notice the rising and falling, they want to change the object. When I was in Malaysia, some *yogīs* just simply said that they could not notice the rising and falling. But we teach meditation according to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. What our late Most Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw taught us is the rising and falling of the abdomen. I encouraged these Malaysian *yogīs* to note the rising and falling closely. Without paying attention to the abdomen, we cannot feel or notice the rising and

falling clearly. That is why we have to pay close attention to the abdomen. Even though we pay close attention to the abdomen, we cannot note the rising and falling all the time because as we know, the mind is so quick and fast. At the beginning of the practice, we cannot note the rising and falling all the time, but we have to try to note it closely.

The more we note it closely, the more we understand our state of mind; thinking or wandering all the time. This is not our fault because we are not enlightened yet. Our mind is running fast and wandering. That is why the Buddha taught us to be mindful. It is not easy to control the mind because the mind is so quick. So when we practise meditation, we understand how difficult it is. Even though it is difficult to control the mind, if we put forth effort, the thinking becomes less and less. Then, we are able to note the rising and falling more clearly. We can maintain and focus our mind by noting the rising and falling for some time. In this way, we make progress in our practice. When I practised meditation at the age of eighteen under the guidance of Sayādawgyi, at the beginning of the practice, I could not note the rising and falling. I thought the rising and falling was so easy. There was nothing in the abdomen, I simply thought. That was why when I went to see him for the interview, I could not report well. So Sayādawgyi reminded me to note it carefully.

When other *yogīs* reported their experience, they could explain very well. They could note the rising and falling very clearly. To me, I could not note the rising and falling. That was why at the beginning of



the practice, I encouraged myself. I would try to note the rising and falling for ten or fifteen times. So I noted it very carefully. When I could note about ten times, then I would try to note for another ten times. In this way, I tried to make progress by noting the rising and falling. What I am trying to say is that I want to encourage the *yogīs* to note the rising and falling closely. Pay close attention to the abdomen. Without paying attention to the abdomen, we cannot note the rising and falling closely. If we can note the rising and falling closely, other things become easy because it is not easy to note this main object. You have to pay close attention. Without paying attention, you cannot note it. There are so many things to understand in the rising and falling. We just note the rising and falling.

At the beginning, we think there is nothing in the rising and falling because we cannot note closely. That was what I felt when I practised meditation at the beginning. That was why I took quite a long time. I did not understand how important it was to note the rising and falling carefully. So I want to remind the *yogīs* that the rising and falling is important. I do not want the *yogīs* to undergo what I had experienced. It is very important to note the rising and falling. Some *yogīs* may have the experience of noting in-breath and out-breath. If you have the experience of noting in-breath and out-breath, it is quite difficult to note the rising and falling of the abdomen, but it does not matter. When you practise meditation here, at the beginning, you should keep your mind onto the abdomen. Note it closely. When the mind goes to the





nostril, you just note in and out a few times, then go back to the rising and falling of the abdomen. In this way, after a few days, you will be able to note the rising and falling quite easily. This is how I encourage the *yogīs* to note the rising and falling closely.

Tonight is the first day. I do not want to talk further. So I want to stop here for tonight. I will continue tomorrow.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**



## 2

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# *Meditation Report*

Tomorrow our *yogīs* will have to report their experience to the meditation teachers. If we know how to report, it is good for both *yogīs* and meditation teachers. This is why this evening I will try to instruct our *yogīs* on how to report their experience correctly. It is not that difficult to report your experience because you watch your mind and body from moment to moment. When you are trying to note whatever arises from the six-sense doors, you will tend to remember. You will not forget. So when you report your experience, you do not need to say any other things apart from your experience.

At the beginning, when you report your experience, you should mention how many hours you have practised. You should mention briefly how many hours you practise daily. How many times you practise sitting meditation and walking meditation. You should mention them. Meditation teachers know *yogīs* follow the schedule, but the teachers still want to know whether or not *yogīs* follow the schedule. That is why in your report, *yogīs* must describe the number of times for

sitting meditation and walking meditation. *Yogīs* should always report first the sitting meditation and not the walking meditation.

When you report your sitting meditation, you do not need to describe every sitting. Which sitting did you have “good” experience? In your practice, you should choose, maybe one sitting or two sittings. You do not need to describe every sitting. In the same way, when you report your walking meditation, one or two walking practices will be sufficient. When you report your sitting meditation, remember, you should describe the main or primary object always. When you describe sitting meditation, mention first the main object, that is the rising and falling of the abdomen. *Yogīs* should not think that the meditation teachers will get bored every day, listening to the rising and falling. They are interested to listen to the experience of *yogīs* noting the main object.

Do *yogīs* note the main object closely or not? The teachers want to know. That is why a *yogī* should describe the main object first while reporting the sitting meditation. When you practise sitting meditation as instructed, you try to pay close attention to the main object. Then, note rising as rising, falling as falling. So when you pay close attention to the rising and falling of the abdomen, you may be able to note it closely. Then, you have to tell your teacher. “When I note rising, falling, I pay close attention to the abdomen.” Note the rising and falling very carefully. You have to describe when you note it closely. What do you notice in your rising and falling? You may not notice anything in the rising and falling of the abdomen immediately if you

are a beginner. Do not worry about whether you have noticed anything. Meditation teachers want to know whether or not the *yogīs* are practising correctly.

When you try to note the main object, sooner or later, a day will come when you will notice something. So when you notice something, you have to describe it. For example, "I note the rising and falling carefully. I can note it clearly. My mind can follow the movement closely. When I note rising, I notice the abdomen inflates. Then, I note falling. When I note falling, I notice the abdomen deflates." I do not know about your experience, but according to your experience, you can describe the upward movement, the downward movement, contracting or expanding. You can describe in whatever way you have experienced and noticed. It does not matter.

Sometimes *yogīs* note very carefully, but still do not notice anything. They think they cannot see anything in the rising and falling. If you cannot notice anything, you just simply say, "I try to note the rising and falling closely, but I can't see anything." As you may remember, I have mentioned that one of the *yogīs'* qualities is honesty. You have to report honestly what you have experienced. If you have noticed something, you should say, "I notice something." If you do not notice anything, you just say, "I don't notice anything." You should describe it. Have you noted the primary object carefully or not? You have to describe it clearly. If you have not experienced anything yet, it does not matter. Do not count while you are noting the rising and falling. Do not count rising and falling one, rising and falling two, rising and falling three. Do not count. It is not necessary

to count.

You can note the rising and falling a few times or for one minute, two minutes or three minutes according to your experience. If you are very careful in your noting of the rising and falling, you will notice how difficult or easy it is. You might understand what you have truly experienced. You should explain your experience. Do not jump into other objects without describing the primary object. The primary object is very important. If you are able to note the primary object closely, other things become easy because your mindfulness is quite strong.

A *yogī* who is a beginner especially does not have the ability to note the rising and falling. After two or three times, one minute or two minutes, the mind goes away or thoughts take over. The mind wanders off or thoughts replace the primary object. In your report or interview, you have to mention this to your meditation teacher. Most of the time, *yogīs* cannot catch the thought immediately. Normally, we follow the thoughts; thinking, wandering, imagining, planning. Sometimes we remember somebody is criticising. These are the experiences *yogīs* always have. So these are the things you have to describe. "After noting the rising and falling a few times, my mind goes away." If you can catch the thought immediately, you can say, "I can catch the thought immediately. Then, I note thinking, thinking, thinking." When you note thinking, what happens? Does the thought still remain in your mind or does it disappear? You understand when you note it. If you do not note it, you do not understand. "I note the thought; thinking, wandering, imagining, planning.

The thought disappears immediately.” When the thought disappears, the noting mind comes back to the primary object. If you do not note the thought immediately, the mind will not come back to the primary object. That is why you are instructed that when the thought occupies the mind, note it straight away. Try to note it. As I have said earlier, when the thought disappears, the noting mind comes back to the primary object.

Some *yogīs* in their report mention that they pull the mind back to the main object. We have to remember that we do not need to pull our mind back to the main object. If you know the fundamental of *Vipassanā* meditation, whatever arises from the six-sense doors, one must be aware of it. When you see something, note “seeing”, when you hear something, note “hearing”, when you smell, you have to note “smelling”, when you taste, you have to note “tasting”, when you touch you have to note “touching” and when you think, you have to note “thinking”.

At the beginning of the practice, *yogīs* do not have the ability to note everything that arises from the six-sense doors. That is why we have the primary object. The primary object is the rising and falling of the abdomen. So when the mind is thinking, just note “thinking”. We do not need to pull it back to the primary object. This is called *cittānupassanā*. So we have to be careful when making a report. Whatever the mind thinks, note “thinking, wandering, imagining”. Just now I mentioned *cittānupassanā*. *Yogīs* can make mistakes. A few *yogīs* told me earlier that they like to practise *cittānupassanā*. So I asked them, “How do you

practise *cittānupassanā*?" "Oh! Follow the thoughts, follow the thoughts," they replied. That is not *cittānupassanā*.

These thoughts disturb our mind. That is why we cannot live peacefully because of these thoughts. The Buddha taught '*sarāgam va cittam sarāgam va cittam ti pajānāti*'. When sensual thoughts arise in the mind, we have to know there are sensual thoughts in us. This means that we are noting, taking note or observing these thoughts. So we must note "thinking, thinking, thinking" straight away. This is *cittānupassanā*. Following the thoughts is not *cittānupassanā*. So one has to describe that after noting the rising and falling a few times, the mind goes away or thoughts take the mind away. "I note thinking. When I note thinking, thinking disappears." When the mind comes back to the rising and falling, "I note rising, falling carefully." Thus, you have described *kāyānupassanā*, contemplation of the body by noting the rising and falling. You have mentioned *cittānupassanā*, noting the thoughts. Our *yogīs* practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. So when you report, you have to report these Four Foundations of Mindfulness that you have practised.

When we practise sitting meditation, we have to sit still. We try not to move or change our posture too often. So when we sit still, unpleasant feelings will arise sooner or later. If you are not used to sitting, pain or unpleasant feelings will arise quickly, maybe after about twenty minutes or so. Mostly unpleasant feelings; pain, stiffness, hotness or needle-poking sensations will arise somewhere in the body. So when an unpleasant feeling arises somewhere in the body, you do not need

to note the rising and falling of the abdomen. The reason is because this unpleasant feeling is more obvious in your mind. You have to note numbness, pain or whatever you feel. Then, you have to describe this feeling. How do you cope with it? Do you notice it closely? "Yes, I note it closely," you may say so. When you note it closely, what do you notice? You should describe it. Do not just say, "I note pain." Do you note it closely? When you note it closely, what do you notice? If you have noted it closely, you may notice something about the pain. Maybe while you are noting the pain, the pain is getting stronger. "I note the pain carefully. When I note the pain closely, I notice the pain is getting stronger and stronger."

When you mention the pain is getting stronger and stronger, you are noticing it clearly. Sometimes you may also experience the pain is getting weaker and weaker. Sometimes while you are noting a few times, the pain or unpleasant feeling appears suddenly. Sometimes the pain is moving around. Sometimes it stays still. These are the experiences you have to describe. If you do not notice anything, you may want to change because of the strong unpleasant feeling. When you want to change, what should you do? As instructed, you note "wanting to change, wanting to change, then changing, changing, changing". You note the change. This wanting to change should also be described. These are your experiences about feelings you have to mention. So experienced *yogīs* would describe more in detail. It is not necessary to mention purposely in detail. If you really experience or notice such feeling, you should describe it. Do *yogīs* note such feeling when it occurs? Yes, they note it.



*Yogīs* seldom tell me about the senses; seeing, hearing, smelling and so on. They do not sense smell all the time, but will imagine and think they see something or somebody. Then, the *yogīs* should note seeing. When you note seeing, you should describe it. "I notice I see something in my thoughts. I note seeing." When you note seeing, what happens? Does it disappear or still continue? According to your experience, you should describe disappearing or continuing. Then, it comes to hearing. Do you note it? You have to mention it. While eating mindfully, you have to mention tasting. At the beginning of the practice, you should describe all the four aspects of *Satipaṭṭhāna* because meditation teachers want to know whether the *yogīs* have practised the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. If you note the object, you mention it. In this way, your report is quite good.

It is very simple and easy to report. Just now I just explained a bit in detail. Three things you should remember. These are the points: appearing, noting and noticing. First is the appearing or occurring in the body, rising and falling. When the rising and falling occurs in the abdomen, *yogīs* note rising as rising, falling as falling. When you note the main object closely, then you notice whether it is inflating or deflating, contracting or expanding, moving upward or moving downward. If you can describe all these three things, your report is perfect. But if you cannot describe yet what you have noticed, it does not matter. One day you will notice something if you are able to be mindful from moment to moment. Do not report from imagination. Do not report without experiencing the senses. *Yogīs* sometimes report from their imagination.

When we practise, we are told not to expect anything. Do not analyse anything. We think and expect the rising and falling. When we have expectation, it is not our true experience. That is why when we expect something, we have to note expectation. Do not search for anything while noting the present object. We have to remember, our *yogīs* have to remember that the Buddha taught us '*satimā*', be mindful. Be mindful from moment to moment so that there is just bare mindfulness. When we are mindful of the object, we can notice it automatically. That is why you do not have to search for anything purposely. Do not analyse anything. Just be mindful by noting the object closely, attentively and precisely. This is the report for sitting meditation.

When you have finished the sitting meditation session, you can begin to practise walking meditation. How do you practise walking meditation? We have to practise walking meditation for one hour. You can divide the session into three parts. The first twenty minutes, do one-step walking: right step, left step. The second twenty minutes, do two-step walking: lifting, placing. The last twenty minutes, do three-step walking: lifting, pushing forward, placing. (But you do not need to be too slow all the time in your walking meditation. When you get up from sitting, you can walk a bit faster or just do normal walking. Note "walking, walking, walking" or "stepping, stepping, stepping" for about ten or fifteen minutes, then slow down.) Try to be mindful during your walking meditation.

Remember as you are instructed when you practise walking meditation, do not look anywhere. If you look around, your eyes can be distracted by something and

then you cannot concentrate. That is why *yogīs* should keep their eyes down always. Do not look anywhere unnecessarily. If you want to know that there is something in the walking practice, then note "right step, left step" and note carefully or attentively. The noting and walking steps must synchronise. If the noting does not synchronise with the walking step, you will not notice anything. So you have to remember this. "I practise one-step walking: right step, left step." You have to describe whether or not your mind can follow the footsteps closely. "I try to note right step, left step, but my mind can't follow the footsteps closely." When you say your noting mind can follow the movement closely, you may notice something in the stepping. You should describe, just as I have mentioned earlier; appearing, noting and noticing. Noting is our duty. A *yogī's* duty is to note closely. He or she must practise attentively. When the noting mind can follow the movement closely, *yogīs* should notice what they should notice. At least, notice the movement. This is the way you have to report. When you practise walking meditation, do not walk too far or too short a distance.

"While walking back and forth, I can follow the movement closely. During the walking meditation, my mind goes away." When you experience this, you have to describe it. At the moment of standing, do you note standing? *Yogīs* mostly do not describe when they stand. Note "standing, standing, standing". You must note standing. When you note standing, you have to describe, "I note standing, standing, standing." When you note standing, what do you notice in the standing? You should describe it. When you note standing, you may say, I notice, for example, "There is stiffness in my

leg. There is hardness or softness in my sole." You should describe in detail, not just simply say, "I note standing, standing, standing."

Then, do you note "turning, turning, turning"? When you note turning, you have to turn mindfully and slowly. If you turn immediately, you will not notice anything. That is why the Buddha taught us to behave like a sick person. So we have to follow all the instructions if we want to gain something in the practice. We must follow the Buddha's instructions. We do not talk. The Buddha taught '*ātāpa*', that is to put strenuous effort. Without putting strenuous effort, we cannot gain anything in the practice. If we want to gain something, we must follow the Buddha's teachings precisely. So move slowly and mindfully. When you move slowly and mindfully, you may notice something about the movement. What do you notice when you note "moving, moving, moving"? "I notice my body is moving, one movement after another. Ah, this is the noticing." If you do not notice anything, just simply say, "I note it closely, but I still don't notice anything."

Personally, I have to say that I do not expect *yogīs* to notice anything immediately. I know how difficult it is. I think all the *yogīs* know that it is very difficult. Even if you are careful, it is not easy to note the rising and falling even for five minutes. Is it easy to note the rising and falling for five minutes without being distracted? Is it easy? I think it is not easy. That is why *yogīs* keep quiet when questioned. Not easy, not easy. Last night I told you that it is not easy. The Buddha taught us that it is very difficult to control the mind because the mind is so quick and fast. When I practised meditation, I noted

the rising and falling very carefully because I was so afraid of the teacher. I practised hard because other *yogīs* could describe how they could note the rising and falling. Their mind did not go anywhere when they reported their experience to the teacher. We reported in a group. Some *yogīs* had been practising for a long time. They were very mindful. Their report was very impressive.

When my turn came, whenever I reported, I could not note rising, falling for even one minute. Rising, falling happened only a few times. It was very difficult. My mind wandered to Upper Myanmar, paying respect to the Buddha at Mahāmuni Buddha Temple. So it is not easy to note the rising and falling. Not only the rising and falling, other objects are not easy to note. That is why I do not expect *yogīs* to say something about what they have noticed. What I want to know is whether or not you have practised meditation correctly. This is very important.

You cannot practise meditation in this centre for a long time. You can practise here for about two weeks only. Maybe at the most, you may practise for about one month. You cannot practise all the time. After two weeks, you are going back home. So when you go back home, some *yogīs* ask, "What should I do when I go back home?" So your meditation teacher suggests that you practise for one hour or two hours every day. But if you know how to practise meditation correctly, you can practise anywhere. That is why I want the *yogīs* to practise meditation correctly. If you can practise meditation correctly, it is enough for me. You will experience the *Dhamma*. If you cannot practise

meditation correctly, even though you practise for a long time, you cannot gain anything because you do not know how to practise meditation correctly.

So when you report your experience, do not worry if you do not describe what you have noticed. It does not matter, but try to be mindful from moment to moment. Bare mindfulness is essential. It is very simple. If you do it, you will know it. If you do not do it, you will not know it. You do it means you have to note it closely. When the rising and falling occurs, you have to note it or you have to be aware of it. You have to take note of it. It means that you will know it. When you know it, then you will notice it.

You do not need to describe in detail at the beginning of the practice. I am concerned about the beginners. The experienced *yogīs* know how to report. If you still have the time, you should mention whether or not you note your daily activities. You do not need to mention in detail because a *yogī* is normally given ten minutes during the interview. However, ten minutes is quite a lot of time. You have to consider other *yogīs*. Sometimes you may have many things to describe. But what is most important is that you should not describe other unnecessary details. You do not need to mention them. What is the most important thing? The primary object is very important. Besides, the pain and the thought. If you have the time, you can describe seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting or touching in detail. If you do not have the time, then you just report generally. You also have to think of other *yogīs*. So these are the ways on how to report.

If you report your experience systematically, then we save time and it is very easy to understand how the *yogīs* are making progress. Do not describe daydreaming. Daydreaming has nothing to do in the practice. You also should not describe your past experiences. The meditation teachers want to listen to the present experience. Tomorrow you have to describe, today you go through today's experience. You have to report tomorrow, but not your past experiences. However, when the meditation teachers are free, you can request and discuss your past experiences. But during the practice, only fresh experiences should be described. So this is the way our *yogīs* have to report the next day.

Now I still have a few minutes left. I want to talk a bit more about walking meditation. Earlier I said, we can divide one hour into three parts, about twenty minutes or so. In one-step walking, *yogīs* do not need to note intention. In two-step walking, *yogīs* note intention, intention to lift two or three times, then lifting. After that, intention to put it down, putting down. Some *yogīs* practise in this way. When we are able to note the footsteps closely, we notice intention. Here, I think we do not need to note intention. When our mindfulness is very good or strong, before we lift our foot, there is intention. Before we put our foot down, there is intention. We should notice this. When our mindfulness is strong and continuous, before we bend, we notice intention to bend or when we stretch our arm, there is intention before we stretch our arm. This occurs when our mindfulness is very good. When our mindfulness is not very strong, we cannot notice the intention. So *yogīs* purposely note intention. If you note

intention before you lift your foot, that is enough. If you like, note intention to lift, lifting then putting down.

If you practise three steps, you note lifting, pushing forward and putting down or placing. When you lift, note lifting. Then, note pushing forward and placing. This is the way to practise walking meditation. Some *yogīs* practise by noting intention to lift, lifting, intention to push forward, pushing forward, intention to place, placing. It is not easy if you note intention to move. You should not move your foot. You have to stop it. Your foot is still going, but you are still noting intention. It is not the present moment you are watching. That is why before you move or lift your foot, note intention, then note lifting, pushing forward, placing.

I want to summarise what I have explained here. It is very easy. Please remember these three things, appearing (object), noting and noticing. Appearing, rising and falling (object), appearing in the abdomen; noting, *yogīs* note rising and falling; then noticing, noticing inflating or deflating, contracting or expanding, upward movement or downward movement of the abdomen . So when your mindfulness is getting better and better, not only do you mention the inflating or deflating, you will also mention automatically without thinking how you notice, how you know the abdomen rises and how the rising movement ends. You will describe these experiences automatically.

When *yogīs* report, they do not need to write their experiences down on a piece of paper. If you apply your mindfulness the whole day, mostly you can remember what you have experienced. When we write our



experiences down on a piece of paper, not everything is correct because when we write, we think, "Ah, this is the thing I have experienced." In this way, not all the written experience is correct. So we cannot report everything that we have experienced. I think some *yogīs* may recall after reporting, "Ah, I forget to tell something. This experience is very good. Why do I forget to write it down? I want to see my teacher again. I want to report this experience." But your time is over. *Yogīs* do have such experience. I also have this experience. If you forget, never mind. Next day, you can still report. You can still remember the experience because you note rising, falling and other objects from the six-sense doors.

A few *yogīs* when they practise sitting meditation, put a small notebook and pen beside them. Then, they practise meditation by noting rising, falling, sitting, touching and so on. After a few minutes, they pick up the notebook and write their experiences down. Then, they note rising, falling and so on. After a few minutes, they open their eyes and write again the latest experience. What do you think of such a practice? Is it called meditation? I do not call it practising meditation. We do not need to write our experiences down while we are practising sitting meditation. Just practise. I think this is 'studying meditation'. That is why they write something, then keep it. After that, they note rising, falling and check the notes instead of practising. So please practise meditation. Do not study or make notes about your meditation. But when you have ended your retreat, you can study or read books about meditation. Here, our *yogīs* are practising meditation. That is enough for today.

May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically. Then, may you understand the *Dhamma* clearly and see things as they really are.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**



### 3

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## 3 Types of Feelings

This evening I would like to talk about '*vedanā*', feelings. When we practise meditation, we want to gain concentration and experience insight, that is to understand the mind and body as they really are. But we do not experience them immediately. What we experience first is feelings. Just sit down in an upright position. Keep the mind onto the abdomen, then note the rising and falling of the abdomen carefully. Ten minutes later, maybe an unpleasant feeling arises somewhere in the body. For beginners, it is so difficult to note and cope with this feeling. They cannot note this feeling closely. That is why they change from one side to another. The Buddha taught us in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, "*Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sukhaṃ vā vedanaṃ vedayamāno 'sukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmī' ti pajānāti; dukkhaṃ vā vedanaṃ vedayamāno 'dukkhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmī' ti pajānāti; adukkhamasukhaṃ vā vedanaṃ vedayamāno 'adukkhamasukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmī' ti pajānāti.*" "Here, O bhikkhus, a bhikkhu when experiencing a pleasant feeling, understands: 'I experience a pleasant feeling'; when experiencing a

painful feeling, he understands: 'I experience a painful feeling', when experiencing a neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling, he understands: 'I experience a neither-pleasant-nor-painful or neutral feeling'." The Buddha taught these feelings in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*.

We experience an unpleasant or painful feeling. What the Buddha taught us, we understand that there are three kinds of feelings, '*sukha vedanā, dukkha vedanā, adukkhamasuka vedanā or upekkhā vedanā*', pleasant, unpleasant and neutral feelings. We can get such information from books, but we do not practically experience these unpleasant feelings especially. When we practise *Vipassanā* meditation, we experience these feelings from our practice. When *yogīs* come for an interview, they mention something about feelings. "I note rising and falling closely. Soon after, I feel the pain. I note the pain, but I cannot bear it. The pain is so strong and unbearable that I have to change my posture." So this is a true experience when *yogīs* report such feeling to their meditation teacher. So when you experience an unpleasant feeling, this is the true experience. You do not imagine this unpleasant feeling in the report. You have not experienced a pleasant feeling yet. When you experience an unpleasant feeling, you are told to be patient. Note it closely to understand as it really is. If you are not patient, you will move from one side to another. When you change the posture, this feeling disappears. Then, you cannot understand the nature of the pain and how it works.

That is why you are told to be patient. We have to be patient, especially with the unpleasant feeling when we practise meditation. When we are patient and note this

feeling closely, we will understand about the pain. While you are noting at the beginning of the practice, the pain is getting stronger and stronger. You will not notice the disappearance of pain at that moment if you do not have patience. You know the unpleasant feeling affects your mind. That is why you change your posture more often; changing from one side to another because of the extreme or strong pain, but you have to be patient. Note it. Sometimes *yogīs* do not like noting the pain because it is unbearable and miserable. That is why most *yogīs* do not like meditation at the beginning of the practice. But when you are patient by noting the pain closely, then you can bear it. You can bear the pain while you are noting patiently. You will notice the pain is getting stronger, then getting weaker. Sometimes, it disappears. When you notice the disappearance of pain by noting, you will feel happy. This is the experience you will encounter. We should not ignore the pain.

You should remember the fundamental of *Vipassanā* meditation. Whatever arises from the six-sense doors, must be noted. I taught this yesterday. So when an unpleasant feeling arises, it must be noted. You should not ignore it. If you ignore it, you are not meditating because *vedanānupassanā* is contemplation of the feeling. In this way, you have to note the pain or unpleasant feeling carefully. When we practise meditation, we can understand these three kinds of feelings; pleasant feeling, unpleasant feeling and neutral feeling. When the pain arises, sometimes we have the energy. We have the determination to overcome it. Then, we will try to note the pain until it disappears or until we overcome it. We should not do that.

We just note the pain closely and not to overcome it. We must note closely to understand the pain. If we think of overcoming the pain and when the pain does not disappear, we may feel upset. Sometimes we get angry because we are impatient and eager while trying to overcome the pain. If we are impatient, we cannot see the nature of things clearly. We cannot understand. If we get angry, we cannot see things clearly. That is why to understand the pain is important and not to overcome the pain. We have to understand this. Whenever an unpleasant feeling arises, we note it closely. We experience the pain. Then, slowly we can cope with the pain even though it is very acute. We do not feel that this unpleasant feeling is affecting our mind. We have *yogīs* who have strong mindfulness. When they have strong mindfulness, they have concentration (*sāmadhi*).

In this way, you can bear the pain when you have enough concentration. When your concentration is good enough, you can see things clearly as they really are. That is why the Buddha taught us to improve and develop our concentration. Having gained concentration, one can understand things clearly as they really are. These three aspects, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom or insight are linked. Without mindfulness, we cannot develop concentration. Without concentration, we cannot understand things clearly as they really are. At the beginning of the practice, we cannot bear the pain. The pain is just normal, but we cannot endure it. Our mind is so sensitive. If we do not practise meditation, we like to live comfortably. We do not normally sit in an upright

position for a long time. So when we feel like changing, we just change our position. That is why we do not understand the nature of the pain when it appears. When we practise meditation, we sit still. When we sit still, the unpleasant feeling arises and our mind is so sensitive that we cannot cope with it, but we must have the determination. Say to yourself, "I will try to sit still without changing or moving." One must have determination. When the pain arises, try to be patient and do not move. If we move often, we cannot get the concentration because the mind becomes restless. Even during the changing of our position, we cannot note changing. We must note changing. When the mind is restless, we cannot note changing. Thus, we cannot progress in our practice.

How can *yogīs* understand whether they are progressing in their practice? Is there progress or not? At first if you can sit still for one hour, then your practice is quite good because you do not move or change. If you are patient with the pain, your practice is quite good. In this way, you can progress sooner or later. That is why you have to try to be patient. With patience, you note whenever the pain arises. When your mind becomes steady, you can see the nature of the pain. While you are noting the pain, the pain gets stronger. You can feel the pain is getting stronger and stronger. I say stronger and stronger, but you may understand yourself that this pain is not a solid one. It is not continuous. You will experience different stages or degree of pain. When you gain such experience, this is the understanding that pain is still there in your body, but you notice different stages or degree of pain at

different moments. It is not a solid pain. So it is not necessary for the pain to disappear. Understanding the nature of the pain is more important.

In this way, your concentration is quite good or strong. While you are noting the pain, you may notice that the pain is getting weaker and weaker. You practise sitting meditation at least four or five times a day. Every day you practise. In this way, whenever the pain arises, you note it closely. Through your practice, you might notice something. When you note the pain, one pain arises, then disappears. The next pain arises, then disappears. In this way, you will notice one pain comes and goes, another pain comes and goes, one following the other. Then, you will realise that this is the understanding about the nature of the pain. You have to be patient with the pain when it arises, but we cannot understand this immediately. We have to be patient. Sometimes when the pain is so strong, what you should do is to change this painful object to another object. If you cannot note the pain continuously and when the pain is so strong, then go back to the primary object, that is note the rising and falling of the abdomen. When you note the primary object closely or when the noting mind goes to the primary object closely, you may not be aware of the pain. The pain may be weaker. In this way, you can note the pain and main object alternately. But if your determination is strong enough, just go ahead. Note the pain. Do not give up easily or immediately. Do not change your posture immediately. Just go ahead and note the pain.

If you have completed one hour and if there is still pain in your meditation, end the session even though



the pain is still there. But at the next sitting, you can practise quite easily because earlier during the first one hour, you did not change your posture. If you change quite often, in the following sitting, you cannot bear the pain. Sometimes you are very careful while noting the pain. You do not give up immediately when the pain arises, but the pain is so strong you also may think that the one hour is completed. You may want to check the clock. When you look at the clock, your one hour has five more minutes to go. Just to complete five more minutes, you close your eyes to note the pain. However, you cannot concentrate or note because once you open your eyes, it is very difficult to continue and complete the one hour. This break or gap will not enable you to concentrate.

That is why a meditator has to be patient. Do not look at the time. Do not open your eyes to look at the clock. Just try to be patient. If you open your eyes to look at the clock for one time, the next time, exactly when you have completed fifty-five minutes and you cannot bear the pain, you tend to look at the clock just to complete for five more minutes to make up the hour. That is why try not to look at the clock. So when you continue noting whatever pain and other objects appear, you are practising meditation.

At the beginning of the practice, you know it is very difficult to keep the mind onto the primary object even though you try to note it closely. The mind does not stay onto the primary object closely. Maybe for a few times, then the mind goes away. You really want to note the primary object closely. You really want to know how the abdomen rises and falls, but you do not have the

ability at that moment to note it closely. You may feel disappointed because you are unable to note the primary object closely.

You also experience pleasant feelings (*sukha vedanā*). You have been working very hard by noting the rising and falling closely. Then, slowly your thinking becomes less and less. You can keep your mind onto the abdomen. You can note the rising and falling closely from the beginning to the end. How do you feel when you are able to note the rising and falling of the abdomen closely from the beginning to the end? You may feel satisfied. You might be happy because you know, now that you have the ability to note it closely. Most *yogīs* are satisfied when they are able to note the primary object. I am sure they are happy. When I was practising meditation at the beginning, I was happy if I was able to note the primary object closely. Happiness is a pleasant feeling.

We should understand clearly when I mention from the beginning to the end. When we note the rising and falling of the abdomen, we must pay close attention. We have to note when the abdomen rises until the end of rising. We must watch it closely. We must note it closely. When we note it closely, our noting mind can follow the movement from the beginning to the end. If you do not note it closely, sometimes you may not know which part of the rising when your mind goes away or strays. You do not know which part of the falling when the mind goes off. Do you remember sometimes the mind goes away? Which part of the rising and falling, the beginning, middle or end when the mind strays? You do not know because at that moment, you do not have

mindfulness. That is why we are always reminded that when we note the primary object, note it closely. It does not mean that we must note the beginning, we must note the middle and we must note the end. It does not mean that.

From the beginning to the end of the rising and falling, we have to understand. So when we are able to note the rising and falling of the abdomen, we feel happy. This is a pleasant feeling. *Yogīs* are satisfied when they are able to note other objects like stretching, bending, sitting down, getting up and so on. So we feel happy or have this pleasant feeling. We do not get bored if we are mindful. When the unpleasant feeling arises, we can note it easily or immediately. At the beginning of the practice, we may be afraid of noting the pain because we know it is so unpleasant. We do not like to note. Now as our mindfulness is getting better, when the feeling of unpleasantness arises, we can easily note it. Sometimes the pain can be very acute. There is stiffness or hardness.

Even sometimes *yogīs* report that when they note the pain, it becomes stronger similar to that of someone cutting them with a knife. Sometimes they feel something like twisting their body or hands, but they note it patiently. When *yogīs* note the pain patiently, it later disappears. They have that experience. That means they like to note the pain. They are not afraid of the pain. So just note the pain. At the beginning, our mind is sensitive because we do not have strong mindfulness. We do not have concentration. Now when you say, "I can note the pain, strong pain, twisting pain, cutting pain, poking pain or different kinds of pain", this means that

you understand.

What about neutral feelings? How do we experience neutral feelings? Whenever the pain arises, note it closely. We do not ignore it. Having experienced this unpleasant feeling many times, we just take it as normal. Sometimes while you are noting the rising and falling, you notice there is an unpleasant feeling. You are able to follow the movement of the rising and falling closely. You do not want to change to other object because your mind can focus onto the abdomen. You are satisfied with the noting of the rising and falling of the abdomen, but you know there is pain from the other parts of the body. You just accept it as normal. In this way, you experience this neutral feeling; neither pleasant nor unpleasant. Sometimes *yogīs* relate that while noting the rising and falling, they feel different types of pain in their body. One pain comes from the left in the knee. There is pain from another side. "I do not know what to do. There are two areas of pain in my body." If this is so, note which pain is more prominent in your mind. Note the more painful feeling closely. Just note. You just note "pain, pain, pain" or just be aware of it.

While standing on the veranda, you look out. When you see a few people, you may know who they are. But when there are many people, you do not know who they are. You just look at them. In the same way, when there are so many unpleasant feelings in your body, just be aware of them or which one is more prominent. Note the stronger unpleasant feeling. In this way, *yogīs* experience unpleasant feelings, pleasant feelings and neutral feelings. Non-practitioners will not understand

that there are three kinds of feelings, pleasant, unpleasant and neutral because they do not practise *Vipassanā* meditation. *Vipassanā* practitioners experience what the Buddha taught. Feelings must be understood.

So when you note the pain, you understand. If we do not practise *Vipassanā* meditation and when the pain arises somewhere in our body, how do we express our feelings? "Oh! I feel painful." We cannot remove the concept of 'I'. When we practise *Vipassanā* meditation ardently and energetically and when our mindfulness and concentration are getting stronger, we can see things clearly as they really are. As I have said earlier, one pain comes and goes, another pain comes and goes, one following the other. In this way, we can remove the concept of 'I'.

At the beginning of the practice, we cannot remove the concept of 'I'. "There is pain in my knee. There is pain in my head. There is pain somewhere in my body." We cannot remove the concept of 'I'. "This is my knee. This is my head. This is my shoulder." But when our mindfulness is getting stronger, we just notice the pain. We cannot see the knee, hand, head or shoulder. Only the mind goes to the pain by noting it. In this way, we can remove the concept of 'I'. That is why I would like to remind the *yogīs* that when the pain arises, try to be patient. Do not change immediately. For beginners, you can change once in a while if you cannot sit through one hour completely without changing. It is too short a period when you change within five minutes or ten minutes in one sitting. It is too short a time. You have to be patient. After twenty or thirty minutes when the pain

arises, be patient. Do not change immediately.

Note the pain closely. If you want to change your posture, you should note "wanting to change, wanting to change, wanting to change". Do not change yet. Be patient while you are noting the intention or desire. The pain may go away or become less. Then, you may not want to change. If you really want to change because you are unable to cope with it, you can change once in a while. Note "changing, changing, changing" mindfully. At least, you can notice how the body changes. When you have changed and there is no more pain, then note rising, falling of the abdomen. You want to change again because your mind becomes restless and you cannot continue sitting any longer. For beginners, I pay attention to them because they make mistakes. If you cannot sit through one hour, you just get up quietly. Then, go out and practise walking meditation. Anyway, it is better not to change.

For other *yogīs*, sometimes they try to sit longer to overcome the pain. At the beginning, we have to practise at least for one hour. If you can complete one hour, your practice is good. But when you have completed one hour and if you want to continue, you continue. But if you want to get up, one hour is enough. But note not to overcome the pain. Sometimes if we do not overcome the pain, we feel disappointed. We feel frustrated. So tonight I have explained feelings; pleasant feelings, unpleasant feelings and neutral feelings. That is enough for tonight.

May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically. May you

understand the *Dhamma* clearly.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**



## 4

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# *Be Mindful of the 5 Aggregates and 4 Postures*

Whenever we take precepts, at the end the monk will remind the devotees '*appamādena sampādeṭha*'. Why do I recite and want to talk about '*appamādena sampādeṭha*'? Because when the Buddha was alive, he reminded the monks (*bhikkhus*) to strive on with heedfulness. Be mindful of the five aggregates. Do not forget. Our Buddha had great compassion for all beings. He was so concerned about the beings so that they may not be reborn into the nether world. When we study the history of the Buddha, we understand this.

When the *Bodhisatta* met Dīpankara Buddha, he was known as Sumedha. Dīpankara Buddha confirmed that Sumedha, an ascetic, would be the Buddha in future. Even though Sumedha had the chance to attain enlightenment, he delayed the opportunity and practised perfections. So he became a Buddha at a later time. The Buddha reminded us to be mindful of the five aggregates as our devotees are practising now. Why did the Buddha remind us to be mindful of the five aggregates? It is a rare opportunity to have the appearance of the Buddha in this world. That is why he



reminded us to be mindful. We understand that to be a Buddha is not easy. A person who wants to be a Buddha must practise ten perfections (*pāramī*). They are generosity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), renunciation (*nekkhamma*), wisdom (*paññā*), effort (*virīya*), patience (*khanti*), truthfulness (*sacca*), determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*), loving-kindness (*mettā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*).

The *Bodhisatta* practised not only one lifetime, but aeons and aeons of lifetime to gain perfection. He practised ten perfections. When his *pāramī* ripened, he was born as Siddhattha, a prince and he married his cousin Yasodharā, a beautiful lady in the country. When he was twenty-nine, he renounced the world and practised meditation in Uruvela forest for six years. He could not gain concentration because later he realised that his practice was not correct. That is why correct practice is so important. He changed his method. Finally, he attained enlightenment. He became the Omniscient Buddha. That is why the Buddha taught us, "It is a rare opportunity to be a human being; to be a human being is also not easy." We may think there are so many people in the population of this world. However, compared to animals, human beings are not that many.

Rare is the appearance of the Buddha. We are fortunate to have the Buddha in this world. Even though the Buddha is no longer present, we can still practise his teachings. You can practise all the teachings if you wish. It is a rare opportunity to be born as a human being. Even though it is a rare opportunity, we are fortunate at this moment that we are human beings. It is rare to find people who have faith in the Triple Gem. But we have

faith in the Buddha, the teachings of the Buddha (*Dhamma*) and his noble disciples (*Saṅgha*).

We have faith in our practice. Actually, we have to understand that we do not have faith immediately, but we have confidence. How do we have confidence? Our *yogīs* here practise *Vipassanā* meditation. You may not have faith at the beginning because you have not experienced anything yet. When you follow the instructions strictly, you are able to note the main object, that is the rising and falling of the abdomen. If you can keep your mind onto the abdomen, then you are able to note the rising and falling closely. You can notice the movement which is the air element. Sometimes you may experience hardness, softness, stiffness, cold, heat, cohesion or liquidity. So when you notice one of the elements, you understand it as it really is. You say to yourself, "Oh! I have experienced what the Buddha taught is true. There is no person, no entity or nobody created to be a human being. It is only mind and matter." In this way, you gain confidence. So I would say, confidence comes first. Because of the confidence, then you believe what the Buddha taught. You believe what the Buddha taught. You trust what the Buddha taught. So you have faith. We are so fortunate to have confidence and then faith in the Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha*.

It is a rare opportunity to renounce the world. We, monks and nuns, renounce the world. How can you renounce the world at the moment you are here to practise *Vipassanā* meditation? When you practise meditation, you have to leave your family and jobs behind. If you do not leave them, you cannot be here. So

you renounce temporarily for the practice. Our *yogīs* renounce temporarily I would say. You are fortunate to renounce the world for the practice.

It is the rarest opportunity to hear the *Dhamma*. Even though it is the rarest opportunity to hear the *Dhamma*, our *yogīs* and devotees here are so fortunate to have the chance to practise meditation and listen to *Dhamma* talks more often. I would say that our *yogīs* are very lucky. Why are our *yogīs* lucky? You have a Sayādaw here who can teach meditation as well as theory (*pariyatti*) and practice (*patipatti*). That is why I say our *yogīs* here are very fortunate to have a *kalyāṇamitta*, a noble friend here.

Before I want to explain about the postures, I just remember '*appamādena sampādeṭha*'. Every day we recite at the end of taking the precepts, '*appamādena sampādeṭha*'. You may want to know what it means. It means strive on heedfully. Do not forget your practice. Practise contemplation of the body, contemplation of the feeling, contemplation of the consciousness and contemplation of the *dhamma* which are the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. In other words, do not forget to practise the five aggregates.

Today I would like to explain about the postures. In the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, the Buddha taught us, "*Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu gacchanto vā 'gacchāmi' ti pajānāti, ṭhito vā 'ṭhitomhī' ti pajānāti, nisinno vā 'nisinnomhī' ti pajānāti, sayāno vā 'sayānomhī' ti pajānāti.*" Again, monks, a monk while he is walking, knows properly "I am walking"; while he is standing, he knows properly "I am standing"; while he is sitting, he

knows properly "I am sitting"; while he is lying down, he knows properly "I am lying down." The instruction is very simple. "He knows" means *yogīs* must note, observe or take note of it. According to this instruction, we practise in this way. The instruction is very easy to follow. Practising is very difficult because we are walking with the mind. As you know, the mind is so quick and fast. It is not easy to concentrate and note concurrently with the object. You know whether it is easy or difficult.

When we practise walking meditation, we can choose the place where we like to practise. Before we start walking, we have to stand properly first, just as we sit properly in our sitting meditation. When we practise sitting meditation, we have to cross our legs, sit comfortably and keep our upper body upright, not too rigid. When we practise walking meditation, we have to keep our body straight. We should not bend our head too low. When we keep our head too low, we will have a headache. That is why keep the upper body and head straight, but keep the eyes down. Do not look too far or too close. Just keep the eyes down. When we keep our eyes down, we should be able to see about four or five feet away. We do not know who are passing by. We should keep our eyes down always. Do not look anywhere. Then, keep the mind onto the foot, not onto the abdomen.

I am reminding you because some *yogīs* make mistakes. When they are walking, instead of noting "right step, left step", they note "rising, falling". When you practise walking meditation, you do not need to watch your abdomen, but your feet. Then, you should

start one-step walking by noting "right step, left step". You can place your hands at the back or in front. You can hold them, but should not change your hands. Then, note "right step, left step". Say "right step, left step" mentally. Do not say or note "right foot, left foot". Do not say "foot". Just note "right step, left step".

When you note "right step, left step", try to synchronise mentally with your footsteps. Then, you can notice something easily. Do not say "right, left" mentally. When you say "right, left", the noting is very short and fast, but your foot activities are still going on. In this way, you cannot catch the present moment. That is why I would like to remind *yogīs* not to say "right, left". How to note "right step, left step"? You should note one step at a time. In this way, you can note closely. Try to follow the movement closely. Do not walk very far, about ten or fifteen feet distance back and forth. When you reach the end, you have to stop walking. When you stop walking, do note "standing, standing, standing", not "stopping, stopping, stopping". When you note "standing, standing, standing", you have to be aware of your standing posture. Do not just simply note "standing, standing, standing", but the mind goes somewhere. In this way, your mind cannot concentrate.

While you are noting "standing, standing, standing", you have to be aware of your standing posture so that you will notice something. Do not search for anything. Do not expect anything. Just note "standing, standing, standing". Then, you will notice maybe stiffness or softness in your body, maybe hardness or softness in your sole. You might be aware of it. Then, you have to turn. When you turn, you have to note "turning,

turning, turning" slowly and mindfully. Take your time. Do not hurry. You are spending your time with mindfulness. You do not waste your time. That is why you take your time and not in a hurry, note "turning, turning, turning". Take your time, turn slowly and mindfully. In this way, you will be able to note five or six times until you stand in your walkway.

After that, note again "standing, standing, standing" mindfully. Then, continue to note "right step, left step, right step, left step" mindfully. On the way, when the thoughts take your mind away, you have to note thinking. You have to stop walking, then note "thinking, thinking, thinking". You do not have to note while you are walking, but when the thoughts take away your mind, note "thinking, thinking, thinking". You should not do two things at the same time. If you want to note thinking, you have to stop walking. When the thoughts disappear, continue to note "right step, left step", but sometimes the thoughts do not take a long time, just a short while. You know you can catch them immediately. If so, you should pay more close attention to your footsteps. When you practise walking meditation after a few steps of noting, your mind wanders. The reason is because your mindfulness is not strong enough.

If the thinking is brief, I would advise, pay close attention to the footstep, note it closely. In this way, the thoughts will not come so easily. When the thoughts keep on lingering for quite a long time, you should stop. Then, note "thinking, thinking, thinking". When the thoughts disappear, continue your practice by noting, "right step, left step". So when you are able to note one step, you may have the intention to continue two steps;

lifting your foot, then putting it down. If you cannot note one step closely without thinking much and if you continue two steps, you may not be mindful. You may not be able to note "lifting, putting down" because you cannot note the one step quite well.

So do practise one step until you can manage to note well. When you note one step closely, you can proceed to another step, two steps. Note two steps, "lifting, putting down or placing". When you lift your foot, note not lifting your foot, just note lifting. You should not raise your foot too high. Just feel the raising or lifting of your foot. You note "lifting", then note "placing". Before your sole touches the ground, you should not lift the other foot. When the stepping foot touches the ground, then you can raise the other foot. In this way, you can note "lifting, placing, lifting, placing". When you are able to note two steps, your mindfulness is quite good. Your concentration is quite good. You may be aware of the intention before you lift your foot. You may have the intention because your mindfulness is quite strong. *Yogīs* here note "intention; intention to lift, intention to lift, intention to lift, then lifting". After that, note "placing", not necessary to note intention. Just go ahead, note "placing".

If you can note three steps, your mindfulness is very good. Without having strong mindfulness, you cannot follow the three steps closely. So you have to be very careful. If you do not pay close attention to the foot, even though you note "right step, left step", your mind goes away. It goes somewhere thinking about other things. You may feel you know nothing, something akin to soldiers who are marching. When soldiers march,

they utter "right, left, right, left". They think that their steps are synchronised, but their mind always goes somewhere. Their mind does not focus onto the foot. The reason is because they are not mindful.

Our *yogīs* are not like soldiers. When we walk, we are very mindful by noting "right step, left step; lifting, placing; lifting, pushing forward, placing". What do you notice in the walking? What do we understand while walking? Do we report such experience to the teacher? We report what we have experienced. As I say, appearing, noting and noticing. When we report our experience to the teacher, we should describe something which we have understood or what we have noticed. For example, a *yogī* says, "I practise walking meditation, one step, right step, left step. My mind can follow the steps. I notice this and that." We should report this. We should say something. So when our mind can follow the footsteps closely, one step at least, we can notice that there is motion. The foot is moving. What you have noticed in the walking, you should describe it to the teacher.

If you note the object carefully and closely, you can relate something. If you cannot say something, that means your mindfulness is not strong enough. You have not noted carefully. That is why you must not look anywhere. Just pay close attention to the foot. Note it closely. Do not search for anything. Do not expect anything. "What can I see in the walking? I can't see anything, only walking". You may feel discouraged. Actually, one can notice there is motion or movement of the foot. This is the noticing. When the foot touches the ground, we may feel there is hardness or softness.



Sometimes we may notice that not all the time, there is softness or hardness. The more we are mindful, the more we can see or notice things clearly. That is why we have to practise conscientiously. If you can mention roughly or superficially that there is motion, hardness or softness, that is good enough.

Then, you proceed to two steps: lifting, placing. When your mindfulness is getting better, you can note in detail. When you note "lifting, placing", what do you notice? You may notice there is lightness when you note "lifting". When you note "placing", you may feel heaviness. When you drop your foot, you may feel heaviness. Then, when your sole touches the ground, hardness or softness may be felt. Such awareness is the noticing.

When you note three steps, you can be aware of the lightness, swinging or motion and heaviness. These are the noticing experiences. So we can compare ourselves with the non-practitioners who are different. Every day we walk. We cannot sit all the time. Do we know there is motion in the walking? Do we know there is softness or hardness in the sole? If we do not practise meditation, we do not realise this reality. Sometimes we may know there is softness. There is hardness if we step on a stone. "My sole is so painful when I step on something hard." We say, "My sole is so painful. My legs are so tired." We do not remove the concept of 'I'. We always mention 'I', but *yogīs* when they practise walking meditation mindfully at the beginning, may not remove the concept of 'I'. When our mindfulness is getting better and improving, we may not see our foot. We may not see our foot, but only the motion and noting. In this

way, we can remove the concept of 'I', not 'I am walking'. There is no 'I', only the mind noting the footsteps, hardness, softness or motion. This is how we note. In this way, we can remove the concept of 'I'.

Non-practitioners when they walk, are not aware that there are motion and intention. They are not aware of such experiences. In the case of our *yogīs* or practitioners, when their mindfulness is strong enough, they can notice that there is intention. This intention is the successive intention. Because of the successive intention, the successive motion appears when there is strong concentration and mindfulness. If we have not developed concentration or if our mindfulness is not sufficiently strong enough, we cannot be aware of the successive intention or successive movement. That is why we are always reminded to be mindful all the time. Why are we reminded to be mindful all the time? Because it is so important to understand the true nature when we practise walking meditation. So if you really want to understand or notice something, try to be mindful of each and every moment.

As taught by the Buddha in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, I always teach three tools that are very important, namely '*ātāpī sampajāno satimā*', ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful. If we really want to improve our meditation, we must have '*ātāpa*' (one who possesses *ātāpa* is called *ātāpī*), that is putting ardent effort. We also must have willingness (*chanda*). Without willingness, our effort will not be strong enough. During the practice, a *yogi* must understand something. Then, he or she will do it. What the Buddha taught, one has to be mindful from moment to moment.

If we put strenuous effort and if we are mindful of each and every moment with willingness, we will understand things clearly as they really are. That is why try to be mindful of each and every moment. So follow the instructions strictly, note "right step, left step" and so on. Then, you will notice something. Swinging or motion is the air element. You do not need to mention that this is the air element. When you are walking, you do not need to say, "Oh! Swinging is the air element. Hardness is the earth element. Heat is the fire element." You do not need to mention. You do not need to check what you have studied. Just apply bare mindfulness on what you have experienced from your own practice. You have experienced motion. You notice it as swinging. Even though you do not mention this is air element (*vāyo-dhātu*), you have experienced it. This is your true and empirical experience because you have been so mindful in your walking meditation. When the foot touches the ground, you feel hardness or softness. This is the earth element (*pathavī-dhātu*).

Sometimes you feel the weather is either hot or cold. This is the fire element (*tejo-dhātu*). Sometimes when the weather is very hot, you may feel stickiness or cohesion on your sole because of the sweat from the foot. This is the water element (*āpo-dhatu*). So if you have this experience, where is the person in the walking meditation? There is no person. Who creates "right step, left step?" Nobody creates these steps. Is there any spirit in the walking? There is no spirit in the walking. You will accept this reality if you have noticed. Then, clearly you will have confidence or faith. Confidence comes first, then followed by faith. You say to yourself,

"I have experienced these four elements. The Buddha also taught us only these four elements. No person, no entity or no creator. I have this experience from my own practice." In this way, you have confidence.

You have understood and experienced these elements. You also have noticed the intention. Because of the intention to walk, you walk, because of the intention to sit down, you sit, because of the intention to stretch, you stretch and so on. So if you understand one thing, you will understand everything. They are the same thing. If you are noting clearly in your meditation, then you will really understand clearly that other things are the same. When you sit down, why do you sit down? Because you want to sit down. Why do you want to sit down? Because you have the intention to sit down.

Why am I speaking now? Because I want to speak, I have the intention to speak. I want the *yogīs* to understand clearly that I have the intention to speak, so I speak. When *yogīs* are mindful during the walking meditation, they notice the intention arising one after another. Intentions are not permanent. They arise, then disappear. The movements also arise, then disappear. In this way, you will notice what impermanence is or the changing in every moment. Noting in this way whenever you practise walking meditation, the steps appear to come one after another. You note "right step, left step; lifting, placing; lifting, pushing forward and placing". While walking, you may feel "so much suffering" because steps appear one after another. That is why I note them. If they do not appear, I do not need to note them. In this way, you will feel the unsatisfactory nature of things. You will also notice that

there is no entity, no spirit or no soul.

We must remember to develop our mindfulness. Without strong or sustained mindfulness, we may not notice. You may say, "Sayādaw, I haven't noticed anything yet." Are you sure what you are saying? Things are changing all the time. You have to experience it yourself if you really want to know. If you really want to notice, try to be mindful and experience it yourself. Sometimes you know you are walking, but the mind goes somewhere. We do not pay attention to our foot. We may say, "right step, left step" mentally like a soldier, but our mind goes wandering. If our mind goes away all the time, we do not notice anything. That is why I have to remind the *yogīs* to try to be mindful all the time. We cannot be mindful all the time at the moment because the mind is so quick and fast, but we must try. If we try, one day we will be able to be mindful for a longer period. Then, we will notice. It is very important to practise walking meditation. We do not practise sitting meditation all the time. We must balance both sitting meditation and walking meditation. We have to practise walking meditation for one hour and sitting meditation for another hour. We have to alternate between sitting and walking.

There are five benefits when we practise walking meditation. The first benefit is that we can walk long distances if we practise walking meditation. Everybody knows that walking exercise is very important and beneficial. That is why in the park or on the road, people walk early in the morning. They walk just for health purposes. But our *yogīs* here practise walking meditation mindfully and move slowly. You may be

afraid that there is not enough exercise in your walking meditation. "I must practise some other forms of physical activities," you say to yourself. I believe our *yogīs* here do not practise yoga. They practise only *Vipassanā* meditation, but at my place in Australia, *yogīs* sometimes practise yoga in the evening. I have to remind them not to practise yoga. Yoga is not meditation.

The second benefit is that walking meditation is good enough for health purposes because *yogīs* move with mindfulness. (At the beginning of the walking meditation, you can walk a bit faster. Note "walking, walking, walking" or "stepping, stepping, stepping" for a few minutes, maybe five or ten minutes. Maybe for the first fifteen minutes, you do quick walking. Note "walking, walking, walking" or "stepping, stepping, stepping". After about fifteen minutes, slow down.) Then, practise accordingly, one, two, three steps. This is enough, but you should walk for one hour. If you sit for one hour, you should walk for one hour. You must practise walking meditation. You should not be lazy. In this way, your body will not be so stiff or tight. If you walk with mindfulness and you are quite relaxed, then your body becomes quite light and fresh. Do not worry about your health. You must walk, but do not practise yoga. When you practise yoga, you are not mindful. You must walk. You must practise walking meditation.

As I am talking now, I suddenly remember something. When I was in Myanmar at Mahāsī Meditation Centre, one day, my teacher had to go somewhere. Sayādāwgyi U Paṇḍitābhivaṃsa, my teacher asked me to interview *yogīs* on his behalf. At

that time, I interviewed new *yogīs*. So I interviewed one *yogī*. When he came into the room, I noticed that he was not normal. So I reminded him to be mindful. “*Yogī*, be mindful,” I told him. Then, he pointed at me. “You, be mindful, you, be mindful.” When he sat down, he did not sit down properly. I told him to sit down mindfully. Then, he also told me to sit down mindfully. From his behaviour, I dared not interview him. I requested Nāyaka Sayādaw to interview him, but he also did not want to interview him. He was mentally unstable. He was sent to a mental hospital. After about three months, he came back. He asked forgiveness from Sayādaw. During the December holidays, he had been practising meditation very hard. He was a very good meditator, but he sat all the time. He did not practise walking meditation. He did not answer the call of nature. He thought to himself that during the two weeks, he had to achieve something. He said to himself, “I will try to practise meditation.” So he practised ardently, but just sitting meditation. He did not want to practise walking meditation. That was why something went wrong mentally. So we must practise walking meditation. Do not sit all the time. Do walking meditation and sitting meditation. They should balance each other.

So when you practise walking meditation, you can walk long distances. Then, you can maintain your health. The third benefit is that you can also maintain your energy when you practise walking meditation. You will have the physical strength and energy. The fourth benefit is that whatever you eat, it can be digested easily. The last benefit is that you can maintain your concentration for quite a long time. That is why we

should practise walking meditation. When you practise walking meditation, you have to pay close attention to your practice. Then, you can notice the four elements and five aggregates. You can also notice the intention. I have told the *yogīs* that if you want to note intention before you lift your foot, you note, "intention to lift, intention to lift, intention to lift, lifting". After noting "lifting", note "pushing forward". Do not note intention again. Note "pushing forward". Then, note "placing down".

Some *yogīs* note "intention to lift, lifting, intention to push, pushing, intention to place, placing". There are so many intentions. It is not necessary to note intention all the time. So just note intention before you lift your foot. Before you move your hand, you can note "intention, intention to move, intention to move, then moving, moving, moving". In this way, when your mindfulness is strong enough while you are noting closely, you can be aware of the intention or successive intentions. Because of the successive intentions, successive movements occur. You will notice this reality during your practice. Do not take my word for it. You have to check it yourself in your practice. Is it true or not true?

During walking meditation, you understand when you are going, you know you are going. When you are standing, you know you are standing by noting "standing, standing, standing". When you are sitting, you know you are sitting. When you are lying down, you also have to note "lying down, lying down, lying down". So according to the instructions, we can practise all the postures of walking meditation, standing



meditation, sitting meditation and lying-down meditation. If you lie down, you can fall asleep easily. If our mindfulness or concentration is not strong enough, it is not advisable to practise the lying-down meditation. But when you go back to your bedroom and before you sleep, you can find out when you lie down on the bed. You can note "lying down, lying down, lying down", but not attentively if you are going to sleep. If you note attentively, your mind becomes very alert, then you will not fall asleep easily. But mostly if you note "rising, falling, lying down or touching", you can fall asleep easily. So these are the four postures taught by the Buddha. I will repeat in Pāli, "gacchanto vā 'gacchāmī' ti pajānāti, ṭhito vā 'ṭhitomhī' ti pajānāti, nisinno vā 'nisinnomhī' ti pajānāti, sayāno vā 'sayānomhī' ti pajānāti." So we have to understand the practice according to the Buddha's instructions. I will stop here for tonight.

May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically. May you understand the *Dhamma* clearly.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**



## 5

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# 7-Year-Old Arahat

Sometimes when devotees come to see monks, we encourage devotees to practise meditation. Some devotees take our advice. They want to practise meditation when they have time. However, many devotees give the excuse, “I don’t have the *pāramī* to practise meditation.” Is it true that they do not have the *pāramī*? We do not know how much *pāramī* a person has. We must practise so that we can understand how much *pāramī* we have.

If we want to attain *Nibbāna*, just by performing *dāna* or charity only, we cannot attain *Nibbāna*. Taking precepts directly, we cannot attain *Nibbāna*. Practising *Samatha* meditation directly, we cannot attain *Nibbāna*. We have to practise *Vipassanā* meditation. So if we want to know how much *pāramī* we have, we must test ourselves, that is practise *Vipassanā* meditation. Today I would like to tell you a story of a young novice monk (*sāmaṇera*), Paṇḍita who attained arahatship at the age of seven. He was the disciple of Thera Sāriputta, the Buddha's chief disciple. He was a new *sāmaṇera*. When he was seven, his parents allowed him to be a *sāmaṇera*.

The family was close to Thera Sāriputta. One day, he wanted to accompany Thera Sāriputta when the latter went for his alms-round. Thera Sāriputta allowed him to do so. On the way to the city, the *sāmaṇera* saw the farmers channelling the water into the paddy fields. The *sāmaṇera* was too young to know that they were farmers. That was why he asked his teacher, "Venerable Sir, who are they"? When Thera Sāriputta saw the farmers channelling the water into the paddy fields, he answered, "They are farmers." "What are they doing, Venerable Sir?" "They are channelling the water into their paddy fields." When he heard Thera Sāriputta's answer, he thought to himself. "Water which has no consciousness can be guided into the paddy field." They continued their alms-round. Then, the *sāmaṇera* saw some archers straightening their arrows by heating the arrows. But the *sāmaṇera* did not know who they were. Then, he asked, "Venerable Sir, who are they?" Thera Sāriputta did not stop him from asking. The *sāmaṇera* was very inquisitive. He was very young. Thera Sāriputta was very patient with him. "They are archers," he replied. "What are they doing, Venerable Sir?" "They are straightening their arrows by heating them." Then, the *sāmaṇera* thought about the crooked bamboo which had no consciousness, but could be straightened.

They continued their alms-round. Soon, they saw some carpenters cutting the wood and making the wood into things. Then, the *sāmaṇerā* asked again. "Venerable Sir, who are they?" "They are carpenters." "What are they doing, Venerable Sir?" "They are cutting the wood and making it into useful things." Then, the *sāmaṇera* reasoned, "Timber which has no

consciousness can be made into useful things." So seeing the farmers channelling the water into the paddy fields, seeing the archers straightening arrows with fire and seeing the carpenters cutting the wood and turning it into things, he felt a sense of urgency (*samvega*). Do we have a sense of urgency when we see something? I believe our *yogīs* here when you practise meditation, you have faith or confidence. You have willingness. You understand the teachings of the Buddha. That is why you are spending your time here to practise the teachings of the Buddha.

When the young *sāmaṇera* whose name was Paṇḍita saw the farmers, archers and carpenters, a sense of urgency came to him. Then, he thought, "If the water which is without consciousness can be guided, if the crooked bamboo which is without consciousness can be straightened and if the timber which is without consciousness can be made into useful things, why could I not tame my mind?" Since he got a sense of urgency, the idea came to him to tame his mind. Do we need to tame our mind? You can answer silently, "Yes, we need to tame our mind because we have so many defilements." Basically, they are the three evil roots, greed (*lobha*), anger or hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). These are unwholesome roots which disturb our mind. Because of them, our mind is not pure and unclear. Our mind is so wild.

So *Sāmaṇera* Paṇḍita thought to himself, "I should tame my mind." Thus, he did not want to continue his alms-round with his teacher, Thera Sāriputta. He asked permission to go back to his monastery. He wanted to tame his mind. Sāriputta did allow him to go back to

the monastery. He went back to his room and sat down like our *yogīs* sitting here. Then, he practised diligently and ardently. What he practised was the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. He practised diligently. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness are "*kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā, cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā*". Our *yogīs* have heard the Four Foundations of Mindfulness so many times. But I want our *yogīs* to repeat after me so that you also can have the chance to say the original words of the Buddha. I still remember when I was invited to teach in New Zealand in a deep forest, it was very difficult and cold. The *yogīs* who practised there, were beginners. They did not know what *Vipassanā* meditation is, but every night I asked them to repeat after me. They liked to recite "*kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā, cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā*". Then, they exclaimed, "Oh! The Pāḷi language is very beautiful." They loved to recite it.

So now our *yogīs* also have to repeat after me. This is also a tradition in our Mahāsī Meditation Centre as Sayādawgyi wants to set an example by asking the Burmese *yogīs* to repeat after him in Pāḷi. So now our *yogīs* also have to repeat after me even though you know the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. "*Kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā, cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā; kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā, cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā; kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā, cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā*".

Please utter three times, "*Kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā, cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā; kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā, cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā; kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā,*

*cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā*". The English translation is contemplation of the body, contemplation of the feeling, contemplation of the consciousness and contemplation of the *dhamma*. (Sayādaw also asked the *yogis* to recite in Vietnamese.) Now in English please repeat, "Contemplation of the body, contemplation of the feeling, contemplation of the consciousness and contemplation of the *dhamma*." Please say, "Sādhu!" Sādhu! Sādhu!"

So *Sāmaṇera* Paṇḍita practised the Four Foundations of Mindfulness ardently and diligently. When we say diligently, it means that he made great effort. The *sāmaṇera* sat down, crossed his legs and kept his upper body upright. He ardently and diligently practised meditation by contemplating the body. He made great effort. How did he make his effort? He noted the object closely. So when we say 'closely' by noting the rising and falling for example, we have to understand three kinds of effort: *ārambha dhātu, nikkama dhātu and parakkama dhātu*.

*Ārambha dhātu* is the initial effort. When you sit down, you have to sit properly, then breathe in. You have to follow the instructions before you note the rising and falling of the abdomen closely. How are we instructed? Breathe properly, not too hard and not too slow, but carefully. Do not take deep breaths. If you take deep breaths, you will be tired. I understand why *yogīs* take deep breaths. The reason is because from my experience and from what *yogīs* had reported, "Sayādaw, I can't notice the rising and falling. Then, I note sitting, touching." If they are beginners, I do not expect them to notice the rising and falling. I encourage them to note

the rising and falling carefully. So I instruct them to take full breaths. When we take full breaths, the air goes to the abdominal area. You can check for yourself if you take full breaths. If we take short breath, the air goes to the chest area. That is why some *yogīs* say, "I can't notice the rising and falling in the abdomen, only in the chest". Never mind if you can notice the rising and falling in the chest. Just do it, but the breath is short. When you take full breaths, the air goes to the abdominal area. The rising-falling movement is quite prominent or clear. That is why you have to breathe in and out carefully. So this is the initial effort, the first effort which should be applied. So when you note the rising and falling, you put forth effort. Without putting forth effort, you cannot feel or notice the movement clearly. So initial effort is very important.

Once you can note the rising and falling very closely, then you have to develop this initial effort not only one time. You can note the rising and falling closely whenever you breathe in and out. You should catch the rising-falling movement all the time. Let us say if you can note one time, the rising and falling closely. At the moment of noting the rising and falling closely or in one single rising movement, there are no defilements. There are no three unwholesome roots at the moment of noting closely. The mind is not filled with greed and hatred. There is also no delusion in the mind because when you note the rising, you notice the rising movement. The mind is so clear.

At the moment if you can make one mental note closely, you accumulate this wholesome deed (*kusala*) one time. In this way, you have to develop your initial

effort, the first effort. If you can note several times, one minute, five minutes or ten minutes, your initial effort is getting stronger. You will understand what I am saying. At the very beginning, you have got to put forth effort to be able to note the rising closely. You will be able to note the falling closely. If you can note the rising closely, you have achieved the initial effort. So you have to develop this initial effort and to increase it.

You can note one minute, two minutes, five minutes or ten minutes. Your effort is getting stronger and developing. This is called stepped-up effort (*nikkama dhātu*). If you are able to note the rising and falling so many times, you will understand. You practise at the beginning of the retreat. This is for the purification of beings (*sattānaṃ visuddhiyā*). You will realise that as long as you are mindful or you are able to note the object closely at that moment, your mind is so clear and pure. You should not stop noting. You have to put forth effort. Then, you will have *nikkama dhātu*. Sometimes when we are practising meditation by noting the rising and falling, we cannot notice it clearly. Our mind wanders off. This is how we feel sometimes. We are getting bored and lazy because we cannot notice the rising and falling. You are unable to note the rising and falling closely. That is why while you are sitting, the mind becomes restless. You want to change from one posture to another. When you look at the clock or here and there, this shows that you are not interested in the practice. Sometimes when we are lazy, we do not want to practise because we cannot notice anything. But if we are able to note, we become interested. The noting makes us know that at the beginning of the practice, it is so difficult to keep our mind onto the abdomen. You are



not interested, but if we are able to note the rising and falling closely, we are very happy. Then, we can overcome laziness.

Putting stepped-up effort is good, but from what I understand according to the *yogīs'* practice, we must put in effort again and again. Note the rising and falling closely again and again whenever we are practising sitting meditation. In this way, we can overcome laziness. The stepped-up effort is spurred on by willingness (*chanda*). If we do not have *chanda*, we may not note rising, falling closely. Not only the rising and falling, but also whatever arises from the six-sense doors. When you see something, you have to note seeing immediately. When you notice the mind is thinking, you have to note thinking immediately. You must not delay noting whatever arises in your mind and body. You must note the object straight away.

Progressive or culminating effort (*parakkama dhātu*) can overcome laziness. Spurred on by willingness, we should have progressive effort. We need to progress when we practise *Vipassanā* meditation. The Buddha taught that everything is impermanent. Everything is changing from moment to moment. Everything is unsatisfactory. There is no spirit, no ego or no self as the Buddha taught. Whether or not it is true, if we are the followers of the Buddha, we do not simply believe what the Buddha taught us. Do not take him for his words. Come and see for yourself. You too must practise. Then, you will comprehend whether what the Buddha taught is true or not. He did not say, "What I teach, you must believe me. You must follow me." He did not ask us to take his words. We practise according to his teachings

to find out for ourselves. So when we practise according to the instructions, we will understand impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self. The Buddha did not hide this knowledge. He did not say that this knowledge is only for monks. He did not say that. Understanding is for everybody. When you practise meditation, you will understand according to your *pāramī*. So to progress, we must continue our effort. We must make progressive effort.

Now at the beginning of the practice, but not yet for beginners, the experienced *yogīs* can sit for one hour easily. They can note the objects which arise in their mind and body. If you are not able to sit for one hour, you may find it difficult even to sit for half an hour. Now how many days have you been practising already? About four days. You can sit for half an hour, maybe more. You can note the rising and falling several times. Then, you can notice the upward movement and downward movement. According to your report, you have improved in your practice. You have made progress, but not enough yet. You have to make or put forth effort, the mental energy. That is what the Buddha meant by '*ātāpa*', putting forth effort. So we have to apply these three efforts: initial effort (*ārambha dhātu*), stepped-up effort (*nikkama dhātu*) and progressive effort (*parakkama dhātu*).

When *Sāmaṇera* Paṇḍita practised, he applied these efforts. That was why just before lunch, he attained *Anāgāmi*, Non-Returner. There are four stages of enlightenment. You know, Stream-Enterer (*Sotāpanna*), Once-Returner (*Sakadāgāmi*), Non-Returner (*Anāgāmi*) and The Holy One (*Arahat* or *Arahant*). He did not

attain *Anāgāmi* straight away. He went through stages of enlightenment one after another. Before he realised and attained enlightenment, he had to purify his mind. He also had to clear the hindrances. When his mind became pure, then he understood mind and matter as well as cause and effect. In this way, he attained *Sotāpatti* Fruition, *Sakadāgāmi* Fruition and then *Anāgāmi* Fruition. Sakkadevaraja, King of the *Devas* and the *devas* also helped the *sāmaṇera* in his meditation by keeping the monastery and its surroundings very quiet and still. Before meal time, *Sāmaṇera* Paṇḍita attained the third stage of enlightenment, *Anāgāmi*. Sakkadevaraja and the *devas* protected the *sāmaṇera* who was earnestly practising the *Dhamma*.

Now I would like to ask our yogis here. What do you think of this incident? Will the *devas* protect you or look after you when you are practising meditation. What do you think? I hope the *devas* will protect you. You do not see Sakkadevaraja and the *devas*, but I can see with my eyes, Sontu, Mr. Kham, helpers and Sayādaws will look after our *yogīs*. They look after you. They are concerned about the *yogīs*' progress. That is why they help. That is why *yogīs* can practise happily and comfortably. There is no need to worry about your food. So just before lunch, the *sāmaṇera* attained *Anāgāmi*. The Buddha saw with his supernormal power that the young *sāmaṇera* had attained *Anāgāmi* and also that if he continued to practise meditation, he would soon attain arahatship. Soon, his teacher returned to the monastery. Thera Sāriputta was concerned about the *sāmaṇera*. He was so young. He might be hungry. It was just about noon. So he was concerned about his disciple. If Thera Sāriputta were to go to his pupil's room, the *sāmaṇera* would not

be able to practise meditation quietly. The Buddha saw this. "I have to stop Sāriputta from asking questions so that the *sāmaṇera* could attain arahatship." So the Buddha also went to the monastery where the *sāmaṇera* was practising and stopped Thera Sāriputta by putting some questions to him. *Sāmaṇera* Paṇḍita was practising diligently. While the conversation was taking place, the *sāmaṇera* attained arahatship. Thus, the *sāmaṇera* became an *Arahat* on the eighth day after becoming a novice monk.

From here, we can understand and study how the *sāmaṇera* practised. He practised diligently. We can take the *sāmaṇera's* example when we practise meditation. We must practise diligently or ardently in our sitting and walking meditation. Not only in our sitting and walking meditation, but also in our daily activities as well. When you have finished sitting meditation, you should still apply mindfulness. Do not forget your mindfulness. Get up slowly and mindfully. Before you get up, you have the intention. Note the intention. When you get up, get up slowly and mindfully. Then, practise walking meditation and other daily activities. Be mindful when you take off the shoes, put on the shoes and so forth. You have to note everything in your daily activities.

According to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, even when answering the call of nature, we have to be mindful. We have to be mindful because at the moment, we can understand. We can notice something in our mind and body. That is why we should not be careless in all the activities. So please repeat after me. "The *sāmaṇera* practised the Four Foundations of Mindfulness:

*kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā, cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā; kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā, cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā; kāyānupassanā, vedanānupassanā, cittānupassanā, dhammānupassanā* (recite three times).

The *sāmaṇera* did not know how much *pāramī* he had. He was so young. When he saw the incidents during his alms-round, he was overcome with a sense of urgency. That is why we should not blame *pāramī* and use the excuse that "I don't have the *pāramī*." We have to understand that we have devotees here who have the *pāramī*. If you do not have the *pāramī*, you will not be practising meditation here in the first place. You will not be interested in the practice. You will not want to meet the meditation teacher, but here you are very lucky. There is not only one Sayādaw, but another four Sayādaws here. You are very lucky. All of them can teach you. They can teach you. They can help you. They can guide you on how to practise meditation. So you have the *pāramī*. You are interested in the practice. All you need to do is to practise diligently. When you practise diligently, you respect your practice. During sitting meditation and walking meditation, do not look anywhere unnecessarily. Do not talk to anybody unnecessarily. Do not rest too much unnecessarily. You have to follow the instructions. If you rest too much, you will waste your time. If you look here and there, you waste your time. So if you really want to progress in your practice, you have to practise diligently.

Just now I mentioned that there are three kinds of effort. You have to put initial effort in the walking meditation and sitting meditation, then stepped-up

effort and progressive effort to overcome laziness. Sometimes even though we like to practise meditation by noting all the time, we are not allowed to look here and there. When laziness arises, we have to note laziness. If we put in progressive effort, we still have to put forth effort to understand the insight knowledge. After Sāmaṇera Paṇḍita attained arahatship, the Buddha stated (The *Dhammapada* Verse 80), "*Udakaṃhi nayanti nettikā*, farmers channelled the water into the field; *usukārā namayanti tejanam*, archers straightened the arrows; *dārum namayanti tacchakā*, carpenters worked the timber; *attānam damayanti paṇḍitā*, the wise tamed themselves." The wise are the *yogīs*, not the scholars.

In the text, the Buddha mentioned that the *Dhamma* which he discovered and realised is very profound. We cannot touch how deep the ground is. The more you are mindful, the more you will understand the *Dhamma* clearly. There is no end. That is why the Buddha said, "It is very difficult to see, not easy to see." Now you note the rising and falling. Can you notice it clearly? It is not easy. The *Dhamma* is not easy to see. It is difficult to penetrate the *Dhamma*. It cannot be understood just by thinking or analysing. Only the wise can understand or know. The wise means the *yogīs*. *Yogīs* cannot study meditation in schools. You have to practise if you really want to know. You have to practise. When you practise *Vipassanā* meditation, at least you understand how difficult it is to control the mind. Is it easy or difficult? I want to hear from all of you. Is it easy or difficult to control the mind? "Difficult!" Why? Because the mind is so quick and fast. It goes wherever it likes. You are here, but the mind goes around the world. If you cannot

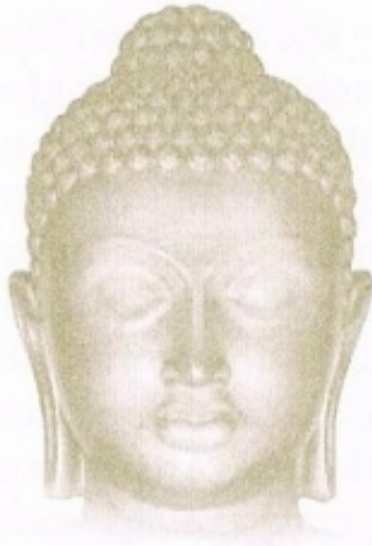
control the mind easily as the Buddha taught, at least you understand it is not easy to control the mind, but if you apply three kinds of effort, you can easily control the mind. You can easily control it. Do not take my word for it. If you keep your mind only onto the abdomen, your mind sticks onto it.

This is what a *yogī* this morning reported, "The mind is glued onto the abdomen. It does not go anywhere." That is true when your practice is getting better or improving. When you experience some kind of insight knowledge, you send your mind back to your home, but your mind does not go home. It will come back to the abdomen. So when the pain arises, the mind will note it closely. Then, the mind does not go anywhere. You send your mind back or send it somewhere. Your mind does not stay somewhere. Your mind seems to be with you. This is the quality in which you can control your mind. When you practise diligently, ardently or energetically, you can be wise. Only the wise can understand. That is why the Buddha said, "The wise tame themselves." Now you are wise because you are taming your mind.

May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently, energetically and diligently. May you understand the *Dhamma* clearly and see things as they really are.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**





## 6

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# 4 Kinds of Clear Comprehension

Today I would like to talk about '*sampajañña*', clear comprehension. Let me recite first in Pāli. It is said in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, "*Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu abhikkante paṭikkante sampajānakārī hoti, ālokite vilokite sampajānakārī hoti, samiñjite pasārite sampajānakārī hoti, saṅghātipattacīvaradhāraṇe sampajānakārī hoti, asite pīte khāyite sāyite sampajānakārī hoti, uccārapassāvakamme sampajānakārī hoti, gate ṭhite nisinne sutte jāgarite bhāsīte tuṅhībhāve sampajānakārī hoti.*" "Again, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* (monk or *yogī*), while going forward or going back, he applies clear comprehension. Whether a *bhikkhu* is looking straight ahead or looking sideways, he applies clear comprehension. While bending or stretching, a *bhikkhu* also applies clear comprehension. While wearing his robes or carrying his bowl, a *bhikkhu* applies clear comprehension. Whether a *bhikkhu* is eating, drinking or savouring, he applies clear comprehension. While answering the call of nature, he applies clear comprehension. Whether a *bhikkhu* is walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, speaking or keeping silent, he applies clear comprehension."



This is the instruction given by the Buddha. So according to this instruction, we practise accordingly not only during sitting meditation and walking meditation, but also what we call daily activities. There must be mindfulness in our daily activities. Sometimes we call general mindfulness. Sometimes we call mindfulness in detail. We have to note all the activities. This is what the Buddha taught at the beginning of the *sutta*. You have heard me repeating these words many times during this retreat, '*ātāpa*', '*sampajañña*' and '*satima*'. Three useful tools are '*ātāpa*', putting forth effort or strenuous effort; '*satima*', be mindful and '*sampajañña*'. If we are mindful by exerting strenuous effort, we can understand things clearly as they really are.

'*Sampajañña*' is a *Pāli* word. It is a combination of three words. '*Sam*' means 'one-self', 'correctly' or 'thoroughly', '*pa*' means 'various ways' or 'distinctly' and '*jañña*' means 'understanding' or 'discerning'. When we practise meditation ardently and energetically, we can understand things correctly or thoroughly as they really are. That is the meaning of '*sampajañña*'. To understand clearly, correctly or thoroughly, we are always reminded to be mindful of each and every moment. When we note the rising and falling, note it carefully and closely. When we note the footstep, note it closely and carefully. All the activities, not only the rising and falling, right step and left step, all have to be noted carefully. Whatever arises from the six-sense doors, we have to note carefully so that we can know clearly, thoroughly or correctly. So that is why tonight I would like to talk about '*sampajañña*'.

There are four kinds of *sampajañña*: *sātthaka sampajañña*, *sappāya sampajañña*, *gocara sampajañña*, *asammoha sampajañña*. *Sātthaka sampajañña* is the clear comprehension of what is beneficial. *Sappāya sampajañña* is the clear comprehension of what is suitable. *Gocara sampajañña* is the clear comprehension of the *yogīs*' domain. *Asammoha sampajañña* is the clear comprehension of non-delusion or reality. We have to understand when you recited the Pāli words yesterday. Now I want our *yogīs* to repeat after me these four kinds of *sampajañña* in Pāli. Please repeat after me. *Sātthaka sampajañña*, *sappāya sampajañña*, *gocara sampajañña*, *asammoha sampajañña*. *Sātthaka sampajañña*, *sappāya sampajañña*, *gocara sampajañña*, *asammoha sampajañña*. *Sātthaka sampajañña*, *sappāya sampajañña*, *gocara sampajañña*, *asammoha sampajañña*. These are the four kinds of *sampajañña*.

The first one is *sātthaka sampajañña*, the clear comprehension of what is beneficial. Before doing anything, we have to think whether or not it is beneficial. You come here for the practice. Before coming here, you have to consider whether or not it is beneficial to practise *Vipassanā* meditation. Is it beneficial? You have to think about it first. You have heard many times. Yes! Practising *Vipassanā* meditation is beneficial. What are the benefits? You may still remember the seven benefits. They are the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for reaching the noble path and for the realisation of *Nibbāna*. These are the main benefits. So as long as you are mindful and if you apply mindfulness, you can get

other benefits. When your practice is good, you can be patient with the weather. You can be patient with the food. You can be patient with the lodging. You can be patient with your friends. The reason is because during the practice, you have experienced the mental state. Sometimes you are happy, sometimes unhappy, sometimes disappointed, sometimes depression sets in and sometimes you are worried. So whatever arises in the mind, you note it. At the beginning, you may not be able to note these kinds of unpleasant feelings which are the manifestations of the mind. But with your effort, you can cope with them. Physically, you experience pain, numbness, stiffness and hardness.

Whatever feelings appear in your body, you note all of them. That is why whether good or bad feelings, you have to experience them. You can cope with them. That is why you have some degree of patience. You have some attributes of mindfulness. Then, you do not mind about the bad weather. You can be patient. During the practice, you also practise with other *yogīs*. With your mindfulness, you are unaware of them. You are mindful of yourself only! As you know, '*ekāyana*' means 'one way'. Another meaning is 'being alone'. Even though you practise in a group, you try to be mindful of yourself. Try to be aware of your mind and body. You do not think of others' presence. You are alone. In this way, you have the capability. So you understand that by practising *Vipassanā* meditation, there are many benefits. If one wants to experience these benefits, one should practise *Vipassanā* meditation. Now you understand the benefits of practising *Vipassanā* meditation.

As it is beneficial, we have to check whether it is suitable. "Yes, it is suitable to practise *Vipassanā* meditation." So you are here. When you practise *Vipassanā* meditation and the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, you have to follow the instructions strictly. If you really want to gain these benefits, you have to follow the instructions. You should not do any other things apart from the instructions of *Vipassanā* meditation based on the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. That is why I have stated that during *Vipassanā* practice, we should not do other things. Sometimes you may think that sitting here for one hour, walking slowly and gently, "I may have some problems with my health. I should do other forms of exercise." Maybe tai chi to relieve stiffness. Maybe yoga. I have stated that *yogīs* during *Vipassanā* practice should not practise yoga, tai chi or any other forms of exercise. Do not worry about your health. Yes, it may be beneficial to do tai chi, yoga or other things, but it is not a suitable time during the practice of *Vipassanā* meditation. So these two *sampajañña* can be applied in our daily life. Even though we do not practise intensive meditation in our daily life, we can apply them. They are very useful.

Then, we have *gocara sampajañña*, the clear comprehension of the *yogīs'* domain. What is the *yogīs'* domain? The Four Foundations of Mindfulness as taught by the Buddha. As *Vipassanā* practitioners, we have to live in our domain. If we live or stay in our domain, *kilesa* or defilements, cannot arise. It is something like you have to live in your territory or stay at home. You should not go out. When you go out, you have to go out during daytime and not at midnight. You

go out at a proper time. If not, somebody may harass you. So we, *yogīs* also have to live in our domain or territory which is the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. If we live in our territory or domain, *asammoha sampajañña*, the clear comprehension of non-delusion will arise automatically. So clear comprehension of the *yogīs'* domain is very important.

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness are the contemplation of the body, contemplation of the feeling, contemplation of the consciousness and contemplation of the *dhamma*. So when you note the rising and falling of the abdomen, you have to note closely. Not only the rising and falling, but also all the physical movements. You have to be aware of them. You have to take note of them. When the pain arises, mindfulness is focussed on this feeling. You have to note it closely, mindfully and respectfully.

When thoughts arise, you have to note them. You should not follow the thoughts. If you follow the thinking, there is no end to it. Your mind will not come back to the main object. That is why we should not entertain the thought. We must note it straight away. If you note it straight away, you will notice the thinking disappears. Then, the mind comes back to the main object. In this way, you live in your territory. At the moment of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting or touching, you have to note all of them. In this manner, you live in your territory. This is what is meant by *gocara sampajañña*, the clear comprehension of the *yogīs'* domain.

There are four kinds of meditators. The first one is

when the *bhikkhu* goes to the village for alms, he carries with him his meditation, but when he returns, he does not carry his meditation. This is the first kind of *bhikkhu* or meditator. The second one is when he goes to the village for alms, he does not carry his mindfulness with him, but when he comes back, he carries it. This is the second one. The third one goes to the village and comes back to the monastery without carrying the mindfulness. The fourth one when he goes to the village for alms and when he comes back to the monastery to and fro, he carries his mindfulness. So we have to follow the fourth one. We have to be mindful all the time.

In the commentary, it is stated that the first *bhikkhu* practises meditation the whole day and night. Early in the morning after waking up, he continues to practise meditation. When the time arrives for the alms food, he goes from the monastery to the village with mindfulness. He can be mindful on the way to the village. When he comes back, he talks to other monks and *sāmañeras*. He does not continue his mindfulness. He breaks his mindfulness. The second kind of *bhikkhu* also practises like the first monk, but early in the morning, he is hungry. He cannot be mindful. That is why he quickly goes to the village to receive the food and eats it. After that, when he comes back, he is mindful on the way back to the monastery. The third monk when he goes to the village, does not carry his mindfulness with him. When he comes back to the monastery, he still does not carry his mindfulness. Most likely, he is not a true practitioner.

The fourth one is very careful. When he goes to the village, he is very mindful. When he comes back, he

carries his mindfulness very carefully. So we have to follow the example of the fourth *bhikkhu*. That is why we have to be mindful. We have to be mindful in everything, not only during sitting meditation and walking meditation. When you make your report, you have to report not only sitting and walking, but also daily activities to show whether or not you are mindful. If you are mindful, what do you notice? You have to report briefly what you have noticed. In this way, the meditation teacher can understand whether you have mindfulness and what you have understood.

While going forward or going back, apply clear comprehension. How do we apply clear comprehension? We have to note the footsteps respectfully, carefully and closely. As we have been instructed, note carefully one, two and three steps. When we note the footsteps carefully, we can notice roughly the first step as movement or motion. In the second noting, we can notice the two steps, lifting and placing. If we can note two steps closely, our noting is clear. Our understanding becomes clear. Earlier I said '*sampajañña*', that is to understand correctly, clearly or thoroughly. So when you note lifting, the noting mind goes to the lifting closely. In this case, you may notice or you may be aware that there is lightness in your lifting. You may notice that when you drop your foot or when you place it down, there is heaviness. When you notice this, you say, "I note lifting. I notice there is lightness. I note placing. I notice there is heaviness." What do you do when you notice these elements from your experience. You do not mention, "I notice *āpo-dhātu*, water element. I notice *vāyo-dhātu*, air element. I notice

*tejo-dhātu*, fire element. I notice *pathavī-dhātu*, earth element." You do not need to mention or label them.

It is also not necessary to mention any element. Just mention what you have experienced or noticed. You do not need to mention *āpo-dhātu*, *vāyo-dhātu*, *tejo-dhātu* and *pathavī-dhātu* which you have experienced. If you say, "I can note lifting. I notice or feel lightness in my foot." When you feel lightness in your foot, it is because of the fire element. Fire element makes the foot light. When you burn a heap of rubbish or leaves, the ash flies all over. Why? The reason is because while burning, sometimes you may see the leaves in the air when the wind blows. So here, you are watching your body carefully in your mind. There is movement which is the air element in your foot. There is also the fire element in your foot.

This is what *yogīs* who practise *Vipassanā* meditation ardently and energetically can understand correctly. Is that lightness true? Yes, it is true. "When I note lifting, I feel or notice there is lightness, something pushing up, pushing my foot up, I can feel it." When you drop your foot or when you place it down, you feel heaviness. Heaviness is the water element which is clearer, followed by the air element. You will notice this when your foot touches the ground. How does it feel? Maybe hardness or softness. In order to feel it, do not search for anything purposely. Do not look for anything deliberately. Just apply bare mindfulness. Mindfulness is very important. I have stressed many times because the Buddha taught '*satima*', be mindful from moment to moment. So if you are mindful and observe closely, you will notice these kinds of elements such as hardness or



softness. When you feel hardness, this is the earth element. Whether soft or hard, you will notice it. Then, you note "lifting, pushing forward, placing". When you note "pushing forward" closely with every step mindfully, you may notice the movement, the forward motion one after another.

You may feel as if somebody is pushing you from the back or pulling your foot from the front. You notice the air element. So this is '*sampajañña*', clear comprehension. Clear comprehension means a *yogī* who is mindful can understand clearly, thoroughly or completely. At the beginning of the practice, when you note "lifting", you cannot see or notice anything. There are many movements which arise and then disappear. While lifting and placing, you cannot notice them because your mindfulness is not strong enough. When your mindfulness or heedfulness gets stronger, you can see many stages of arising and fading away in just one single lifting, one single movement and one single dropping.

You can see or notice in the same way when you sit down and get up. You can see many parts of these movements. So this is the meaning of '*sampajañña*', clear comprehension. While going forward or going back and while returning to your footpath, you have to be mindful. The same thing applies when you are standing. Note "standing, standing, standing". When you note "standing, standing, standing" mindfully, you should be aware of your standing posture. There is tightness in your body, leg or foot. You may ask, "What should I see when I note standing, standing, standing"? Sometimes we do not understand. We also do not pay

attention in the standing. We must pay attention. We must note "standing, standing, standing" very carefully. Then, note "moving, moving, moving" slowly and mindfully. You can notice something if you note "turning, turning, turning". "I notice my body is moving." Moving is the air element. This is clear comprehension. Then, looking straight or looking sideways, we have to apply clear comprehension.

We are told not to look anywhere unnecessarily, but if necessary we have to look, we have to be mindful. When we look, we must note "looking, looking, looking" or "seeing, seeing, seeing". We have to be mindful and just note. Sometimes we need to bend our hand and stretch. For example, while we are practising sitting meditation, there is itchiness somewhere in the body; maybe on the face. We need at first to note "itchy, itchy, itchy". However, the itch is so strong that in spite of our noting, still we cannot stand or endure the itchiness. We have to note that we want to scratch it. If we want to scratch it, at the beginning, we must note "intention to move, intention to move". Note "intention to move, intention to move, then moving, moving, moving". We do not immediately bend our hand. We do not immediately scratch our face. Be aware of the intention first.

If really necessary we have to move, note "moving, moving, moving". Note first before we scratch the itch. Note "intention to scratch, intention to scratch, intention to scratch". Then, "scratching, scratching, scratching". When the itchiness disappears, then we have to put down our hand. So before putting down, note "intention or wanting to put down, wanting to put

down". Note "putting down, putting down, putting down". In this way, we note the mindfulness in detail. Note in detail and not in a hurry. Do not put our hand back immediately. Put it back slowly and mindfully. We have to note. In this way, we notice the movement of our hand which is the air element. Thus, *yogīs* will understand.

While bending or stretching the hand, *yogīs* have to apply clear comprehension. For monks, while wearing their robes, double-thickness outer robe, upper robe and under robe, they have to apply clear comprehension, that is to be mindful. When they carry the bowl, they have to apply clear comprehension. For lay *yogīs*, when you wear your shirt or dress, you have to be mindful by noting "wearing". When you carry something, a glass, a plate or whatever, you have to be mindful. Then, you have to eat mindfully. How do you eat mindfully? In the instructions and if you have listened mindfully, our late Most Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw explained that when you see the food or look at the food, you have to note "seeing" or "looking". When you take the spoon, you have to note "taking" or when handling, note "handling". When you scoop the food, note "scooping". When you bring the food, note "bringing". When you open the mouth, note "opening". When you put the food, note "putting". When you chew the food, note "chewing". This is especially so when you chew the food. Do not swallow it immediately. When you are hungry, you normally swallow fast. You have to chew mindfully by noting "chewing, chewing, chewing". Not chewing two or three times, but as many times as you can. In this way,

the food can be digested easily. It is also good for health. But here, you chew not because of health. You chew your food by applying mindfulness. Then, when you swallow it, you have to note "swallowing, swallowing, swallowing". In this way, we can apply clear comprehension during our meals.

One *yogī* related to me how she practised eating and drinking mindfully. She followed the instructions strictly. She ate mindfully in the whole process of eating. One spoonful of the meal went to the stomach. By eating in this way after sometimes, she did not want to eat anymore. She said that there was so much "suffering" while eating one spoonful of food. The reason was because she practised very mindfully. Our *yogīs* also try to eat and drink mindfully during the process of eating and drinking. After eating, you answer the call of nature. You use the bathroom. You have to be mindful. You must not think that it is not necessary to be mindful when using the bathroom or restroom. The Buddha taught that we must apply mindfulness even during the call of nature. To be mindful, we can understand clearly and correctly. That is why we have to be mindful even when using the restroom or answering the call of nature. We will notice the air element, water element and so on.

While we are walking, standing, sitting and then falling asleep, we have to note. When we are on the bed, we have to be mindful. Note "sleeping, sleeping, sleeping" or "lying down, lying down, lying down". Note it and if you note attentively, you will not fall asleep easily because the mind is alert. That is why if you note generally or just note "sleeping, sleeping,

sleeping” or “lying down, lying down, lying down”, you can fall asleep easily. If you note while on the bed, you do not need to take sleeping tablets. You can fall asleep very easily. I come very far from Australia. It takes thirteen hours flying to Los Angeles. I got jet lag. What I did was I just made a mental note of the rising and falling to enable me to sleep. This trip is not very taxing for me. Otherwise I will take one week to recover. Day time I sleep. Night time I cannot sleep. I was not very tired because of the noting. This is why I can teach every night. Otherwise during the day time, I cannot teach. I will fall asleep in the day time. So meditation is very good. When you wake up, you have to be mindful. It is not easy to be mindful when we wake up, but if you practise, you can be mindful. You can be mindful when you note “waking up, waking up, waking up”. Initially, we forget our mindfulness when we wake up. But when we practise, we can have mindfulness. Note “waking up, waking up, waking up”.

Now we come to talking. *Yogīs* are not allowed to talk, but sometimes you have to talk. For example, when you report your experience to your meditation teacher, you have to talk mindfully. Are you mindful when you are talking? How do you report mindfully? I will tell you. When I practised meditation, I had to report to my teacher. I kept my eyes down. I did not look anywhere, just kept my eyes down while reporting. We have to control our hands. We should not move. If we move, our teacher knows we are not mindful. At first as a beginner or new *yogī*, I did not know. So I looked at Sayādaw and my hands also moved slightly. “*Sāmaṇera*, why do you look at me? You are not mindful.” The

teacher could see my fault. So we have to be mindful while we are talking or reporting. We should not move our hands. If we move our hands, the teachers will think that even in front of them, the *yogīs* are not mindful. "How then to be mindful behind the teachers?", they may think. So when we are reporting, we have to be mindful.

When we remain silent, we also have to be mindful. If we are silent, we have to be mindful. So apply mindfulness in the daily activities. We have to practise according to the teacher's instructions. In this way, you do not have much time because you are so busy practising sitting meditation. You are also mindful in the walking meditation. You are mindful in the daily activities. You are still mindful during the two weeks' retreat. You will experience a lot of what the Buddha taught. You will understand the four elements as taught by the Buddha. There is no person in the body, no entity or spirit; only the four elements.

You have the experience in one single rising or in one single movement of the footstep. You have understood clearly the four elements. The Buddha also taught the five aggregates (*khandha*). You have experienced the twelve sense-bases (*āyatana*). You have experienced the rising, falling, sitting, touching and so on. You have experienced so many things taught by the Buddha; the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path and so on. *Yogīs* may say, "What I have experienced, I haven't understood yet." But wait for the following days. I will try to explain how *yogīs* have understood and listened to the *Dhamma* clearly.

So for today, it is enough. May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically. May you understand the *Dhamma* clearly and see things as they really are.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**





## 7

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### *Thera Poṭṭhila*

Yesterday I talked about '*sampajañña*', clear comprehension, that is noting in detail mindfully. If you are not true *yogīs*, you cannot note everything in detail. By applying clear comprehension, we learn to eat mindfully. Yesterday I explained the process of eating. I forgot to tell you yesterday that because our *yogīs* eat together, we also have to consider our helpers. When you eat alone, you can eat as mindfully as you can. You can note in detail the whole process of eating. When you put in one spoonful of minced food, you can note in detail. But when eating in a group, sometimes it is not possible to note in detail because you have to follow the schedule of meal times. Nevertheless, at least you should note when you chew and swallow the food. You have to eat mindfully and finish in time.

Today I would like to tell you a story and explain it with regard to meditation. Thera Poṭṭhila was a learned monk during the Buddha's time. He was a senior monk, very learned and taught the teachings of the Buddha. He taught many *bhikkhus*, but did not practise meditation. Because of his knowledge of the teachings



of the Buddha, he was very proud and did not practise meditation. The Buddha knew that he did not practise meditation. So the Buddha wanted him to mend his way. When Thera Poṭṭhila came to see the Buddha, the Buddha called him Tuccha Poṭṭhila, that is 'Useless Potthila'.

Poṭṭhila thought, "I do teach the monks. The Buddha still calls me '*tuccha*' or useless. The Buddha wants me to practise meditation." Poṭṭhila understood what the Buddha had implied. So one day, without telling anyone, he left the monastery. He found a monastery where thirty *bhikkhus* were staying. He went to see the most senior monk, then paid his respect. He humbly requested the senior monk to teach him meditation. The most senior monk was an *Arahat*. This senior monk wanted Poṭṭhila to be humble. He did not want to teach meditation. "You are a learned monk, I can't teach you. Go and see another monk." Then, Poṭṭhila went to see another senior monk. The second senior monk also rejected his request to teach him meditation. Eventually, he was sent to the youngest *sāmaṇera* who was seven years old and was an *Arahat*. This youngest *sāmaṇera* told Poṭṭhila, "Venerable Sir, if you listen to me, I will teach, otherwise I won't because you are a learned monk." Immediately, Poṭṭhila agreed. "Yes, Venerable Sir. I will listen to you." The *sāmaṇera* wanted to test Potthila's sincerity. "If so, Venerable Sir, there is a lake over there. Go to the lake and go into the water." Poṭṭhila immediately got up and went to the lake. He was about to go into the water. The *sāmaṇera* realised that Poṭṭhila was indeed sincere and would listen to him. The *sāmaṇera* immediately called him, "Venerable Sir, please come back." Poṭṭhila immediately returned.

From this story, we learn that if we want to study, we have to listen to our teacher's advice.

To be obedient is very important. If we do not obey the teacher, the latter may feel unhappy or hurt. If the teacher tells us to do this or that, we must follow his advice, something akin to seeing a doctor. When a doctor treats us, we must listen to him. If we do not listen to his advice, the treatment will not be effective and successful. So it is very obvious that if we want to study from somebody, we must listen obediently to him or her. It is very important. The *sāmaṇera* realised that Thera Poṭṭhila would follow his advice. That was why he agreed to be Thera Poṭṭhila's teacher.

The *sāmaṇera* agreed to teach Thera Poṭṭhila. His instructions were very easy. He uttered just a few words. "Venerable Sir, you are a learned monk. So I will give an example. There is a termite hill that has six holes. A lizard goes into the termite hill. If you want to catch this lizard, what should you do?" "Ah, Venerable Sir, now I understand." This was what the *sāmaṇera* taught. The *sāmaṇera* illustrated his teaching with an analogy of the six holes and a lizard going into the termite hill. If a person wants to catch the lizard, what should he or she do? Close the five holes and wait for the lizard to come out from the sixth hole and then catch it. This is what we are instructed to do in our meditation. When we practise *Vipassanā* meditation, whatever arises from the six-sense doors must be noted. So we must close the five doors: *cakkhu dvāra*, eyes door; *sota dvāra*, ears door; *ghāna dvāra*, nose door; *jivhā dvāra*, tongue door; *kāya dvāra*, body door. Watch from the *mano dvāra*. This door is the mind.

So the instructions given by the *sāmaṇera* to Thera Poṭṭhilla were very simple. How do we close the doors? When we see something or somebody with our eyes, we note "seeing". When we hear something, we note "hearing". When we smell something, we note "smelling". When we taste something, we note "tasting". When we touch something, we note "touching" closely. In this way, we close the doors. The lizard is the defilement. You can catch it. If we do not note or if we are not aware of seeing the object, defilements will arise. If defilements arise in our mind, we cannot simply catch them. If we hear the sound, we must note "hearing, hearing, hearing" closely. If we do not note hearing closely, we cannot catch it. We cannot catch the lizard which is the defilement. Note while seeing and hearing. This is the advice I give to the new *yogīs* at the beginning of the practice. When we see the images, we should not note for a long time, "seeing, seeing, seeing". We cannot get concentration easily in this way. Just note a few times. When we hear the sounds, we should not note for a long time, "hearing, hearing, hearing" because this is not the internal object. We just try to develop our mindfulness. We will not get concentration easily. That is why we should pay close attention to the main object, that is the rising and falling of the abdomen. We should pay close attention to the main object. Note it carefully. In this way, we can develop our mindfulness. Then, we may gain some degree of concentration.

When we have some degree of concentration, at the moment of seeing the images, we can note "seeing, seeing, seeing" patiently for some time. Then, we may notice something in the seeing. We may be aware of

something in the seeing. When we note "hearing, hearing, hearing", we may notice something in the hearing. It must not be done in a hurry. You should not note just for a few seconds and then note the rising and falling. You should note carefully when you have developed concentration and mindfulness. If you are not a beginner, you should note closely. When we smell something, note "smelling" mindfully. When we eat, we have to be mindful during the process of eating. When we touch something, note "touching". In this way, we close the five doors. Watch from one door only.

When we note "seeing", note it closely. What should we notice in the seeing? If we do not practise meditation, we look at it freely. We enjoy looking or seeing. We listen freely. We are not aware of the pleasant or unpleasant feelings. If the image or visible object is pleasant, we feel happy. We may be attached to it and may want to have it. We may like it. Thus, liking arises in our mind. When the image is disagreeable, maybe we ignore it or it makes us feel unhappy or disappointed. Disappointment will arise in our mind. This is the way the mind behaves. We are unenlightened ones (*puthujjana*). We are unenlightened ones living in the sensual pleasure world, *kāma bhava*. So we are happy living in the sensual pleasure world.

When we practise *Vipassanā* meditation, we cannot or do not have the ability to cultivate mindfulness yet. We have not developed concentration yet. We have not understood anything. Therefore, we must note carefully. While noting the rising and falling very closely, the thought arises. In our thought, we see something or somebody. In our thought, we must note

it straight away. When we note "seeing, seeing, seeing" closely, the image will disappear. There will be no more images in our thought. The thought will disappear. So when we experience just seeing, our mind does not go beyond that, not beyond seeing the thought. The Buddha taught us, depending on eye-base and visible objects, eye consciousness arises. With the coming together of these three, contact arises.

If we do not practise meditation, when we look, we can see something or somebody. This is the eye contact (*phassa*). Sometimes the contact is very poor. When the eyesight is poor, what do you do? We use glasses to magnify so that the contact becomes very clear. So contact arises. Depending on contact, feeling arises. I have mentioned that when we see something or somebody and even if we do not note seeing, eye contact of the physical object will occur. "This is a man. This is a woman. This is a good thing. I see a car. I understand. I notice." So contact arises. When we are not mindful, we say, "Oh, it is pleasant, good, beautiful or handsome." We have this type of feeling. "Ah, very good. I like it. I like to have it. I like to possess it. It will be very good if I can get it." Because we are not mindful, this is how we feel.

Depending on feelings, craving (*taṇhā*) arises. I have mentioned, "I like it because it is so beautiful. I like to have it because it is so good or pleasant." *Taṇhā* is the defilement of the mind which is not so strong. If we note this defilement, it will disappear. Because the visible object looks so good and beautiful, we will not let it go easily. We put this physical object in our mind. We cannot let it go. The feeling is so strong. This is

'*upādāna*', grasping or putting it into our mind. Grasping is the defilement. Defilement pollutes our mind. Our mind is not clear and pure when this happens. So how do we purify our mind? We have to note. We have to note "seeing, seeing, seeing" immediately when we see something or somebody. If we can note "seeing, seeing, seeing" straight away, just seeing, no unpleasant or pleasant feeling arises. If there is no pleasant or unpleasant feeling, there is no attachment or craving. If there is no craving, there is no grasping. Grasping ceases. If wanting or craving ceases, feeling ceases. In this way, we close the eye door.

It is very difficult. Saying is very easy. Practising is very difficult. *Yogīs*, what do you think? What do you think. Is it easy or difficult? We know that the Buddha-to-be went to Uruvela forest for six years. When he was twenty-nine, he left his family, his wife, Yasodharā and his newly-born child, Rāhula. The Buddha-to-be left Kapilavatthu, his country. The Buddha-to-be left for meditation practice in the Uruvela forest for six years. After six years, he attained enlightenment. He became the Buddha. His father, King Suddhodana wanted to see him very much because the king was quite old, about eighty years old. He loved his son very much. He wanted to see him very much. That was why he sent his one thousand ministers to invite the Buddha to Kapilavatthu. Nobody returned to Kapilavatthu. They followed the Buddha.

King Suddhodana thought that the one thousand ministers he sent earlier had been delayed. So he sent another one thousand ministers. They also did not come back because when they met the Buddha, they

listened to the *Dhamma*. After that, they became monks. The king again sent his men nine times. Finally, he sent Kāludāyi. Kāludāyi also became a monk, but he managed to invite the Buddha to go back to his native country, Kapilavatthu. So the Buddha and his disciples went back to Kapilavatthu. King Suddhodana invited the Buddha and his disciples for lunch. After lunch, the Buddha gave his bowl to Prince Nanda. Nanda did not want to take the bowl because he was about to marry a princess named Janapadakalyāṇi. She must have been very beautiful. That was why she was named Rūpananda. Nanda did not want to take the Buddha's bowl, but he did not say it openly.

So the Buddha asked Nanda, "You must follow me if you want to come to the monastery." Then, Rūpananda Janapadakalyāṇi saw Nanda carrying the bowl and following the Buddha. She became very worried. When the Buddha left, Rāhula would get the inheritance. He would be the king. But Rāhula became a *samaṇerā*. Now it was Nanda's time. That was why Rūpananda Janapadakalyāṇi was so worried. She knew that when Nanda followed the Buddha, the Buddha would ask him to become a monk. That was why when she opened the door, she reminded Nanda, "My Lord Prince, come back immediately." When Nanda heard these words, Nanda's heart fell when he heard Rūpananda reminding him. That is why in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, it is mentioned that the voice of a woman obsesses the mind of a man.

So Nanda followed the Buddha. When they reached the monastery, the Buddha asked Nanda, "Nanda, do you want to be a monk?" He dared not say 'no'. He just

replied, "Yes", but inside his heart he did not want to be a monk. However, he became a monk. He did not practise meditation. He did not study the scriptures. His mind was so restless because his mind kept going back to the palace and saw Rūpananda. He heard the reminder of Rūpananda. He kept on hearing, "Please come back quickly. Please come back quickly. Please come back quickly."

So Nanda did not practise meditation. If he were a practitioner, he would note "hearing, hearing, hearing" or "seeing, seeing, seeing". Since he was not, he did not note "hearing" or "seeing". He did not close his ears door or eyes door. We have to note "seeing, seeing, seeing" when we see something or somebody. If we do not note "seeing", feelings will arise. At that time in Nanda's mind, when the visible object was the beautiful Rūpananda, he felt unhappy. He felt unhappy because he knew he could not live together with Rūpananda.

If Nanda could note "hearing" or "seeing", this kind of feeling would not arise in him. He did not have the quality of mindfulness to note "hearing" or "seeing". When our *yogīs* here see the visible object, they note "seeing, seeing, seeing". When you note "seeing, seeing, seeing" closely at the moment of noting, your mind is clear and pure. There is no defilement, no wanting, no attachment or no craving in your mind. Your mind is so clear and pure. This is the quality of mindfulness. If you are not mindful, you will also be like Nanda because you do not have the quality to be mindful on hearing or seeing the object. Now you have the quality to be mindful at the moment of seeing. You note it closely. When you note it closely, just seeing, the



mind is pure at that moment. '*Sattānaṃ visuddhiyā*' means 'for the purification of beings'. If you have that experience, then you notice more, the noting mind. Not only one time of noting seeing, but until the image disappears. Then, you can see the image disappearing.

If you do not have the quality to note the rising and falling, your mind goes away. So in the thought, you will see the object. The seeing object appears. When you note the object, it disappears. So you notice appearing and disappearing. For the noting mind too, when you note the image or the visible object, you note seeing. There is noting after noting and the noting disappears. Then, another noting arises. You note seeing. In this way, you can notice the noting mind, arising and fading away. The object is also arising and fading away. They are not together. They are separated. You will be able to distinguish between the noting mind and the object. So whenever the image arises, you note "seeing, seeing, seeing". You will see the image disappearing. Then, you can understand mind and matter. If you note closely, you can understand cause and effect. In this way, we close our eyes door by noting seeing. When we hear the sound, we must note hearing closely. Note "hearing, hearing, hearing". Note it closely. When we note hearing closely, the sound will disappear just like when we note seeing.

As a beginner, just pay close attention to the rising and falling of the abdomen. At the beginning of the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, we are told that if we want to practise meditation, we must find a secluded and quiet place. Nowadays it is very difficult to find a quiet place. Sound is all around us. We can hear the sound of a car,

aeroplane, bus and so forth. So when we note the rising and falling, at the same time we also hear the sound of a car or bus for example. When we note hearing, there is no end. You cannot concentrate. You cannot be mindful. Yes, it is true that in *Vipassanā* meditation whatever arises from the six-sense doors, it must be noted. "Seeing, hearing, smelling" and so on, but we must pay close attention to the main object. If we can pay close attention to the main object, our mind will not be distracted by the sound. Sometimes we may hear the sound. In this case, we note "hearing, hearing, hearing." Otherwise we have to pay close attention to the main object.

You have to apply your mindfulness. When your mindfulness is getting better, you hear as if you do not hear anything. That is why you do not have to worry about the sound. Do not note the sound immediately. Try to pay close attention to the main object. I have to stress this point because if we do not pay close attention to the main object, it is difficult to remain mindful. There are so many things to understand in the rising and falling. If you can note the rising and falling closely, it is easy to note seeing. It is easy to note hearing. It is easy to note smelling. You can notice clearly. When you understand the rising and falling clearly, you can notice something in the seeing. Then, you should note "hearing, hearing, hearing" closely. Depending on ear-base and sound, hearing consciousness arises. Depending on hearing consciousness, contact arises. Depending on contact, feeling arises. Depending on feeling, craving arises. Depending on craving, grasping arises. So if we do not note "hearing, hearing, hearing", our mind goes beyond hearing. Then, attachment will

arise. Sometimes a sound can be pleasant and melodious. In our mind, we create beautiful sounds and music. If you like the music very much, you keep hearing it in your thought. Then, you will not be able to note "hearing, hearing, hearing".

If you practise meditation ardently, you may be disappointed if you cannot note hearing. When I was in Myanmar, I accompanied my teacher, Sayādawgyi U Paṇḍitābhivaṃsa to Lower Myanmar. We taught meditation in a ten-day retreat. While a young man was practising sitting meditation, he cried. I reminded him to note this unpleasant feeling until he could overcome or control it. He said that he could not control his mind. He cried very loud. So the next day when he came for his interview, he said that he heard a certain kind of music in Myanmar. I think *yogīs* who had gone to Myanmar would know this. On certain occasions, Burmese use loud speakers or public address systems. From far sometimes, even in Paṇḍitārama Hse Main Gon Forest Meditation Centre, you can hear the music. So this *yogī* heard the music. He liked it very much. When he heard the music he said that he noted "hearing, hearing, hearing". He kept on noting, but he could not get it disappear. That was why he got angry. When he could not control his mind, he cried out loudly. If you are captivated by it, you may not be able to control it. We must note "hearing, hearing, hearing". When you are noting "hearing, hearing, hearing", the sound slowly fades away. You may notice sometimes that while you are noting hearing, the sound becomes clearer. Sometimes you can hear the lyrics or separate words if you note "hearing, hearing, hearing". Not one solid word, but you will realise there are separate



words. You will be able to notice them. If we do not note hearing closely, attachment, craving and then grasping will arise. If we note hearing closely, at the moment of noting, our mind is pure and clear. We can hear the voice or sound appearing and fading away. We can notice it clearly. In this way, we close our ears door.

How many doors have you closed? Two doors, eyes and ears. Then, we are instructed to note smelling. When we detect any kind of smell, pleasant or unpleasant smell, we must note "smelling, smelling, smelling". We must note it in the same way as we note seeing and hearing. I have explained seeing and hearing. Therefore, you will understand how to note smelling. Yesterday I explained tasting. Then, we come to touching. When we touch, we must note "touching, touching, touching". If you note touching mindfully, you will notice it very clearly. One day a *yogī* related his experience to me. "I never note touching, but I am very mindful when I note rising, falling and other things. Suddenly on one occasion I realised when I used the napkin to clean my hands, the touching sensation was so clear. So I noted it. It was clear and satisfying while noting touching. The sensation or feeling was very clear."

This is why we have to practise respectfully and mindfully. It is not just simply noting the object, but note it closely. If you respect the noting, then you will notice it very clearly. This was how Thera Poṭṭhila was instructed by the *sāmaṇera* to practise ardently and energetically. The Buddha knew Thera Poṭṭhila was practising ardently and energetically. That was why he encouraged Thera Poṭṭhila and said, "*Yogā ve jāyati*

*bhūri, ayogā bhūrisaṅkhayo*. Indeed, wisdom arises from meditation. Without meditation, wisdom is lost." (*The Dhammapada Verse 282*). We have to understand that insight or wisdom comes from meditation, that is *Vipassanā* meditation, not *Samatha* meditation. *Samatha* meditation focuses only on one object. You have to note one object. When the mind goes away, you must pull your mind back. Then, you get concentration. In *Samatha* meditation, you only gain concentration. You cannot understand insight knowledge. You cannot understand the arising and fading away or ever-changing, unsatisfactoriness and non-self. When you practise *Vipassanā* meditation, you experience concentration as well as insight knowledge. That is what the Buddha taught us. Wisdom comes from meditation. Without meditation, wisdom is lost.

I have not explained how we experience insight knowledge. Before the end of the retreat, I will try to explain. Now I am teaching you how to practise meditation. At the beginning of the retreat, I told the *yogīs* that if they could tell me what they had noticed, I would be very happy because you could report completely: appearing, noting and noticing. Appearing is the object. Noting is the mind. Noticing is the insight knowledge or wisdom. If you can practise correctly, you are happy because correct practice is very important. If you have correct instructions, you can practise anywhere. You will benefit. That is why up till now, I try to explain how to practise correctly. I have explained the contemplation of the body and contemplation of the feeling. Today I have started to explain one part of the contemplation of the *dharmā*. Thera Poṭṭhila attained arahatship fast. How did he attain arahatship? Because

he practised ardently and energetically. He followed the teacher's advice. His teacher was a young *sāmaṇera* who was an *Arahat*. I notice our *yogīs* here are practising diligently. They practise ardently and energetically.

May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically. Then, may you understand the *Dhamma* clearly and see things as they really are.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**



## 8

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# Mindfulness of Death

*“Andhabhūto ayam loko, tanuke’ttha vipassati, sakuṇo jālamuttova, appo saggāya gacchati.”* (The *Dhammapada* Verse 174). The Buddha uttered this stanza when he was at Ālavi City. He put several questions to a girl. The girl answered all the questions properly and correctly. The Buddha was satisfied with her answers. At the end, the Buddha uttered these words. People all over the world are ‘blind’. Only a few people can see clearly. Just as only a few birds escape from the hunter’s net, so also only a few people get to the world of the *devas*. So tonight I would like to explain more about this story. The Buddha lived most of the time in Jetavana Vihāra, Savatthi, but when he knew somebody would understand the *Dhamma* and would attain enlightenment, the Buddha would go there to help him or her to understand the *Dhamma*. At one time, he went to Ālavi City. There the devotees offered food to the Buddha as well as to the *Saṅgha*. After lunch, he gave a talk. In his talk, he reminded the devotees in the audience to be mindful of the five aggregates.

Our *yogīs* here meditate on the five aggregates: *rūpakkhandha*, *vedanākkhandha*, *saññākkhandha*,

*saṅkhārakkhandha*, *viññānakkhandha*; the group of corporeality, the group of feelings, the group of perception, the group of mental formations and the group of consciousness. In brief, mind and matter. The Buddha also stressed the importance of practising mindfulness of death (*maraṇānussati*). Yogīs not only practise *Vipassanā* meditation, but also practise *maraṇānussati* which is *Samatha* meditation. "My life is not lasting. My death is sure to come. My life will end in death. Inevitable is my death. My life is uncertain. Death is certain." That is *maraṇānussati*. We can practise *maraṇānussati* as well. If we practise *maraṇānussati*, we will not be afraid of death.

When our life ends, we can be mindful. So practise *maraṇānussati*. It is very useful. When we practise *maraṇānussati*, we do not fear death. We can be mindful on what we should do. Death can come anytime. Before I die, I should do charity. I should keep the precepts. I should practise *Samatha* meditation. I should practise *Vipassanā* meditation. So *maraṇānussati* practice will remind us to live correctly. Otherwise we forget to do good deeds. So if our devotees like to practise *maraṇānussati*, please repeat after me.

"My life is not lasting. My life is not lasting. My death is sure to come. My death is sure to come. My life is not lasting. My death is sure to come." Please recite three times.

"My life will end in death. My life will end in death. Inevitable is my death. Inevitable is my death. My life will end in death. Inevitable is my death."

"My life is uncertain. My life is uncertain. Death is



certain. Death is certain. My life is uncertain. Death is certain.”

So please recite from the beginning. “My life is not lasting. My death is sure to come. My life will end in death. Inevitable is my death. My life is uncertain. Death is certain.”

So this is *marañānussati* which you can practise. If we practise *marañānussati*, we cannot be afraid of death. Then, we are reminded to behave correctly. We will refrain from doing any bad deeds, but to do good deeds. Even though the Buddha reminded the audience about *marañānussati*, many people ignored his teaching. They did not pay attention to what the Buddha said, but the girl realised how important it was. So she practised because she had listened to the *Dhamma* talk given by the Buddha. After the *Dhamma* talk, the Buddha went back to Savatthi. After three years, when the Buddha surveyed the world, the Buddha saw in his vision that the girl whose name was Pesākara, would soon attain *Sotapatti* Fruition.

That was why the Buddha went to Ālavi City again to help the girl to attain the first stage of enlightenment. The Buddha was giving a talk in the city when the girl heard that the Buddha had come to the city of Ālavi. She wanted to listen to the *Dhamma* talk very much. At the same time, her father needed the thread spools because he was a weaver. So he asked the daughter to get the thread spools which were urgently needed. Then, Pesākara took some thread spools to her father. On the way to her father’s weaving shed, she saw the Buddha was giving a talk to the audience. She thought to herself, “Should I listen to the *Dhamma* talk first or

send the thread spools to my father first?" The Buddha knew that she must listen to the *Dhamma*. If she did not listen to the *Dhamma* on the way to the weaving shed, she would miss her chance of attaining enlightenment. The Buddha also saw in his vision that she would die when she reached the weaving shed. That was why the Buddha purposely looked at her.

When she saw the Buddha looking at her, she understood that the Buddha wanted her to listen to the *Dhamma* talk. So she joined the audience and sat down. As she sat down, the Buddha put the questions to her. The questions are very easy. Listen carefully. You would not want to miss what I am going to say. So the Buddha put the four questions to her. "My dear girl, where have you come from?" This is the first question the Buddha asked her. Immediately, she replied, "I don't know, Venerable Sir." Then, the Buddha asked the second question. "Where are you going?" Then, she replied, "I don't know, Venerable Sir." The Buddha asked the third question. "Don't you really know." Then, she answered, "I do know, Venerable Sir." The fourth question the Buddha asked, "Do you know?" "No, I don't know, Venerable Sir." She answered in this way. When she had answered all the questions, the Buddha asked the confused audience who thought that the girl had not shown respect to the Buddha. The Buddha asked, "Where have you come from?" She should have answered, "I have come from my home." The Buddha asked, "Where are you going?" She should have answered, "I am going to the weaving shed." It was not that she did not show her respect. The audience or assembled listeners were confused because they did not know what the Buddha meant. That was why the

Buddha wanted to clarify the confusion of the audience. They did not listen to the *Dhamma* talk properly. When the Buddha stressed to be mindful of death, they did not pay attention. That was why they did not practise meditation whereas the girl practised meditation.

Since the girl had heard the teaching of the Buddha, she could answer the four questions correctly and properly. So the Buddha wanted to clarify this to the audience, "My dear girl, when I asked where have you come from? You answered 'I don't know, Venerable Sir'. What do you mean by that?" "Venerable Sir, I know where I have come from in this life, but I know you mean which past existence I have come from. That I don't know, Venerable Sir which past life or which part of existence I have come from." That is why I answered, "I don't know, Venerable Sir," she answered the question put forward by the Buddha correctly. As she could answer correctly, the Buddha expressed his happiness and said "*Sādhu!*" three times. "When I asked where are you going? You answered 'I don't know, Venerable Sir'. What do you mean by that?" "After this life, I don't know which existence I am going to be reborn. That is why I answered I don't know, Venerable Sir." Then, the Buddha said "*Sādhu!*" three times. She could answer correctly.

"Then, when I asked 'don't you know?' You answered 'I know, Venerable Sir'. What do you mean by that?" "I do know, Venerable Sir. Yes, I know that one day, I am going to die. That is why I answered I do know, Venerable Sir." "When I asked 'do you know?' You answered 'I don't know, Venerable Sir'. What do you mean by that?" "I know I am going to die, but I

don't know when I am going to die." So she could answer all the questions correctly. The Buddha was pleased with her answers and then said "*Sādhu!*" three times.

We can ask ourselves that we also do not know from which existence we have come from. We do not know in which existence we are going to be reborn after this life. Where are we going to be reborn? Do we know? We do not know, but we can ask this second question. After this life, where am I going to be reborn? If we listen to the teachings of the Buddha, we can guess where we are going to be reborn. What the Buddha taught us, "*Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ, kusalassa upasampadā, sacittapariyodapanam, etaṃ Buddhāna sāsanaṃ.*" It is a very short *Dhamma* talk, but it is very meaningful. '*Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ*' means 'not to do any evil'. '*Kusalassa upasampadā*' means 'cultivate good deeds'. '*Sacittapariyodapanam*' means 'purify one's mind'. '*Etaṃ Buddhāna sāsanaṃ*' means 'this is the Teaching of the Buddhas'. So if we follow and practise the *Dhamma*, we can guess where we are going to be reborn. What did the Buddha teach? "Don't do any evil. Don't kill. Don't take which is not given. No improper behaviour. No sexual misconduct. Don't tell lies. Don't take any intoxicants. No harsh words to others. Don't separate any relationship." So '*akusala*' means 'unwholesome deeds' which we have to avoid. We have to cultivate good deeds (*kusala*) such as charity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), meditation (*bhāvanā*) and reverence (*apacāyana*). We respect not only the monks, but also we must show our respect to the elderly people. Other wholesome deeds are service (*veyyāvacca*), transfer of merits to others (*pattidāna*), rejoice or be happy when others do

charity or perform good deeds (*pattanumodanā*), listening to *Dhamma* talks (*dhammasavana*) and share your *Dhamma* knowledge with others (*dhammadesanā*). Thus, when one practises meditation and listens to *Dhamma* talks, one will straighten one's right view (*ditṭhijukamma*). These are ten meritorious deeds. Not all the time we are practising meditation. You can cultivate ten meritorious deeds. If you do so, you can guess where you are going to be reborn. So we have answered the second question.

Then, we come to the third question. Everybody knows he or she is going to die one day whether young or old. Not only old people die, the young also die. But we do not know when we are going to die. We can die suddenly. That is why the Buddha taught that we do not know five things. How long are we going to live? We do not know how long we are going to live. What kind of disease we are going to have? We do not know. We do not know when we are going to die. We do not know the time. Then, we do not know where we are going to be buried. We do not know which existence we are going to be reborn. We cannot and do not know these five things. That is why it is advisable to practise meditation. To do good, practise meditation early. Before we grow old, we should practise meditation. Before we get sickness or disease, we should practise meditation. It is advisable to practise meditation before we die. When we are old, we become weak physically and mentally. When our mind and body are weak, we cannot practise meditation diligently because when we grow old, we are forgetful. Physically, our body is also weak. We cannot practise like young practitioners. That is why it is advisable to practise before we are old. It is

advisable to practise before we get diseases. It is advisable to practise before we die. We must practise.

At the end of the talk, the Buddha told the audience that those who are ignorant are in darkness. They are just like the blind. According to the Buddha, people are 'blind' in this world. Only a few people can see clearly, '*tanuke'ttha vipassati*'. That is the point I want to explain. I want to ask our *yogīs*. Do you ignore your mind and body? You do not ignore your mind and body. You are mindful of your mind and body. You do not ignore your mind and body during the retreat. You are trying to be mindful from moment to moment. You practise diligently and ardently so that you will not be in darkness. The Buddha said that those who are ignorant are in darkness. What does he mean that they are in darkness? They are just like the blind. What does he mean by that? It means that because they are not mindful, they cannot see anything in their mind and body. Our practitioners here try to be mindful from moment to moment. The Buddha said '*ātāpa*', putting forth effort. I have explained it. Can you still remember initial effort (*ārambha dhātu*), stepped-up effort (*nikkama dhātu*) and progressive effort (*parakkama dhātu*)? So you are applying these three kinds of effort. From early morning until ten o'clock, you practise diligently. So when you practise diligently, you can see something in your mind and body. You are practising what the Buddha taught. Only a few people in the world can see clearly.

How do you see clearly? Only a very few people who practise *Vipassanā* meditation can see clearly. After listening to the instruction tapes, *yogīs* are mindful in



the sitting meditation. They keep their mind onto the abdomen and note it closely. Then, when the mind goes away, they note "thinking". When feelings appear somewhere in the body, they note them carefully. Then, they note "seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching". After sitting meditation, they practise walking meditation by noting one step, two steps and three steps very carefully. According to the instructions, you note the rising and falling carefully. I always explain the rising and falling because this main object is so important. I have told you this many times. It is very important. If you can note the rising and falling very closely, there are so many things you can notice in the rising and falling. If you can note the rising and falling closely, other things become easy. You will be aware of other things automatically. Not only the rising and falling, there are also many things in the body to be noted. You will understand. You will notice. You will realise all these by yourself.

That is why you must pay close attention to the rising and falling. At the beginning, our noting mind cannot keep up with the rising and falling. We cannot note the rising and falling closely. So when you are very mindful while noting the rising and falling, you can catch the rising-falling movement. It is not necessary to catch the beginning of the rising, middle of the rising or end of the rising. It is not necessary. It depends on your mindfulness. When your mindfulness is very strong or if you have developed sufficient mindfulness, you can see the beginning, middle or end. But do not worry about the beginning, middle or end. Just observe the movement at the beginning. At the beginning, when you note rising, you will notice the abdomen goes up.

You can sense your abdomen in your mind. "Ah, my abdomen goes up." When you note falling, you can note it closely. Then, you notice the abdomen goes down. In this way, you see the abdomen goes up and down. Just feel the movement.

What our late Most Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw said in the instructions is to know the reality. That is important. Naming or labelling is not so important, but labelling is very helpful. If we just watch the movement, our mind cannot focus it closely. That is why we have to label at the beginning of the practice. Note rising, falling closely. When we note it closely, we can see the movement. At the same time, we can also see our abdomen. Why do I keep repeating rising, falling? I want to let our *yogīs* know that there are three things we have to understand: form, manner and reality. We have to notice the reality, but we cannot remove at the beginning of the practice the form and the manner.

When we note rising, you can see the movement. At the same time, we also see the form of our abdomen, the manner of rising and falling and then the reality of the air element which is motion or movement. So when time passes, mindful *yogīs* can see when they note the rising and falling. "I note rising, falling. Only then can I feel the movement when I note rising. When I note falling, I can't see the form. It is not like before." At the beginning of the practice, when you note the rising and falling, you may be satisfied with your noting because your mind can follow the movement closely. At the same time, you can also see the form in the abdomen. You are satisfied with your noting. Now as time goes on and your mindfulness is getting stronger and stronger,



then when you note rising, falling, you cannot see the form, but only the movement. At the very first experience, *yogīs* might be confused. "Ah, my practice is wrong. At the beginning of the practice, when I noted rising, falling, I could see the movement. At the same time, I also could see the form. Now I can't see the form, only the movement. What is happening?" Feeling disappointed they might report their experience. "Venerable Sir, at the beginning of the practice, I could see the form when I noted rising, falling. I could feel the movement. Now I can't see the form." Never mind, go ahead.

When you practise walking meditation, you keep your mind onto the foot, not onto the abdomen. Then, you note it closely. Note "right step, left step". Not "right, left". Note "right step, left step". Not "right foot, left foot". Then, you can see the movement. At the same time, you can also see your foot. Your foot is moving. When your mindfulness is getting better and better or when you are very mindful, only then can you see the movement. You may notice suddenly, "I can't see my foot, just movement. "When I note lifting, I can see or notice just lightness. I can't see my foot. When I place it down, only then can I feel the heaviness. I can't see my foot." Only very mindful yogis will notice the form, manner and reality.

When I say reality, it is the ultimate truth (*paramattha*), but we cannot remove the conventional truth (*paññatti*) immediately. We see the form at the beginning. If you understand the rising and falling or in the stepping, you understand other things. When you note "standing, stretching, sitting down or getting up",

you will notice. In this way, you can see. This is the meaning of '*tanuke'ttha vipassati*'. Only a few people can see clearly. How can we see clearly? If we do not practise meditation, we mention, "This is my body. This is my face. This is my nose. This is my ear." All parts of the body we will mention. "This is my abdomen. My abdomen rises and falls." When we note it closely and mindfully, there are only noting and rising, noting and falling. Only two things. Noting is the mind. Rising is the matter. Noting is the mind. Falling is the matter. Rising is the air element, that is movement. When you note rising, you notice the movement. When you note falling, you notice the movement or motion. Sometimes while you are noting the rising and falling, suddenly there is warmth in your body. You note "warm, warm, warm". Sometimes when you feel cold, you note "cold, cold, cold". Sometimes while you are noting the rising and falling, saliva flows in your mouth. You note "flowing, flowing, flowing". Then, you note "gathering, gathering, gathering". You note "swallowing, swallowing, swallowing".

When you note the object closely, then you will realise that there is nobody or no person in the body. Only the elements. There is nobody, only mind and matter. How do we understand mind and matter? If you can note the rising and falling closely, you will notice and understand it yourself. "Do I understand mind and matter?" You should not ask, "When can I understand mind and matter?" When some *yogīs* practise meditation diligently, they will notice sooner or later. Some *yogīs* even though they have practised for a long time, cannot see mind and matter. This depends on one's mindfulness. That is why if we really want to

understand mind and matter, we must follow the instructions given by the Buddha, that is to be mindful from moment to moment.

You are noting the rising and falling. I have only to say rising and falling which is my special object. While noting the rising and falling closely without thinking of other things, you may notice. Sometimes *yogīs* mention, "When I note rising, falling, there is no rising-falling movement." If there is no rising-falling movement, do you still note rising, falling? You do not note. Why do you note rising, falling? Because rising and falling is in the abdomen. When there is no rising and falling, you do not note. Why do you note feelings? Because feelings appear such as pain numbness or stiffness. In this way, you understand clearly the meaning of '*tanuke'ttha vipassati*'. Only a few people can see clearly. That is why we are always instructed to be mindful all the time. When you say, "I can't see rising, falling, you should mention how you can't see rising, falling." You should not just simply say, "I can't see rising, falling". Sometimes when our effort is weak, we feel we cannot see rising, falling. We cannot see rising, falling when our effort is weak. Our mind becomes restless. Then, we cannot keep our mind onto the abdomen. So we cannot see rising, falling. That is why if you cannot see rising, falling, you should explain and report clearly why you cannot see rising, falling. Some *yogīs* say, "I note rising, falling closely. My mind doesn't go anywhere, just only the abdomen. Then, slowly rising and falling becomes smooth and gentle. Then, slowly rising and falling fades away. If you have this experience, you should tell it in your report. Do not simply say, "Rising and falling disappears."

When rising and falling disappears, what do you do? At the beginning, you may be confused because you do not know. You have not been instructed yet. You do not know what to do. When you report to your meditation teacher, you may say that you cannot note rising, falling. Then, note "sitting, touching". When you note "sitting, touching", how do you note "sitting, touching"? You have to note sitting the way you sit. You have to know how you sit in an upright position. Then, note it closely. You will notice when you note sitting. "I notice this and that in the sitting." Then, you note touching; the buttocks touching the floor. "When I note touching, I notice this and that." Note the touching points as you experience them, not just simply say, "I note sitting, touching, then go to other things." You should mention as you explain in the rising and falling. You also should mention what you have noticed in the sitting and touching. In this way, you can understand something clearly in the sitting and touching.

Only a few people can see clearly. So if you understand in this way, you are not a 'blind' person and you are not in darkness. The Buddha said those who are ignorant are in darkness. You do not ignore your mind and body. That is why you are not in darkness. Not only do you understand mind and body, but also you understand the four elements, five aggregates, Noble Eightfold Path and so on. So during the practice if you are mindful, you will experience so many things that the Buddha taught.

That is why the Buddha always reminded us '*appamādena sampādetha*', be mindful always or strive on heedfully. The Buddha taught us to be mindful. I will

stop here for tonight. So before the end of the retreat, I will try to explain how *yogīs* understand or see things clearly as they really are.

May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically. May you understand the *Dhamma* clearly.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**



## 9

# Contemplation of the Consciousness

Today I would like to talk about '*cittānupassanā*', contemplation of the consciousness. Contemplation of the body (*kāyānupassana*), contemplation of the feeling (*vedanānupassanā*) and the third one is contemplation of the consciousness (*cittānupassanā*). It is said in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, "Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sarāgaṃ vā cittaṃ 'sarāgaṃ va cittaṃ' ti pajānāti, vītarāgaṃ vā cittaṃ 'vītarāgaṃ va cittaṃ' ti pajānāti, sadosaṃ va cittaṃ 'sadosaṃ va cittaṃ' ti pajānāti, vītadosaṃ vā cittaṃ 'vītadosaṃ va cittaṃ' ti pajānāti, samohaṃ vā cittaṃ 'samohaṃ va cittaṃ' ti pajānāti, vītamohaṃ vā cittaṃ 'vītamohaṃ va cittaṃ' ti pajānāti. "Again, monks, a monk knows consciousness with lust as consciousness with lust, he knows consciousness without lust as consciousness without lust, he knows consciousness with aversion as consciousness with aversion, he knows consciousness without aversion as consciousness without aversion, he knows consciousness with delusion as consciousness with delusion, he knows consciousness without delusion as consciousness without delusion."

Based on the Buddha's instructions, we practise *Vipassanā* meditation. Before *yogīs* practise *Vipassanā* meditation, they observe the eight precepts. When we observe the eight precepts, we restrain our verbal and physical actions. These actions are quite clear, but not the mind. When we practise meditation, we restrain our mind with mindfulness. Try to note rising, falling closely as the main object. At the beginning of the practice, even though we try to note the rising and falling closely, we cannot note it all the time because our mindfulness is not strong enough. As you know, our mental energy is not strong enough. You may notice that our mind always wanders such as thinking, wandering, imagining, planning, remembering or criticising. We must note all of them.

Sometimes unexpectedly, an unwholesome thought like lust will arise. We do not pay attention to it. We pay attention to the rising and falling of the abdomen. We try to develop mindfulness. We try to develop concentration so that we can understand things clearly as they really are. As we are the unenlightened ones (*puthujanna*), our mind is so attracted to the senses. If you are young, your mind will be more sensitive. Even though when we try to keep our mind onto the abdomen and note it very closely, our mind still goes off rapidly. We must note as we are instructed. When we think, note "thinking". When our mind wanders, note "wandering, imagining, remembering" and so on. If we are unable to note, our thoughts will come continuously. If our noting mind is not energetic enough, our thoughts become even stronger.

When there is an unwholesome thought of sensual

pleasure or lust, it must be noted. The instruction is very simple and easy. The *bhikkhu* knows. The *bhikkhu* means the practitioner, not only the monk in this case, but the practitioners are also called *bhikkhus*. As they want to be liberated from *samsāra*, they are called *bhikkhus*. They know there is sensual pleasure or lust. They have to note lust, longing or craving. You must note it. You should note it straight away. You should not delay the noting. If you delay it, your mind will keep on following this sensual pleasure or lust. You will not have the ability to control this unwholesome state of mind. That is why we must note whatever thought rapidly, immediately and closely. Most of you know that at the moment when you are practising. Your noting is not powerful enough. Mostly at the beginning of the practice, especially if you are a beginner, you will follow the thoughts. The mind does not come back to the rising and falling. Thinking takes quite a long time. But we must try. As the Buddha said, we must put forth effort. The more you pay close attention to your main object, the more you will understand your state of mind. There is a lot of thinking or wandering mind.

In this way, you can improve your mindfulness in your practice. Your thoughts will become fewer and fewer. If you do not note the thought immediately or carefully, you will not remove it quickly. That is why you have to try to note the thinking closely. When the lustful thoughts surface, note them. The Buddha always taught us that thoughts are very delicate and not easy to control or restrain. It is true. "When an unwholesome thought arises, I can't note. I still don't know when my mind goes off," one *yogī* says. You can control the thought if you are very energetic by noting it





closely. When you note thinking closely, you will notice it. When you note the lustful thought, it will disappear. "Ah, now there is no more lustful thought." If you note this lustful thought immediately, you will notice it disappears. So with your mindfulness, you will have that experience. If you really note it, you will gain confidence. You will have the confidence to believe what the Buddha taught is true. You say to yourself, "Now when lust arises in my mind, I note it quickly and it disappears. There is no more lustful thought."

Sometimes while we are noting the rising and falling, other thoughts spring up like anger. When anger arises in your mind, what should you do? You note it. You have to note, "anger, anger, anger". Mostly sometimes if we cannot note rising, falling closely, we might get angry because we are very eager. Note this primary object closely. If you are unable to note it closely, you become disappointed and you may get angry. Sometimes you cannot note rising, falling because your mind goes away. Now an unwholesome thought may come up about somebody you do not like. You get angry. Whenever you are angry, your duty is to note it. You must note "anger, anger, anger". When you note anger closely, you may notice the disappearance of anger. Soon, you will realise, "Now there is no anger in me." The *yogī* knows consciousness with anger or hate. According to our own experience when there is anger in our mind, anger must be noted closely. "Ah, there is no more anger in my mind," the *yogī* says.

Sometimes we do not note rising, falling. We do not note any other objects in our mind and body. We just sit and close our eyes. Sometimes we close and open our

eyes. We look here and there. The reason is because our mind is so restless. We cannot be mindful. We know nothing in our mind and body. The mind is so restless. So this is delusion (*moha*). We know nothing because we do not watch our mind and body carefully. If you are careful while noting the rising and falling, you can notice the abdominal movement such as inflating, deflating, expanding, contracting or releasing. You can notice the upward movement or downward movement. In this way, you know how the abdomen works. "Ah, it is motion or air element." You will understand. This is right understanding. There is no delusion in your mind because you know in your mind and body, just movement when you note rising, falling closely.

This is the instruction given by the Buddha. We do not have the ability to observe immediately because we are still the unenlightened ones. We live in a sensual world. We have to understand that the mind of a *puthujanna* is very restless and wild. That is why the wise tame their mind. Now you are the wise. The wise tame their mind. How do we tame the mind? We do it by practising the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. When we do something and find something difficult, we cannot do things smoothly. We find them difficult. Even when we practise sitting meditation and walking meditation, we still find things difficult.

Do you think it is difficult to practise meditation? Yes. You want to gain something which the Buddha taught. The Buddha taught us about the purification of mind. So you too want to purify your mind. As followers of the Buddha, we want to understand what the Buddha taught. We want to attain enlightenment

such as *Sotāpatti* Fruition, *Sakadāgāmi* Fruition, *Anāgāmi* Fruition and *Arahatta* Fruition if possible, but we cannot achieve them immediately. We are still the unenlightened ones. Just now I said, we are living in a sensual world. We like the senses. We have craving for them. We like to see visible objects. We like to see pleasant objects. We have craving for sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and thought. It is so difficult not to crave for them. That is why the Buddha taught us about hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) such as the sensual pleasurable thoughts. More often such thoughts will arise when we practise meditation.

Sensual desires or pleasures (*kāmacchanda*) hinder our mind. When thoughts of sensual pleasure arise, we must note them closely. We may mistake something as *cittānupassanā*. When I talk about *cittānupassanā* and if you have listened carefully, you will understand what *cittānupassanā* is. In *cittānupassanā*, when lust, anger or delusion arises, it must be noted. We must be aware of it. We must not follow it. We do not have to follow this state of mind. We must not follow. Some *yogīs* (not here) when they practise under our instructions, we take care of them. We interview them, then we correct them, but they do not practise with us all the time. They go somewhere where they practise under other instructors. They practise under many teachers. When they come back, they get another idea by saying, "Ah, I like to practise *cittānupassanā*." "Why do you like *cittānupassanā*?" I asked. "It is very good to note *cittānupassanā*." "Let me know how good it is to practise *cittānupassanā*?" "The Buddha taught the Four Foundations of Mindfulness: *kāyānupassanā*, *vedanānupassanā*, *cittānupassanā*, *dhammānupassanā*,"

they replied.

When I checked on them, they did not make a mental note. They did not note closely, but they followed the thoughts. By following the thoughts, is it *cittānupassanā*? What do you think? Following the thoughts is not *cittānupassanā*. It is just thinking, imagining or fantasising. It is very nice to fantasise sometimes. Have you experienced very pleasant fantasising? If you experience fantasising, your mind will not come back to the main object. It may take a long time, half an hour, forty-five minutes or fifty five minutes. The mind will not come back because you are fantasising. It is very harmful if left unchecked.

We must note according to what the Buddha taught. You must be aware of it. You must observe it. It means to watch it. Watch it means to note it closely. When you note it, you will notice it. What I say to you, to do it, you will know it. If you do not do it, you will not know it. It is a very simple instruction. One *yogī* said that he was practising *cittānupassanā*. When I checked on how he practised, he did not note when his thought arose. He just followed his thought. I will relate to you about one of the *yogīs* in Myanmar. He was a gentleman. He practised in our meditation centre. My teacher was the one who interviewed him. This *yogī* always related what he experienced. He liked to sway his body. Then, he smiled. Since I had to take care of this *yogī* at that time, I reminded him to note his experience closely and carefully. After this, he stopped for a while. After a while, he returned to swaying his body. Sayādaw also told him not to sway and smile. He did not listen to Sayādaw. Sayādaw reprimanded him. Then, he became

apprehensive. Later, he told me he liked to sway his body in his imagination. So this was what I came across that *yogī* in Myanmar.

Another *yogī*, not in Myanmar was also practising under me. When she was practising under me, she could practise ardently and energetically. Then, she wanted to practise under other instructors. One day she came to visit me. I saw that she did not look well. She said to her friend that she was under medical treatment. She was taking medicine. I asked her why she was taking medicine. Because she could not sleep. She had insomnia. She had stopped practising. I told her not to worry. Personally, I advised her not to take the medicine. Under medication, she could not note when the thought arose. She could not control the mind. It was not true what she was thinking. She was imagining. She had that kind of thought. She realised this when I pointed it out to her. She regained her confidence. She discontinued her medicine. Later, she told me that she had regained her health.

When the thought arises in the mind, we must note it closely. We must not follow it. If we follow the thought and cannot note it, we can make mistakes. I have met quite a number of *yogīs* who had practised meditation under me before. But when they went wrong, they were not under my instructions. They had practised other methods. So you have to be careful. Note the thought closely. During the Buddha's time, a *bhikkhu* whose name was Meghiya was the attendant of the Buddha. One day, he came back from his alms-round. He saw a mango grove and it looked so pleasant. He thought to himself, "If I practise meditation under the mango

grove, I would achieve something." He wanted very much to practise meditation under the mango grove. At that time, there were no other monks with the Buddha. So when Meghiya asked permission from the Buddha, the Buddha told him to wait until another monk came along. But he did not want to wait for another monk. Thus, he repeated his request. The Buddha told him to do what he liked. So Meghiya went to the mango grove to practise meditation at the foot of the trees. He could not be mindful. Throughout the whole day, though he practised meditation, he could not gain concentration. In the evening, he came back. He had a lot of imagination in his thoughts. This is an example and there are also several examples. If we cannot note the thoughts, we lose our mindfulness. When such thoughts arise, we must note them closely. The sensual pleasurable thoughts arise. Note the sensual pleasurable thoughts. Besides sensual pleasures, ill-will (*vyāpāda*) will also arise. When we practise meditation, anger will arise. Disappointment or sometimes depression will spring forth. When such thought arises, it must be noted.

The most difficult hindrance is sloth and torpor (*thīna-middha*). We cannot avoid sloth and torpor when we practise meditation. We will experience sloth and torpor. Drooping our head is a sign of sleepiness. When sloth and torpor arise, they must be noted. When we are sleepy, note "sleepy, sleepy, sleepy". Why do we have sleepiness? If our noting mind is not strong enough, we may have sleepiness. When our energy (*virīya*) is weak, we may have sleepiness. So we have to check ourself and ask whether our noting mind is strong enough or not. "Do I note rising, falling closely and other objects

when they appear?" We must check. When our effort is weak, make a mental note carefully. When the noting is strong enough, we will not have sleepiness immediately. We have to check. Sometimes we are sleepy not because we lack effort.

We can note the rising and falling as well as other objects closely. Let us say you note rising, falling closely. While noting the rising and falling closely without thinking much, you also may have sleepiness. So when you make your report, you have to report clearly. Do you have sleepiness? If you say you cannot note rising, falling, you may have sleepiness. In this case, you have to make an extra effort or mental effort to overcome the sleepiness. When you can note the rising and falling closely and still have sleepiness, tell your teacher. He will instruct you further. To prevent sleepiness, note "rising, falling, sitting, touching". Note "rising, falling, sitting, touching". So if you add another two objects, you tend to be more alert. If you are not alert, you cannot note the four objects together. In this way, you can make your mind alert by noting "rising, falling, sitting, touching". You have to note in this way to prevent sloth and torpor. But if you think you cannot note rising, falling when sleepiness arises, you have to be careful. Because of laziness, we may have sleepiness. But anyway, when you are sleepy, you have to note "sleepy, sleepy, sleepy". If you are still sleepy, you can note "rising, falling, sitting, touching" or "sitting, touching". In this way, you will not have sleepiness. If you are still sleepy, you can rub your face or you just get up and practise walking meditation.

The fourth hindrance is restlessness and remorse

(*uddhacca kukkucca*). If our noting mind cannot focus onto the object closely, our mind becomes restless. Why do we have restlessness? Because our noting mind cannot focus onto the object closely. That is why we have restlessness, but we must note “restlessness, restlessness, restlessness”. A better way is to note the object closely. In this way, the mind becomes alert. We are noting the rising and falling in the sitting meditation. When we have some quality of mindfulness, our mind becomes clear. When our mind becomes clear, we may remember the past experiences. We have good and bad experiences. We might have done something wrong in the past. When we remember the misdeeds we did in the past, regret will arise. At this very moment, we try to behave ourselves. We try to purify our mind. But at the same time, we also remember what we had done wrong in the past. Such guilty feeling or remorse will arise. When this kind of feeling arises, it must be noted. That is the feeling of guilt. When we note this feeling, it may disappear.

The fifth hindrance is doubt (*vicikicchā*). When doubt arises, note it. There are doubts about the Buddha, the teachings of the Buddha, the *Saṅgha* and the practice. Would it be possible to understand these doubts clearly as they really are? Just note “rising, falling, sitting, touching, right step and left step”. We may experience these kinds of doubt, but we must note “doubt, doubt, doubt”. So these are the five hindrances that always hinder our mind. That is why I say that saying is very easy, but to practise is very difficult.

We are walking with the mind. So note rising, falling. The more you note this main object closely, the more



you will understand about your mind. In this way, the thoughts decrease. The Buddha taught us that it is not easy to control the mind. It is not easy to restrain the mind, but the wise try to tame themselves. So if we are able to note rising, falling closely when the thought arises, we can note it immediately. At the beginning of the practice, we do not have the ability to control the thought. Practise respectfully. Not only noting the rising and falling, but also feeling that arises and other objects that arise such as seeing, hearing, smelling and so on. If you practise very carefully, slowly you can control the mind. While noting the rising and falling, you can catch the thought immediately when it arises. At the beginning of the practice, you do not have this kind of ability. But now you can catch the thought immediately. When thoughts of sensual pleasure appear, catch them. When you note them, you notice they will disappear.

When anger arises, catch it immediately. Then, you note anger. When you note anger, it disappears. However, it is not easy to remove thoughts of anger or sensual pleasure immediately. Anger is very strong. We have to note it for a while. Note anger patiently. Anger is a very strong feeling. We should not note simply just anger a few times, then return to the main object. If we really want to know how anger arises and how anger disappears, we must note it closely. When we note "anger, anger, anger" closely, we may find that anger is getting stronger and stronger. If this happens, we should not give up easily. Note anger closely and continuously. Eventually, while we are noticing anger, another thought will arise. "Why am I getting angry? Whom am I angry?"

When you note anger closely and patiently, anger disappears. Once you find out how anger disappears, your confidence grows. Thus, in future sittings whenever anger or other mental states arise, you will know how to manage them. Most *yogīs* only want to note pleasant feelings. However, when happiness arises and because we like this pleasant feeling, we forget to note "happy, happy, happy". We must note it. When we note happiness, we notice that this happy feeling too will disappear. But most *yogīs* do not note "happy, happy, happy". When the happy feeling arises, they just accept it. They say to themselves, "Ah, I am so happy. What a pleasant feeling. I like it." They do not say, "I note it." I found out that *yogīs* do not note it. They like this feeling very much. They want to prolong happiness as long as they can. *Yogīs* do not want to note anger too. They do not want to mention anger that arises. They usually want to mention this feeling of happiness. But one must note both happiness and unhappiness.

When you analyse what the Buddha taught, it is very difficult to see our mind. But when we have strong mindfulness, we can see our mind. How do we see our mind? Have you ever experienced seeing your mind? You note rising, falling closely. At the beginning of the practice even though you have practised for quite some time, you do not notice your mind when your mind goes off. Which part of your mind goes off? You do not notice it, but when you practise according to the instructions of the Buddha, slowly you can note rising, falling closely. When the mind goes off at the beginning, you cannot describe which part of the rising your mind goes off. Later, your mindfulness is very good and your mental energy is very strong. When you note rising,

falling, you say, "In the middle of the rising, my mind goes off." When you note rising, falling, suddenly your mind comes back to this main object. If you notice it in this way, you have the ability to see your mind.

Remember what the Buddha taught, "*saragam va cittam 'saragam va cittam' ti pajanati.*" I have to repeat and remind you. When consciousness with lust arises, the *yogī* knows there is consciousness with lust in me. This is the noting. When you note lust, you notice it disappears. There is consciousness without lust in me. From our experience, when there is a lustful thought, note it straight away. Do not follow your thought. If you follow it, your mind will not come back to the main object. So this is *cittānupassanā*, contemplation of the consciousness.

May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically. May you understand the *Dhamma* clearly and see things as they really are.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**



## 10

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# *The Gift of Dhamma*

*“Sabbadānaṃ dhammadānaṃ jināti, sabbarasaṃ dhammaraso jināti, sabbaratiṃ dhammarati jināti, taṇhakkhaya sabbadukkhaṃ jināti.”* (The *Dhammapada* Verse 354). The Buddha uttered this stanza while residing at Jetavana Vihāra in Savatthi. One night Sakadevaraja (Sakka) and the *devas* came to see the Buddha. Sakka asked several questions. At a meeting of the *devas* in Tāvātimsa heaven, they discussed one matter which they could not solve. So the *devas* went to see Sakadevaraja, the King of *Devas*. He also could not solve the problem. That was why Sakka and the *devas* came to see the Buddha for help. Sakka asked the Buddha, “Venerable Sir, among gifts, which is the best? Among tastes which is the best? Among delights, which is the best? Why is the eradication of craving said to be the most excellent?” These were the questions put forward by Sakka. The Buddha answered, “The gift of *Dhamma* excels all gifts. The taste of *Dhamma* excels all tastes. The delight in *Dhamma* excels all delights. The eradication of craving overcomes all ills.” These are the answers given by the Buddha.

In our human society, we give gifts when we are invited to a house-warming party, wedding and so forth. On many other occasions, we receive gifts. We also give gifts to our friends. These gifts cannot be kept by us all the time. We cannot use them all the time. Sometimes you may give them to your loved ones. The most precious gift may be ruby or other expensive things. You cannot use them all the time during your lifetime. You may use them, but when you die you have to leave them behind. If the gifts are not so expensive, you may not even care or bother. These gifts are not excellent, but the Buddha said the gift of *Dhamma* is excellent. Why is the gift of *Dhamma* excellent? Let us say you perform charity. You do *dāna*. You offer food even one spoonful of rice to the *Saṅgha*, this is the charitable gift. You can be reborn in the *deva* plane. You can be reborn in the human world. You can get four benefits which are longevity, beauty or good look, happiness and strength. You can have these benefits because you have performed *dāna*.

If you take precepts, you can be healthy. You also can have a better life in the *deva* plane or human world. If you practise meditation, you can get concentration. You can have wisdom. These are the gifts of *Dhamma*. Not only in this life can you use these gifts. When you have the gift of *Dhamma* and know how to use it wisely, you can be liberated and cannot be reborn in the four *apāya*. That is why the Buddha answered the gift of *Dhamma* excels all other gifts.

Now our Tathāgata Meditation Centre Committee members arrange retreats about four times a year or maybe more than four times. When they arrange

retreats, our practitioners have the chance to practise meditation. When you come here for the practice, you have the chance to see the monks, '*samaṇānañ ca dassanā*'. Seeing the virtuous people is the highest blessing. When you hear the *Dhamma* from the virtuous person, I have explained that hearing the *Dhamma* is a rare opportunity. So you have the chance to hear the *Dhamma* from the virtuous people.

When you hear the *Dhamma*, you learn something from the teachings of the Buddha. When you practise meditation, you get the benefits on how to be mindful in your mind and body, how to develop concentration and how to develop wisdom. So according to your effort and practice, you can gain insight knowledge. If you have the *pāramī* and if your practice is enough, even during this lifetime, you can attain enlightenment. When you attain enlightenment, you cut off *saṃsāra*. What is *saṃsāra*? It is the endless life cycle. When you attain the first stage of enlightenment, you cut off *saṃsāra*. Only seven more times you are going to be reborn and always in a good place. You will never be reborn in the nether world or four woeful states (*āpāya*). You will never be reborn in such planes of existence. That is why the *Dhamma* gifts are the best and excel all gifts. Now all of you are receiving the most precious gift.

"Among tastes, which is the best"? Sakka asked. The Buddha answered, "The taste of *Dhamma* excels all tastes." Actually, it is quite difficult to understand this unless you have experienced it with your mindfulness, but you have not practised meditation yet. When you listen to the *Dhamma*, the teachings of the Buddha

carefully and by paying close attention to the talks, you may feel something. When you pay close attention to the talk, you will not remember any other things; about your work, family, friends or other things because you have paid close attention and listened carefully. In the *Dhamma* talk about meditation, you are always reminded on how to be mindful, how to note, how you can understand, how you can develop concentration and how you can develop insight. By listening thus, you set your mind at peace.

At the moment if you do not have any unpleasant feelings or unwise feelings, your mind is at peace. There is no defilement in your mind. When you understand the *Dhamma*, then you practise meditation after listening to the *Dhamma* talks. You should practise meditation because you can get the benefits such as purification of mind, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation as well as other benefits. You should practise meditation so that you can be liberated. So you come and practise meditation. When you practise meditation, you cannot taste the *Dhamma* immediately. What do you taste first? Pain here, pain there. This is what you have experienced and tasted first. It is a bitter taste and not a sweet taste initially. So sit still. You have back pain, pin-and-needle pain or headache. You suffer, but you follow the instructions given by the Buddha. The Buddha taught us to put forth effort. You do not give up easily. You bite your teeth. When the pain arises and gets stronger, you do not give up. You will not give up. "I will note it until I complete one hour." "I won't give up. Pain arises just after fifteen minutes or thirty minutes. I won't give up. I won't change." You encourage yourself. You note pain until you complete one hour.

Even though there is pain, you may have the confidence of conquering the one-hour mark. You think to yourself, "I won't be able to sit for one hour completely. Now I have sat for one hour completely." In this way, you build up your confidence.

In the following sittings, you may feel more painful. It is very challenging with the pain. Do not give up. In this way, you are able to sit for one hour. Then, you can cope with the pain. You can manage the pain even though it does not disappear, but you can manage it. At the beginning, pain disturbs the mind. Your mind is so sensitive. After fifteen minutes, you want to change to another posture. Then, after another five minutes, you want to change again. Even though you are very restless, but now you do not change your posture easily. You do not give up immediately. You are patient with the pain. In this way, you have gained confidence. When you experience the disappearance of pain, you may be happy. You have confidence. Then, you note rising, falling at the beginning. You can note rising, falling. You are happy to note this main object closely. You understand the rising and falling; the beginning part of the rising and falling, the middle part of the rising and falling, the end part of the rising and falling. Slowly you develop your mindfulness. When you have developed your mindfulness and with strong mindfulness, you can catch the beginning. You do not purposely watch the beginning of the rising, but you can catch it. You can also catch the middle and the end of the rising. So too the beginning of the falling, the middle of the falling and the end of the falling when your mindfulness is strong. You can catch the three stages.



According to your power of mindfulness, you can note the rising and falling. You can experience how the abdomen rises and falls. In this way, you will find delight in your practice. You will feel delighted. You will not get bored. When you cannot notice anything in your meditation, you become lazy and bored. So the taste of *Dhamma* is the best. You may not have this experience at the moment, but try to follow the instructions which are very easy. You must have '*ātāpa*', putting forth effort. You have heard this advice so many times. I am reminding you so many times because it is so important. Even though we have been constantly reminded, we are still forgetful. When you get up, you forget to note "getting up, getting up, getting up". When you sit down, you forget to note "sitting down, sitting down, sitting down". So we are very forgetful. We are like the elephant. Have you ever seen the mahout or elephant trainer touching the elephant's ear all the time? An elephant trainer sits near the head of the elephant. He reminds the elephant by touching its ears so that the elephant will know that there is somebody near its head. Otherwise the elephant will forget and may kill the elephant trainer. So we are also reminded all the time. '*Appamādena sampādeṭha*', strive on heedfully or be mindful of the five aggregates. Do not forget.

Even then, we are still forgetful. We forget to note. Is it true or not? You can check it yourself. When you come for the interview, do you carry with you your mindfulness? When you sit down, do you have the mindfulness? When you keep precepts or bow down, are you mindful? We are still forgetful. *Yogīs* should always carry mindfulness with them. When we are in

the practice, we feel happy by noting whatever objects closely. You will not feel lazy. You will not be bored while noting and watching the object closely. When you have the confidence, you want to watch it in detail. At the beginning of the practice, we cannot even note one step, "right step, left step". If you can follow the footsteps closely, you will feel happy. "Now I can note the footsteps closely." Now, you want to increase to two steps. Why do you want to note two steps? Because noting one step is not in detail. When you note two steps, you have to put in more effort, otherwise you cannot note "lifting, placing". You are forgetful. When you note two steps, you have to double your effort. Then, you can note "lifting, placing". When you note three steps, you are more careful in your footsteps. Your manner also becomes very gentle. You move slowly and note very mindfully. You have to be patient. Otherwise, it is not necessary to move too slow. "I will just note right step, left step, walking, walking, stepping, stepping. This is enough," you may think.

When you note three steps, you must have very strong mindfulness because you want to watch all parts of the movement closely. So in the lifting, you notice the appearing and fading away. There are many stages while lifting. There are many stages while pushing forward. You will also notice that there are many stages while placing down. In this way, even though you practise walking meditation for one hour, you will not get bored. You are delighted with your mindfulness. You delight in your practice. You will not get bored when you practise sitting meditation because you can note whatever objects that arise in your body. At the beginning, you may not even note the rising and falling.

Now not only are you able to note the rising and falling, sometimes you may also notice your breathing too. Sometimes while you are noting the rising and falling, you may also notice that there is warmth in your hand, itchiness on your face, stiffness on your back and other sensations in your body.

Sometimes you may feel something like an insect crawling on your body. You may check whether it is an insect on your body. There are no insects or ants on your face. It is just the air element. Your awareness or your mindfulness is getting stronger. You can note not only the rising and falling, but also many other objects. You are aware of them. They can be noted because you have mindfulness. Your power of mindfulness is getting stronger and stronger. In this way, we delight in our practice. The delight in *Dhamma* excels all delights.

The Buddha said that the taste of *Dhamma* excels all tastes because we are noting the rising and falling or all the five aggregates. Then, the eradication of craving overcomes all ills. We have heard craving (*taṇhā*) many times. We are the unenlightened ones in the sensual pleasure world. We find delight in sight, smell and taste. We also find delight in sound, touch and thought. We delight in these senses. We delight in craving. We do not know how the eradication of craving overcomes all ills. When we practise meditation accordingly, we can be aware of craving.

When the Buddha-to-be was twenty-nine years old, he left his family. He renounced and practised meditation at Uruvela forest. Then, after attaining enlightenment, he was invited by his father to Kapilavatthu. When the Buddha returned, Rāhula, his

son saw him. Buddha's father told his grandson, Rāhula, "My grandson, the monk is your father. When he left the palace, the gold pots disappeared. Now ask him to give these gold pots to you because you are his son." So Rāhula who was very young asked the Buddha for his inheritance. The Buddha did not have any property. He ordained Rāhula as a *sāmaṇera* or novice monk. Thus, Rāhula became a novice monk. He was very diligent and wise. As a young *sāmaṇera*, he was very respectful to everybody and the senior monks. One day Rāhula approached the Buddha. The Buddha taught Rāhula about mind and matter. There are two kinds of elements; internal and external. In our body, there are also four elements; earth element, water element, fire element and wind element. A person who can see things clearly as they really are, for example the earth element, knows that 'it is not mine'. One who has seen clearly in this way, can cut off craving. So the Buddha taught this to Rāhula. When we practise *Vipassanā* meditation, we follow what the Buddha taught. We note rising, falling. We note sitting, touching, bending, stretching, sitting down, getting up, right step, left step and so on. We note whatever objects pertaining to the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. We practise accordingly.

Have you experienced and realised that the air element is not yours or the air element is not mine? Have you had that experience? If we have this experience, we can cut off craving. So we have to note rising, falling very closely. I have given this instruction to you many times because the Buddha also taught in this manner. The Buddha taught that the earth element is not mine. While we are noting the rising and falling,

we may not feel clearly the earth element, but when we note sitting and touching, it is quite clear. Mostly we note the buttocks touching the floor. When we note it closely, we may feel or notice something in the touching area. There is hardness. When we note sitting, we may notice that there is stiffness in our body. Our upper body must be upright. Sit still and note it very closely. Other times, we may be aware that there is stiffness, not only just noting sitting, touching. If you just note sitting, touching, you may not notice anything else. That is why we are told to note attentively, precisely and diligently. When you do so, you may be aware at the beginning that touching spreads all over the touching area. When the mind is concentrated and when the noting is getting stronger, only the touching point which is a small part in the area is felt. Then, you may be aware that there is hardness in the touching point.

Next you may be aware of hardness in the ankle area. So this is what you notice. You do not need to say, "There is earth element in the touching point." What you experience, you will say, "I notice when I note touching. I notice or am aware that there is hardness in the touching point." You should say that from your experience. It is not necessary to say, "Earth element, water element or fire element." So when you notice it, you remove craving or attachment. "This is my body. This is my hand. This is my abdomen." You remove the attachment. So the Buddha said that if a person who is aware that the earth element is not mine, this person has cut off craving.

In the same way, you note other objects. Only then can we overcome all ills (*samsāra dukkha*). As to who can

achieve the eradication of craving, only an *Arahat* can eradicate *taṇhā*. We are the unenlightened ones at this moment. Our *yogīs* are struggling to cut off craving. You may say, "I have not cut off yet." Never mind, just go ahead by noting it, but at least we can taste the *Dhamma*. When we note rising, falling, sitting, touching, the mind becomes clear and so pure. When the mind is concentrated, you delight in your practice. You will not get bored. Note when you notice the rising and falling. Note it very closely and you will not want to get up sometimes because you can note whatever arises in your mind and body.

If we cannot note the present object, our mind becomes restless. We may resort to checking the clock to complete one hour. This shows our mindfulness is not strong enough. We do not find delight in the *Dhamma*. We are not in our practice. When some *yogīs* practise meditation, they know that they have already sat for one hour by noting the present object. They can follow it. They can note it. That is why they keep very quiet and feel very happy. They do not want to get up. They want to continue with their sitting. There are other *yogīs* who can practise easily for one hour. They can even sit for two hours without changing postures. So when they practise walking meditation, they are so mindful that they note everything. They can catch all parts of the movement; lifting, pushing forward, placing. They do not want to stop walking. They want to continue. When they practise walking meditation, they feel that their body is so light. Sometimes even though when making contact with the ground, they do not feel the hardness. The movement of their feet is so soft that they may feel like that they are walking on air.

Some *yogīs* do not want to go back home. They want to practise meditation. That is why many *yogīs* in Myanmar when they attend the retreat, initially they want to practise just for one month or so, but when their meditation is good, they do not want to go back.

The Buddha answered that among tastes, the taste of *Dhamma* is the best. The taste of *Dhamma* excels all other tastes. Maybe this is a bit difficult to understand, but some *yogīs* may experience this taste because I have seen many *yogīs* practise meditation diligently. In the retreat, they put forth great effort, but still need to be mindful even more in their daily activities. When I check their sitting meditation, they can sit straight and sit very well. But when they practise walking meditation, they still need to be mindful. When you practise walking meditation, you should not look around. Try to keep your eyes down. You should not bend your head too low. You will have a headache. (At the beginning of the walking meditation, you may walk a bit faster. Note “walking, walking, walking” or “stepping, stepping, stepping” for about ten or fifteen minutes.) After that, slow down and try to note one step, two steps, three steps closely. Maybe you still need to exert more effort in your walking meditation. In your sitting meditation, when I observe you, I find that you can practise well. In your walking meditation, try to put in more effort. Do not look anywhere. If you look somewhere, your mind goes somewhere.

When you look somewhere, your mind catches the object. When it happens, you recall some past experiences. Then, you will not concentrate. That is why in your walking meditation, try to be more mindful as

taught by the Buddha. If you follow the instructions strictly, you will find delight in the taste of *Dhamma*. If you can find delight in the *Dhamma*, you have a good "friend" even though you are alone and have no one to talk to. But you have a good friend. This good "friend" is the *Dhamma*. You will not get bored. You can never be alone. Without the *Dhamma*, you always try to find a person to keep you company. Living alone is boring. That is why some people say that to be monks or nuns is boring because they always live alone. They do not go anywhere. It is boring. "I don't like to be a monk or nun." I do encourage *yogīs* to become a monk or nun. "No, I don't want because it is boring." But if we can really experience the *Dhamma* such as the four elements, five aggregates and Noble Eightfold Path, really we will be happy. You will not get bored. So to taste the delight in the *Dhamma*, we have to listen to what the Buddha taught.

To eradicate craving (*taṇhā*), we have to try very hard. Depending on our *pāramī*, we can attain enlightenment in this life. I want to say in conclusion that among gifts, the gift of *Dhamma* is the best. Among tastes, the taste of *Dhamma* is the best. Among delights, the delight in *Dhamma* is the best. The eradication of craving overcomes all ills. That is why as soon as the *Bodhisatta* attained enlightenment and became the Buddha, he was so happy that he expressed his happiness by saying, "*Anekajāti saṃsāraṃ, sandhāvissaṃ anibbisaṃ, gahakāraṃ gavesanto, dukkhā jāti punappunaṃ.*" "Through many a birth I wandered in *saṃsāra*. I have been seeking the builder of the house. The house is the body. Sorrowful is repeated birth because I haven't seen the builder of the house." The builder of the house refers to *taṇhā*. We



suffer because of *taṇhā*. *Taṇhā* is wanting or craving; wanting for sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and thought.

So because of *taṇhā*, we are born again and again. When we are born again and again, we become old again. When we are old again, we die again and again. Is that true? It is true when you learn the Buddha's first sermon, *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*. Birth is suffering. Aging is suffering. Death is suffering. After death, we have sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and distress. This is the truth of suffering. Separation from the loved ones is suffering. Association with those whom we hate is suffering. Not to get one's wishes is suffering. In short, the clinging of the five aggregates is suffering. Because of clinging (*upādānā*), there is suffering. The Buddha said, "I have been seeking the builder of the house. I couldn't find the builder that is *taṇhā*. Now I have attained enlightenment. I have become the Buddha. I know everything through my own practice. Now this builder, *taṇhā* cannot build my house anymore, that is to be born again and again."

The Buddha taught that when you attain enlightenment, suffering ends. That is why the Buddha also wanted beings to be liberated from suffering. That is why with *mahā karuṇā* or great compassion, he taught the *Dhamma* for forty five years without resting much. The Buddha just rested a few hours, just about one or two hours. During the day, the Buddha taught the *bhikkhu* and lay devotees. At night, he taught Sakkadevaraja and the *devas*. In the middle of the night, *devas* would come down to the human world to see the Buddha and ask questions. Why do they come at night?

The reason is because human beings have body odour. Our body is very smelly. *Devas* could not stand the odour. So at night, they came. The eradication of craving is the most important thing. Now when we are practising *Vipassanā* meditation, our aim is to eradicate craving.

May all of you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically. May you understand the *Dhamma* and cut off craving very soon.

***SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!***



## 11

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### *Restraint in All the Senses*

Our two weeks' meditation retreat is about to end. There are just two days left. During the retreat, our *yogīs* have made great effort by trying to be mindful from moment to moment. When you are mindful from moment to moment, you may not feel free. Sometimes you may feel you are in a trap because you are not allowed to look freely. You are not allowed to speak freely. You are not allowed to eat freely. You are not allowed to sit or get up freely. You have to be mindful in all the activities. It is completely different living in the outside world and attending this meditation retreat. So sometimes don't you feel that ending a retreat is a good thing? Don't you feel it has taken so long? "It feels good when the retreat is over. It's a good thing. Now I can look freely, eat freely and speak freely. I can do what I like." Don't you feel that this retreat has taken so long? You may not have such feeling because you are mindful. For me, I look forward to finishing quickly. Because every day I have to give a talk. What should I talk today? What should I talk about? I am not too clear as what to talk about. I have to think of something to talk. I have to find a topic. So today you have to recite the eight

precepts. In the meantime, I have to think of what I should talk about.

A topic has come to mind. I will speak on this topic. It is not easy to speak because English is not my mother tongue. I have to be very careful with the pronunciation and grammar. If I cannot construct sentences properly, the *yogīs* may not understand well. If they do not understand well, they may not know how to practise. So if I am careful of the grammar and pronunciation, I forget my topic. If I take care of my topic, I forget the grammar and pronunciation. You know it is not easy, but I really want the *yogīs* to understand my *Dhamma* talk.

I really want the *yogīs* to understand the instructions. I really want the *yogīs* to progress in their practice. During the interview, the *yogīs* encourage me. Sayādaw's talk is very good and clear. They encourage me. That is why I have the energy. Even though I want to finish the retreat immediately, I still have the energy. So tonight I would like to give a talk because the *yogīs* say that they understand what I am talking about. We have to understand that when we practise meditation, we have to experience what the Buddha taught, '*ātāpī sampajāno satimā, sattānaṃ visuddhiyā,*' and so on. This is our aim, that is to achieve the insight knowledge or the truth of what the Buddha taught. When we practise *Vipassanā* meditation according to the teachings of the Buddha, we practise what the Buddha taught. When you practise *Vipassanā* meditation, whatever arises from the six-sense doors must be noted. Eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind are the six-sense doors. Through these sense doors, we do not need to find any

other things in our mind and body.

So today I would like to talk about the senses. I will recite two stanzas first that the Buddha taught. Later, I will try to explain. "*Cakkhunā saṁvaro sādhu, sādhu sotena saṁvaro, ghāṇena saṁvaro sādhu, sādhu jivhāya saṁvaro. Kāyena saṁvaro sādhu, sādhu vācāya saṁvaro, manasā saṁvaro sādhu, sādhu sabbattha saṁvaro, sabbattha saṁvuto bhikkhu, sabbadukkhā pamuccati.*" (The *Dhammapada* Verses 360 and 361). Restraint in the eye is good, good is restraint in the ear, restraint in the nose is good, good is restraint in the tongue. Restraint in body (deed) is good, good is restraint in speech, restraint in mind is good, good is restraint in all the senses. A *bhikkhu* restrained in all the senses is freed from all ills (*saṁsāra dukkha*). The Buddha uttered these two stanzas because five *bhikkhus* were practising different objects. Each of them was practising in a different way. One *bhikkhu* was mindful of his eyes. Another *bhikkhu* was mindful of his ears. The third *bhikkhu* was mindful of his nose. The fourth *bhikkhu* was mindful of his tongue and the last *bhikkhu* or the fifth *bhikkhu* was mindful of his body. Each of them claimed that what he was practicing was the most difficult.

When they met to discuss what they had been practising, argument arose among the five *bhikkhus*. The *bhikkhu* who practised the sense of seeing said, "Restraint or control of seeing is the most difficult". The other four *bhikkhus* disagreed with the *bhikkhu* who was mindful of seeing. The second *bhikkhu* who was mindful of hearing said, "Not seeing, but the hearing is the most difficult." The *bhikkhu* who was mindful of smelling said, "Restraint in the nose is the most

difficult." Then, the fourth *bhikkhu* said that to be mindful of tasting was the most difficult. The last one who was mindful of touching said that all the four *bhikkhus* were wrong. Restraint in his body was the most difficult. In this way, they argued. They could not solve this problem. Eventually, they came to see the Buddha to ask for his decision. The Buddha said to them, "Each of the senses is just as difficult to control as the other, but all *bhikkhus* must control all the five senses and not just one. Only those who control all the senses would escape from the round of rebirths." Is that true? What do our *yogīs* think? All of them are difficult. That is why the Buddha uttered these two stanzas. "*Cakkhunā saṁvaro sādhu, sādhu sotena saṁvaro, ghāṇena saṁvaro sādhu, sādhu jivhāya saṁvaro. Kāyena saṁvaro sādhu, sādhu vācāya saṁvaro, manasā saṁvaro sādhu, sādhu sabbattha saṁvaro, sabbattha saṁvuto bhikkhu, sabbadukkhā pamuccati.*" I repeat so that you have the chance to hear the original words of the Buddha. It is a rare opportunity to hear the original words of the Buddha. Our devotees are not like monks. Monks recite them every day. They memorise the Pāḷi words. I can recite without referring to the book because I recite them regularly. I memorise them, otherwise I have to read from the book. However, you do not have the chance like the monks have. That is why I repeat.

Restraint in the eye is good. Restraint in the ear is good. Restraint in the nose is good. So is restraint in the tongue. How do we restrain the eyes? We are taught that at the beginning of the practice, if we see something or somebody, we note "seeing, seeing, seeing". Whatever we see with our eyes or when we look somewhere, we have to note "looking, looking,

looking". In the sitting meditation, we have to close our eyes. Even though we close our eyes, we can see something or somebody in our mind. We see them in our thoughts or imagination. So we must note "seeing, seeing, seeing" closely. When we note the visible object, we practise restraint in our eyes. Then, when we hear an audible object, we must restrain by noting closely "hearing, hearing, hearing". When we detect any kind of smell, good or bad, we must restrain and note "smelling, smelling, smelling". When we eat and taste something, we note "tasting, tasting, tasting". Our *yogīs* practise in detail by noting all processes of eating mindfully. In this way, they restrain their tongue. Then, when we touch, we note "touching, touching, touching". In this way, we restrain our body. That is why the Buddha taught, restraint in the eye is good, good is restraint in the ear. Restraint in the nose is good, good is restraint in the tongue. So we have to restrain ourselves.

If we do not restrain or repress our senses, what will happen? We see freely without mindfulness. What will happen? Greed will arise. Anger will arise in our mind. If we do not note hearing when we hear a pleasant sound, greed will arise. If the sound is not pleasant, anger will arise. If we detect smell and do not note smelling, and if the smell is pleasant, we like it. If we like it, we have the desire, craving or attachment for it. If the smell is unpleasant, anger will arise. If we do not note eating mindfully, attachment will arise. If we note it carefully, attachment or craving will not arise. That is why the Buddha taught that it is not easy to note or restrain the senses of seeing, hearing smelling and so on. The Buddha taught that it is not easy to restrain.

Why is it not easy? We have heard this many times. We are unenlightened ones (*puṭhujjana*). The *puṭhujjana*'s mind is still attracted to the senses. We are living in the sensual pleasure world. We like to look at pleasant or agreeable visible objects.

We like to see freely. We like to listen to pleasant sounds or voices freely. We like to smell freely pleasant smell. We like to taste freely. We like to touch freely the tangible objects. This is the nature or disposition of the unenlightened ones. Let us say that you do not have such a craving or longing in whatever you see. When you look at a tree, what do you feel? Is there any attachment in your mind? No, because this is just a tree. If you like a scenery, you may have a pleasant feeling, but you will not have any attachment to it. When you go to the mall or shopping centre, you see so many things. Some of them attract your mind. Without craving, you have no attachment or sensual desire for them. According to the Buddha, the voice of a woman obsesses the mind of a man. The sight of a woman obsesses the mind of a man. Reversely, the voice of a man obsesses the mind of a woman. The sight of a man obsesses the mind of a woman. The Buddha taught us in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. Without mindfulness, both sexes are trapped in the sense of sound, smell and so on.

When a man sees a beautiful woman, sensual desire may arise. If so, he is not mindful. There are so many stories in the teachings of the Buddha that give this illustration. It is also in our present time. Such a desire normally happens. So as a *yogī* or meditator, when you see somebody, maybe a man or woman, you have to be



mindful. You have to be mindful, that is you must note “seeing, seeing, seeing” mindfully. If you do not note it mindfully or if you are not mindful of the sight, desire will arise. Longing will also arise. Affectionate feelings will arise because you are not mindful. So if you are not mindful and forget your mindfulness, then greed, lust or longing will overwhelm your mind. It is out of control. So if you note “seeing, seeing, seeing”, just seeing, your mind does not go beyond that seeing. If you note it very carefully, even if you may not feel anything, just seeing, this will not make you think of a man, woman or whatever the sight may be.

At one time in Sri Lanka, a long time ago, a monk practised meditation diligently and ardently. One day while he was walking, a lady passed by. He did not see her as a lady, but he just noted “seeing, seeing, seeing”. When he practised meditation, he could not see her in the form of a woman, but he just saw a skeleton. A man came up to the monk and asked the monk, “Venerable Sir, did you see a lady who might have passed this way?” The man was the husband. “I didn't see any lady, but I saw a skeleton passing by.” Because the monk was so mindful in his practice, he was not aware whether or not it was a lady or a man who went past him. So when we see something or somebody, we must note “seeing, seeing, seeing” mindfully. In this way, there is no greed, anger or other defilements in the mind. The mind is pure and clear. This is what our *yogīs* will experience if you note whatever objects closely. If you note seeing closely, you cannot see it as a person, but just seeing.

That is why the Buddha gave another example. There was a very big tortoise. One day the tortoise was

searching for food in the evening along the shore of a lake. At that time, a jackal was also searching for food. Soon, both met face to face. The tortoise saw the jackal coming towards him from afar. So when the tortoise saw the jackal coming towards him, he withdrew his legs, neck and head. He withdrew them into his shell. He kept quite still. He did not move when he saw the jackal. The jackal also saw the tortoise searching for food as he was also searching for food. When the jackal saw the tortoise, he said to himself. "Now there is food for me. I will eat." However when the jackal reached the tortoise, he could not do anything. He could not bite it because the shell protected the tortoise. He thought that when the tortoise stretched out his neck, he would catch it. He said, "I will seize it when his head stretches out. I will tear it off. Then, I will eat it." But the tortoise did not emerge from its shell and the jackal did not have the ability to bite the tortoise. So this is an example. When we practise *Vipassanā* meditation, we have to restrain our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body. We note all the senses. If we are unable to restrain our eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, defilements will occupy our mind. So this is the example of the tortoise and jackal given by the Buddha.

In the same way, when we hear a sound, we must note, "hearing, hearing, hearing". When we smell, note "smelling, smelling, smelling". When we chew, note "chewing, chewing, chewing". Then, note the actions of the body. "*Kāyena saṁvaro sādhu, sādhu vācāya saṁvaro, manasā saṁvaro sādhu, sādhu sabbattha saṁvaro.*" Restraint in body (deed) is good, good is restraint in speech; restraint in mind is good, good is restraint in all the senses. This is what the Buddha taught. Not only

noting seeing, one must also note hearing, smelling, tasting and so on. One must note the body. Note rising, falling, sitting, touching.

Restraint in speech means that practitioners are not allowed to speak unnecessarily. We must practise restraint in writing as well. During the practice, we should not write a lot. Just write brief notes in case you forget. If you write something in your book, you have to think and recall what you have experienced. When you write, you have to think. While you are writing the events of the day, you lose mindfulness at that moment. That is why we should not write too much during the practice.

Not only in speech, we have to restrain our mind too. One day, during the Buddha's time, a young man offered food to a *bhikkhu*. Associating with the *bhikkhu*, the young man told the *bhikkhu* that he wanted to be a *bhikkhu* too. The *bhikkhu* ordained the young man. The new *bhikkhu* asked how to practise meditation. The monk told him to learn the *Vinaya* rules for monks. After that, study *Suttanta Piṭaka* and *Abhidhamma*. The young *bhikkhu* realised that there were so many things to do. He would like to disrobe. He could not take the hardship. The Buddha knew that one must restrain one's mind. Try to be mindful. Some say that it is easy to restrain the mind. We must try to restrain our mind. Here in our retreat, we note all of them; seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and so forth.

I would like to explain from what our *yogīs* have experienced. When we note rising, falling, we can sense something in the abdomen. The abdomen inflates or deflates during the rising and falling. We can see quite

clearly because there is motion in the abdomen even though it is quite difficult to follow the movement closely. If you are mindful and watch it closely, you can feel the movement. "There is motion in my abdomen." When you note sitting and touching, you must pay close attention to your sitting and touching. Do not just simply note sitting and touching. As you know, there is motion in your abdomen. You also should know and notice something in your sitting and touching.

So make a mental note very closely. When you note closely, you may notice something in the sitting and touching. If you do not note it closely, you do not notice anything in the sitting and touching. If you really want to know something in the sitting and touching, pay close attention. What do you notice in the sitting and touching? When you note sitting, you may notice stiffness in your body or maybe hardness in your body. "When I note sitting, I notice something. There is stiffness or hardness in my body. When I note touching, I notice hardness in the touching area." You can notice because you note it closely. This is the thing you have to understand. I have reminded *yogīs* that when they report sitting and touching, they do not mention what they have noticed. They could explain motion in the abdomen when they note rising, falling. They can see this and that, but they seldom mention what they have noticed in the sitting and touching. They only mention, "I note sitting and touching." So you have to understand these kinds of things. But do not search for anything. Do not expect anything. What we have been taught is just to apply mindfulness or bare attention.

If you are mindful and note closely every moment,

then your mindfulness is good enough to notice automatically even though we say, not to search for anything or not to expect anything. However, expectation always rises. When expectation arises, note it. It is very difficult to stop expectation from arising even though we say we do not have expectations. They always arise. When we practise meditation, we normally think that we must notice something, but we notice what we are going to expect. These are the things we understand. We expect other things during meditation such as seeing the *devas* or lights. But we have seen something in our body when we note rising, falling. We notice the abdomen inflates or deflates. We notice the upward movement or downward movement. We understand. Thus, we do not expect other things.

When your mindfulness is getting better and better, you can see very clearly. This depends on your mindfulness. I have told you before. I have to say it again because it is important, that is the form, the manner and reality. When we practise *Vipassanā* meditation, we have to understand reality. But at the beginning of the practice, we cannot remove the form. We will see the form. At the same time, we also notice reality. Let us say noting the rising and falling. "I note it closely. Then, I notice my abdomen goes up. My abdomen goes down." You can see the movement or motion in the abdomen. At the same time, you can also see the form. You cannot remove the form immediately. It is not easy to remove it immediately. But when your mindfulness is getting better and better even though you want to see the form, you will not see it. You can only notice the movement. That is why some *yogīs* say, "Now I can't see the form. I don't know what is

happening. At the beginning of the practice, I could follow the movement closely. Now I can feel the movement." So let it be. Do not force yourself to make the movement appear.

Some *yogīs* report that when they are noting the rising and falling, it becomes shallow, soft and gentle. In order to make it more distinct, they force their breathing. We should not force the breathing. Just let it be. Try to be natural. We should not force it. At the beginning of the practice, our effort is weak. Our mindfulness is weak. That is why we must pay close attention. We must put forth effort to be able to follow the movement closely. Now when your mindfulness is getting better and better, you do not need to put in so much effort. Just note rising, falling. Then, you can follow concurrently the rising and falling, up and down.

When the mind goes off, note it. It is not necessary to bring your mind back to the abdomen. When you are practising *Vipassanā* meditation, you do not need to bring your mind back. When you know you are thinking, just note thinking. When you know you are wandering, just note wandering. You do not need to pull your mind back to the abdomen. When you practise *Samatha* meditation, there is only one object, that is the in-breath and out-breath. Breathe in, breathe out. There is only one object. It is not like the six-sense doors. So when you have developed concentration and when the mind goes off, you know that you are thinking. You do not have to note "thinking, thinking, thinking" because you are practising *Samatha* meditation. When you practise *Samatha* meditation, you

have to pull your mind back to your nostrils. Now you are not practising *Samatha* meditation. You are practising *Vipassanā* meditation. That is why it is not necessary to bring your mind back to the abdomen.

When you note "thinking, thinking, thinking" or "wandering, wandering, wandering", what happens? When you note it closely, you will notice, "When I note thinking, thinking disappears. Thinking stops." So you notice it. Do not just say thinking. You should explain just like what you can notice in your rising and falling of the abdomen. You should also explain what happens when you note the wandering mind. Note it closely. You should explain in this manner. When I note thinking, it disappears or stops. In this way, you are noticing your mind. So during the practice, you have come across many experiences. There are so many experiences during one sitting. While you are noting the rising and falling, sometimes happiness arises. Sometimes unhappiness, anger, resentment, selfishness or pride arises. There are so many states of mind you have come across. If you do not practise meditation, you will not notice these experiences.

The Buddha taught us to practise restraint in all our senses. When you see, you note "seeing". When you hear, you note "hearing". When you smell, you note "smelling". When you taste, you note "tasting". When you touch, you note "touching". I will not explain further. You understand how to restrain your senses. '*Sabattha samvuto bhikkhu, sabbadukkhā pamuccati*' which means 'a *bhikkhu* or *yogī* restrained in all the senses is freed from all ills or sufferings'. '*Sabbadukkha*' means 'all ills or sufferings'. By practising in this way, all

sufferings will come to an end. Only an *Arahat* can attain the cessation of all sufferings. If we attain the first stage of enlightenment or *Sotāpatti* Fruition, we are not free yet because we still have some defilements. By attaining *Sakadāgāmi* or Once-Returner, we still have defilements. When we attain *Anāgāmi* or Non-Returner, we still have defilements. When we finally attain *Arahatship*, there are no more defilements. This is the way to free ourselves from all sufferings. That is why *Vipassanā* meditation is a very good practice which can uproot all defilements.

Some *yogīs* ask me something like this. "Sayādaw I have practised sitting meditation by noting the rising and falling. What should I do now?" My answer is that meditation is not something like learning a lesson in schools. It is not like that. The basic or main object is the rising and falling. When you practise *Vipassanā* meditation, you have to practise noting all the senses; rising, falling, sitting, touching, seeing, hearing and so on. In this way, you can attain enlightenment. When you attain the first enlightenment, what should you do? You still have to practise the five aggregates and restrain all the senses. You have to note. Then, you can attain *Sakadāgāmi*, Once-Returner. When you attain *Sakadāgāmi*, what should you do? You still have to note all the five aggregates and all the senses. Then, you attain *Anāgāmi*, Non-Returner. Then, finally you attain *Arahatship*, but you still have to practise these five aggregates and restrain all the senses. Why do I say this?

In the *Sīlavanta Sutta*, Mahā Kotthita and Sāriputta had a discussion. Mahā Kotthita asked Sāriputtā, "If a



person who has morality, what should he or she do?" "Practise the five aggregates to understand as they really are, *anicca*, *dukkha* and *annata*. In this way, he attains *Sotapatti* Fruition." "When a person attains *Sotāpatti* Fruition, what should he do next?" "Practise the five aggregates to attain *Sakadāgāmi* Fruition." "After attaining *Sakadāgāmi* Fruition, what should he do?" "Practise the five aggregates." Sāriputta answered thus. So according to this *sutta*, whenever we practise meditation, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, our main object is the rising and falling of the abdomen.

When you sit down, you have to note the rising and falling of the abdomen. Note so that later whatever arises in the body, you can notice clearly. Meditation is not like a school lesson. So note rising, falling. You may get bored. If you get bored, note "boring, boring, boring." Note everything that arises. In this way, what the Buddha taught us, we can experience insight knowledge such as mind and matter as well as cause and effect. We understand the three characteristics clearly and the nature of arising and fading away. We experience insight knowledge. Now our *yogīs* also have experienced some insight knowledge like distinguishing between mind and matter clearly by noting the rising and falling, sitting and touching, right step and left step. I will try to explain further tomorrow, but not today. Before the end of the retreat, I will try to explain how *yogīs* experience insight knowledge, not all, just some insight knowledge. Tomorrow I will try to explain more.

May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically and may

you understand the *Dhamma* clearly and see things as they really are.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**



## 12

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### *2 Kinds of Worldlings*

When we practise *Vipassanā* meditation, our aim is to attain *Nibbāna* or at least the first stage of enlightenment, *Sotāpatti* Fruition. This is our aim when we practise *Vipassanā* meditation. If we have not attained enlightenment, we are still called *puthujjana*. Tonight I would like to talk about the meaning of *puthujjana*. The Buddha taught us that there are two kinds of *puthujjana*, worldlings or people who are unenlightened. There are two kinds of *puthujjana*. One is *andha puthujjana* and another is *kalyāṇa puthujjana*. 'Andha' means 'blind' whereas 'kalyāṇa' means 'noble'. So we have blind worldlings and noble worldlings. I would like to explain the meaning of *puthujjana* because when we translate this word into English, we just translate it as an unenlightened one or worldling. *Puthujjana* is a combination of two words. 'Puthu' means 'many' or 'a lot'. 'Jana' means 'producing' or 'causing'.

What 'many' do we have? When we check ourselves, what are the many things we have? What many things do we have? We have a lot of defilements. We have heard many times in the *Dhamma* talk that ordinary

people have a lot of defilements. When we practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness by watching our mind and body, we have to note many defilements in our mind. So a *puthujjana* is a person who has many defilements. You have heard of '*puthujjano ummattako*' before. This means that all worldlings are 'mad' people. We are mad about sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and thought. So '*puthujjano ummatakko*' means 'all worldlings who are mad with regard to senses'.

So the Buddha taught us that there are two kinds of *puthujjana*, *andha puthujjana* and *kalyāṇa puthujjana*. *Andha puthujjana* refers to blind worldlings. What does 'blind' mean here? A person who does not know about the teachings of the Buddha such as the five aggregates, four elements, sense-bases, Four Noble Truths, Noble Eightfold Path and so forth. They do not study, discuss and practise. They are not interested in the teachings of the Buddha. The four elements, five aggregates and so on are the teachings of the Buddha. They are 'blind' or ignorant about the teachings of the Buddha. Thus, they are called *andha puthujjana*. *Kalyāṇa puthujjana* is a *puthujjana* who is interested in the teachings of the Buddha and ardently practises the *Dhamma*. Then, they experience the teachings of the Buddha. They discuss the *Dhamma*. So they are called *kalyāṇa puthujjana*.

We can check if our *yogīs* are *andha puthujjana* or *kalyāṇa puthujjana*. If we have not attained the first stage of enlightenment or *Sotāpatti* Fruition, we are still *puthujjana*. I believe our *yogīs* here are *kalyāṇa puthujjana*. We do not know who have attained enlightenment. As our late Most Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw taught that we have to check ourselves at

which level of enlightenment or insight knowledge we have attained. We have to check ourselves. So we do not know in this retreat who have realised or attained enlightenment. Nobody knows, but only you yourself will know what you have experienced about the *Dhamma*. However at least, I am sure we can understand and experience the five aggregates, four elements, Four Noble Truths, seven noble treasures and Noble Eightfold Path.

So this evening I will try to explain what our *yogīs* have experienced about the teachings of the Buddha. Then, you can decide for yourself whether you are a blind worldling or a noble worldling. You can judge for yourself. As for me, I believe that nobody is a blind worldling here in this retreat. When you come here for the practice, initially you listen carefully to the instruction tapes. You observe the eight precepts and you listen to the instruction tapes carefully. After following the instructions, you try to be mindful of each and every moment. As you have been told many times, you put forth effort or mental energy. You strive to be mindful from moment to moment. You keep your mind onto the abdomen. Then, note closely the rising and falling of the abdomen. At the beginning of the practice, you may not be able to note the movement closely. But with your mental energy, you can follow the movement of the rising and falling of the abdomen closely.

When you are able to note the rising and falling closely, you will notice that there is motion. Actually, you will notice the motion in your abdomen. This is the noticing I have already explained. When you note rising closely, you will notice that the abdomen inflates. When

you note falling closely, you will notice that the abdomen deflates. At least you will notice such movement. So when you note closely whenever the rising and falling is obvious, you will notice clearly. Sometimes you feel the abdominal movement such as pushing up, sometimes pushing down, sometimes expanding or sometimes contracting. You will notice the abdomen in different ways depending on your mindfulness. This is how you will understand. You are noting the rising and falling very carefully. When the mind is able to note the rising and falling closely, you have some power of mindfulness. When you are noting the rising and falling very carefully, unexpectedly a kind of knowledge or awareness will arise in your mind.

You just pay close attention to the rising and falling. Quite unexpectedly, you may be aware of some feelings somewhere in your body; maybe your hands. When you practise sitting meditation, you put your palm on top of the other for an hour or so. You may notice there is warmness in your hands. There is heat in your hands. You are aware of it while you are noting the rising and falling of the abdomen. You just pay close attention to the abdomen, but when your concentration is strong, you are aware there is heat in your hands. When this happens, you note "heat, heat, heat" or "warm, warm, warm" closely. By noting closely, you may feel other things. The warmness or heat is something like hardness. This is the noticing. Noticing is the insight knowledge or wisdom because you are watching your body carefully. It is akin to a stove near your hand or palm. You may feel hardness because the warmness or heat has changed into hardness. You do not watch

purposely the hardness or softness. Just pay close attention to the abdomen. Because of your concentration, you become aware that there is warmth or heat. When you note heat or warmth, you notice hardness. In this way, your knowledge is getting better. It is not all the time you note the rising and falling.

You may still remember what I have said about noting the rising and falling very carefully. It is so important. If you note it closely, your mind opens up. How does your mind broaden and open up even though you do not note other objects in your mind? Sometimes the air goes up. Sometimes you mention, "While I am noting the rising and falling, my arms jerk. When I realise this, I note jumping or moving." Since you note, you are aware of it. Sometimes the air goes up when you hiccup. You note it. All *yogīs* have a certain kind of experience every morning. What do you experience? Do you remember? I think most of the *yogīs* experience the weather. The weather is very cold. You dare not switch on the fan. You start sneezing and fluid runs down your nose. When you sneeze, you have to clean up with mindfulness. Are you aware of fluidity? I am sure you are aware of it. At the moment of sneezing, you notice the air element, water element and earth element. In this way, you have experienced these elements.

You just note the rising and falling of the abdomen which is the air in the abdomen. There are six kinds of air element. If you have not heard about the *Dhamma*, you will not understand. Even though you do not study the *Dhamma* or read any *Dhamma* books, but will have the experience from your practice. You will experience, I believe, all the six kinds of air element. The air which is

going up when you are coughing. Do you note coughing? I am sure you note the air going up. Second, when the air goes down, it must also be noted. While answering the call of nature, we have to apply clear comprehension as taught by the Buddha. If you are mindful while answering the call of nature, you will be aware of something like air pressure. If we note the releasing, we will understand clearly. The air which is going down and the air which is going up. Third, the air in the hands and legs when you practise walking meditation. When you stretch your arm, you have to note "stretching". When you bend your hand, you have to note "bending". When you move, you have to note "moving". When you get up, you have to note "getting up". When you sit, you have to note "sitting". Thus, you can be aware of the air element that pervades through the limbs.

Sometimes you eat very little in the morning. When you practise your walking meditation and note the rising and falling of your abdomen very closely, you soon become hungry very fast. The food that you have eaten can be digested easily because you take full breaths by noting the rising and falling. In this way, the food can be digested very easily. So if you eat very little, you can be hungry very fast. It is not time yet for the bell to sound for lunch. So when you are hungry, you may hear some rumblings in your stomach because there is no food in the stomach. When there is a stomach rumble inside the intestines, you note "hearing, hearing, hearing". When you are hungry, the body becomes weak. This is the air element inside the intestines. You will have this experience. Then, you note rising and falling in the abdomen. Fifth, there is air that



circulates in the abdomen. While you are noting the rising and falling, you are breathing. Sometimes the mind goes to the nostrils, in and out. You notice that the air in the nostrils is the in-and-out breathing. In this way, you will have the personal experience of these six kinds of air element. When you have this experience, knowledge arises. You will be able to understand what the Buddha taught about the four elements. There are only the four elements. There is no person, no 'he' or 'she' or no 'I' in the air element. If you really can note it closely, there is no soul in the rising and falling. You really understand and this comes from your own mindfulness.

What can you understand while noting an object? Noting is the mind. The mind notes the rising. Rising is the object or matter. It is corporeality. Noting is the mind. Falling is the matter. So when you note rising, you notice motion. When you note falling, you notice motion which is the air element. This is the noting and noticing. Noticing is the insight knowledge. Noting an object is the mind. There are only three things: noting, object and noticing. Noting is the mind, object is the matter and noticing is the insight knowledge. Have you experienced what I have mentioned? I hope you have had that experience. So if you have had that experience, you will understand what I am talking about. There are four elements you must understand. So if you understand that there are four elements in your mind and body, you have comprehended clearly.

That is why you recite the six qualities of the *Dhamma* every day. "*Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo, Saṅdiṭṭhiko, Akāliko, Ehipassiko, Opaneyyiko, Paccattam veditabbo*

*viññuhi.*" These are the six qualities of the *Dhamma*. The *Dhamma* of the Blessed One is well-expounded. '*Saṅdiṭṭhika*' means 'visible here and now or to be realised by oneself'. If you do not practise *Vipassanā* meditation, you will not realise it. If you practise *Vipassanā* meditation, you will realise it clearly as it really is. According to the instructions given by the Buddha, you practise diligently and ardently. You do not give up easily. You must put forth effort. Without putting forth effort, we cannot follow the movement closely. So you must put forth effort or mental energy from moment to moment and watch the movement carefully. Then, you can follow it closely. You notice the abdomen inflates or deflates. If you do not practise, you will not understand, notice or realise. This is '*saṅdiṭṭhika*', the *Dhamma* which is to be realised by oneself.

'*Akālika*' means 'giving immediate result'. Let us say you have not practised meditation, but have been listening to the *Dhamma* talks carefully. When you are listening to the *Dhamma* carefully, you are paying close attention at the moment of listening. You will feel peace of mind. So this is the immediate result. When your mind is absorbed in the *Dhamma*, you do not think of any other things. There is no thinking or wandering. The mind is very peaceful. When you practise meditation, you are watching your mind and body from moment to moment. When the mind does not wander, it is calmer and more peaceful. That is why when *yogīs* make their report, they mention a very calm and peaceful mind. Why do they feel very calm and peaceful? Because they are so mindful. When one is mindful, the mind is still. When the mind is still, the

body also becomes still. Quite a number of *yogīs* here can sit still for one hour. Some can sit for two hours. Surprisingly, they can sit for so long. Sitting for a long period of time stills the mind. When your practice is good enough, you will experience all the insight knowledge. Then, you will attain enlightenment.

'*Ehipassika*' means 'come and experience the *Dhamma* for yourself'. "I have comprehended this with my practice." The Buddha invited us to practise. If you practise the *Dhamma*, you will also comprehend clearly things as they really are. Do not take my word for it. Do not believe blindly. Practise it yourself. Then, you will comprehend. During these two weeks' retreat, you have been practising diligently and ardently. As I have mentioned earlier, you can notice motion. You can experience it. You have also experienced warmth, coldness, hardness and softness. While you are noting the rising and falling, sometimes you notice saliva flowing in your mouth. When the saliva is flowing in your mouth, what do you do? You note "flowing, flowing, flowing", "collecting, collecting, collecting" or "gathering, gathering, gathering". Then, you note "swallowing, swallowing, swallowing". You note the whole process of the saliva flowing until the saliva is swallowed. Even though you do not see the saliva, you know that this is the water element. You will experience the water element with your mindfulness. You have comprehended according to your practice. Come and experience the *Dhamma* for yourself.

'*Opaneyyika*' means 'to be brought inward'. We should practise until we gain and experience something, especially the inward peace of mind.

'*Paccattam veditabbo viññūhi*' means 'to be realised or comprehended by the wise'. The wise means not the professional or educated, but the meditators who practise *Vipassanā* meditation. In my talk, I have explained that wisdom comes from meditation. So if you practise meditation and if you experience it, you are regarded as the wise. You are the wise. The *Dhamma* is to be realised by the wise. So now you can tell from your experience. Let us say the four elements. Explain to a person who does not practise *Vipassanā* meditation. He or she may not know what you are talking. "I can't understand," he or she may say. Because they do not practise meditation, they do not understand. They are like blind worldlings.

A person who has attained the first stage of enlightenment, *Sotāpanna* cannot understand another person who has attained the second stage of enlightenment, *Sakadāgāmi*. The Buddha's chief lay disciple, Anāthapiṇḍika had three daughters and one son. The eldest daughter was a *Sotāpanna*. Anāthapiṇḍika was also a *Sotāpanna*. He attained *Sotāpatti* Fruition. The second daughter, Cula Subhaddā also attained *Sotāpatti* Fruition. But the youngest daughter, Sumanadevi while she was looking after the monks and listening to the *Dhamma* talk from the monks, also attained enlightenment. Her attainment was Once-Returner, *Sakadāgāmi*. One day she was ill and her life was about to end. So her father, Anāthapiṇḍika went to see her. When Sumanadevi saw her father, she addressed him as her little brother. Sumanadevi called her father, "My little brother." Upon hearing this, Anāthapiṇḍika became sad. "My daughter

does not have any *Dhamma* to depend on during her life. She is so scared to die. That is why she is calling me little brother." Her father was very sad.

So he went to see the Buddha and informed the situation of his daughter. The Buddha told Anāthapiṇḍika that Sumanadevi was right because he was a little brother of her. Anāthapiṇḍika could not understand. The Buddha explained further, "Your daughter had attained *Sakadāgāmi* Fruition, one stage higher than you. You only attained *Sotāpatti* Fruition. That is why she calls you so." What I want to say is that we cannot understand other people's experience. So '*paccattam veditabbo vinnuhi*', the *Dhamma* is to be experienced by the wise for himself or herself. These are the six qualities of the *Dhamma*. We have realised because we practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. So please repeat after me. Now you have the chance to recite the six qualities of the *Dhamma*. "*Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo, Saṅditthiko, Akāliko, Ehipassiko, Opaneyyiko, Paccattam vetitabbo viññūhi*". Please say again, "*Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo, Saṅditthiko, Akāliko, Ehipassiko, Opaneyyiko, Paccattam vetitabbo viññūhi*". *Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!*

In this way, our *yogīs* can experience the four elements. If you have experienced the four elements, you are a *kalyāṇā puthujjana*. Even though you have not attained enlightenment yet, you have the merits. These merits cannot be compared with other merits. If you do *dāna*, you have merits. If you take precepts, you also have merits, but the merits cannot be compared with the merits of meditation. You have the merits of charity and morality, but the merits of *Vipassanā* meditation

surpass all other merits. When you note rising, can you see any person? You cannot see any person. While noting in the mind, can you see any person? You cannot. You have experienced mind and matter. Noting is the mind. The object, rising is the matter. Noting is the mind. Falling is the matter. Actually, there are only two things; nothing else.

You note rising, falling closely. Why I do stress noting this main object carefully and closely? Because there are so many things we can understand in the rising and falling. The more you note rising, falling closely, the more you will understand. There are so many things that can be learned in the rising and falling. At the beginning of the practice, you can only catch the clear part of the rising and falling. You will not have the ability to catch the beginning or the end. When your mindfulness is getting better and better, you can catch the beginning part of the rising, the middle part of the rising and the end part of the rising. You catch the beginning part of the falling, the middle part of the falling and the end part of the falling. When you notice very clearly while noting the rising closely, you can catch the beginning, but the movement at the beginning is not strong enough. Soon, the movement is getting stronger and stronger. The middle part can be seen more clearly. Then, slowly the movement gets weaker at the end. When you note falling, you can catch the beginning, but the movement is not strong enough. Then, slowly at the end of the rising, the abdomen does not fall immediately. It stops for a moment. Then, you notice the abdomen falls.

At the beginning of the falling, the movement is not

strong. Then, slowly it gets stronger. At the end of the falling, the movement or motion becomes weaker. "Sometimes I notice at the end of the rising, something is pushing up. I can feel tightness at the end of the rising," *yogīs* report. So you see very clearly the movement in your abdomen. Some *yogīs* mention that they cannot see the form. They can feel only the movement. "When I note the rising and falling, suddenly I am aware that there is heat or warmth in my hands, but I can't see my hands. I can't see my hands, but I can feel the warmth." This is how *yogīs* report their experience. This shows that *yogīs* are getting to understand more clearly. That is why you are told to note the object closely as long as you can. Note the object closely. If you can notice clearly, it becomes clearer. Thus, you will understand mind and matter in the rising and falling. In the same way, when you note "right step, left step" closely, you will notice that the mind can follow the movement. If you understand what I have taught in the rising and falling, you will understand during the walking meditation. Noting "right step, left step" is the mind. The footstep is the matter. Right step or left step is the matter. You will notice at least the swinging, motion or movement.

Do not look at any other things during the walking meditation. If you do, you cannot see anything in the footstep. Sometimes *yogīs* are looking for other things. "What can I see in the walking meditation? Nothing in the walking meditation." You may think that walking is nothing special. However, it is very special. If you want to know, then note closely the right step and left step. You have to note closely, carefully and respectfully. If you do not respect your practice, you cannot

understand anything. That is why you are reminded all the time to note closely. Even though *yogīs* have often been reminded, sometimes they become careless. It is not your mistake. The reason is because we are still *puṭhujjana*. We still have a lot of defilements. Even though we try to be mindful of each and every moment, we still forget.

So you must pay close attention if you really want to know something. At least know the swinging feeling, motion or movement. If you realise that there is movement when your foot is moving forward or swinging, then you will understand. It is not necessary to understand in detail. But if you are mindful and watch closely, you will notice something one day. It occurs automatically. This depends on your mindfulness and energy. You will notice. Direct understanding is the insight knowledge. Do not worry about it. Even though you cannot see it in detail, do not worry about it. But you have to practise ardently and energetically. I will not mention in detail.

We are told that when we see something, we note "seeing" closely. When we hear, we note "hearing" closely. We also note smelling, tasting and touching closely so that we will understand mind and matter. At the moment of seeing, the sight of a visible object is the matter (*rūpa*). When you see the object, you note "seeing, seeing, seeing". Noting the object is the mind (*nāma*). When you note hearing, the sound which is detected by your ears is the *rūpa*. Noting is the mind. So you can distinguish between *nāma* and *rūpa*. If you make a mental note closely, you will notice clearly. Hearing, smelling, tasting and touching are the same. I



have to explain the rising and falling, how you discern cause and effect and not any other things. The reason is because we note the rising and falling as the main object all the time whenever we practise sitting meditation. That is why I encourage *yogīs* who practise watching the in-breath and out-breath, to note the rising and falling carefully.

I have encouraged many *yogīs*. Sometimes they simply say that they cannot notice the rising and falling because previously they practised awareness of the in-breath and out-breath. According to them, it is so difficult. No! It is not difficult. Yes, I know it can be quite difficult if you start with one method, but it does not mean that you must not watch the in-breath and out-breath. The reason is because the Buddha also taught mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*). But if you practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness under our guidance, you have to note the rising and falling. We teach the rising and falling of the abdomen as our late Most Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw had taught. When we explain how *yogīs* experience insight knowledge, we give the example of the rising and falling of the abdomen. So if you note breathing-in and breathing-out, but do not experience anything in the rising and falling, then you also may wonder what Sayādaw is talking about. You may say, "I don't understand air element or water element."

But if you have practised sitting meditation by noting the rising and falling as I have already explained, you will accept it because you have the experience. So my advice to you is not to worry even though you practise *ānāpānasati*. At the beginning, pay attention to the rising

and falling. Note it closely. You must have a strong will to enable you to note the rising and falling closely. While you are noting the rising and falling carefully, if the mind goes back to your nostrils, do not worry about it. Just note a few breaths, in and out. Then, you will realise that your main object is noting the rising and falling. Then, go back to the rising and falling. When the mind goes back to the nostrils, note again a few of the in-and-out breaths. Then, go back to the rising and falling. By training your mind, sooner or later you are able to note the rising and falling of the abdomen.

With my encouragement, many *yogīs* during the retreat can note the rising and falling of the abdomen. Even myself when I was young, my teacher taught me meditation. I started to learn watching the in-breath and out-breath under my first young meditation teacher. When I was young, my teacher taught me what people in Myanmar call "Sayāthatgyi" method (nowadays outsiders know the Goenka method). When I was eighteen, I practised under the guidance of our Sayādawgyi U Paṇḍitābhivaṃsa. So the same thing happened to me because of the way I was taught. My mind went back to the nostrils. So I had to change. When we note the rising and falling, we can understand so many things. Now you are noting the rising and falling closely, but your understanding is different. While noting closely the rising and falling, unexpectedly you might be aware of the breathing. Some *yogīs* in their report say, "While I was noting the rising and falling, I became aware of my breathing." There are two things to notice in the breathing. This comes from your experience. The rising and falling does not happen by itself. Because of the breathing,

rising and falling appears. If there is no breathing-in and breathing-out, there will be no rising and falling. Am I right or wrong? I want to hear. "Right!" Why do you say so? Because you have experienced it yourself. You are noting or watching all the time. That is why you have the personal experience. If you do not experience it yourself, you will not say, "I am right." So this is the cause and effect.

Some *yogīs* report that when they note the rising and falling, they cannot notice it. If you do not notice the rising and falling, do you note it? You do not because there is no movement in the rising and falling. Why do you note the rising and falling? Because of the rising and falling, you note it. If there is no rising and falling, you do not note it. This is the cause and effect. In this way, *yogīs* know the cause and effect. It is a very simple instruction, but the implication is very profound. I also said earlier that while you are practising, if there is no food in your stomach, you hear the rumblings of hunger in your stomach. Then, you note "hearing, hearing, hearing". Why do you note hearing? Because you hear the sound. In this way, you understand the cause and effect.

It is already eight o'clock. Tomorrow I will continue. I still need to explain how *yogīs* have experienced mind and matter as well as cause and effect. I would like to explain how *yogīs* understand the four elements. Then, I will explain the five aggregates. In a single rising, there are five aggregates if you can note closely. There are five aggregates in a single falling. There are five aggregates in a single seeing if you can note mindfully. There are five aggregates in the stepping: right step, left step;

lifting, placing; lifting, pushing forward, placing. You will only have this experience from your own practice. Nobody can tell you. According to the Buddha, you come and experience it yourself. If you practise, you will comprehend clearly. Tomorrow I will continue. I would like to teach our *yogīs* more because very soon our retreat is coming to an end. When you practise meditation, what do you look for? To understand the teachings of the Buddha clearly or just to test the *Dhamma*? If you want to test the *Dhamma*, it is up to you. I will not comment, but with good intention, I just want to help every *yogī*. If you want to know something about the *Dhamma* clearly, to experience what I said about *kalyāṇa puthujjana*, to understand the *Dhamma* clearly and to understand the teachings of the Buddha correctly, you have really good teachers here to help you.

It is not easy to find so many teachers. They can guide and teach what the Buddha taught. When I give a talk, you hear the Pāḷi words used. That means I do not teach the *Dhamma* based on my own ideas. I teach the *Dhamma* according to what my teachers had taught. I believe and trust my teachers. They teach what the Buddha had taught. They do not give you the wrong information. We are scared to give you the incorrect information. We try to teach correctly and truthfully. Our world has so many ideas and beliefs. There are so many ideas that we are confused. We meet people who say, "Oh! I practise like this or like that." Sometimes I am sorry to say that my words may hurt others. I do not intend to do this. That is why I want to remind you that you should practise under the correct guidance until you benefit from the *Dhamma*. If you have experienced it

personally, you do not want to change your belief. You say to yourself, "Yes, by noting the rising and falling of the abdomen, sitting, touching, right step, left step and so on, I have experienced the four elements." This is what the Buddha had taught about the four elements. Thus, you have confidence from your practice.

So if somebody disagrees with you, do not say it is not true. You have experienced the four elements and five aggregates. That is why I urge you to practise until you benefit something under the expert guidance of meditation teachers. Our world has many ideas and beliefs that confuse us. Tomorrow I will continue. I will explain how *yogīs* experience the five aggregates. If I have the time, I will expound the Noble Eightfold Path and seven noble treasures.

May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically. May you understand the *Dhamma* clearly and see things as they really are.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**





13

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## *5 Aggregates and Insight Knowledge*

Yesterday I talked about two kinds of *puthujjana* or worldlings, *andha puthujjana* and *kalyāṇa puthujjana*. *Andha puthujjana* is a blind worldling. *Kalyāṇa puthujjana* is a noble worldling. Yesterday I said that our *yogīs* are not blind worldlings because they are interested in the *Dhamma*, the teachings of the Buddha. Because of their interest, they practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness diligently. When they practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness diligently, they experience the four elements, five aggregates, twelve sense-bases, seven noble treasures, Noble Eightfold Path and so on. They experience all the *Dhamma* that the Buddha had taught. They may not know how they experience or understand this *Dhamma*.

Now I will try to explain how *yogīs* understand the *Dhamma*. You have to check from your practice whether or not you have experienced this *Dhamma*. Yesterday I explained how *yogīs* experience the four elements. Most of the *yogīs* describe how they note the rising and falling closely. They can feel the movement. So today I will not repeat the topic on elements. I will go ahead with the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*). How do *yogīs*

understand the aggregates (*khandha*)? There are five aggregates: *rūpakkhandha*, *vedanākkhandha*, *saññākkhandha*, *saṅkhārakkhandha*, *viññānakkhandha*. 'Khandha' means 'group' or 'heap'. In English, *rūpakkhandha* means 'the group of matter or corporeality', *vedanākkhandha* 'the group of feelings', *saññākkhandha* 'the group of perception', *saṅkhārakkhandha* 'the group of mental formations' and *viññānakkhandha* 'the group of consciousness'.

We can read about them from *Dhamma* books. We can study the aggregates (*khandha*) from books, but we cannot feel them unless we practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. When you practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, you may have experienced these aggregates, but you may not be able to describe them. This is *rūpakkhandha*, the group of corporeality. You may have experienced this aggregate even though you cannot describe it. From young, we have been monks. We studied *Abhidhamma*. We memorised *Abhidhamma*, but we could not experience it. We just memorised and did not really understand it. When we practise meditation and through our own experience, we understand more clearly what the Buddha taught. So now our *yogīs* are practising the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. The main object is to note the rising and falling of the abdomen. When you are able to note the rising and falling in one single movement, there are five aggregates. If you can note the falling, there are also five aggregates in one single falling. If you really can note closely, you can see the five aggregates. That is why you must have the ability to note the rising and falling closely. If you cannot note it closely, you will not understand what I am talking

about. That is why *yogīs* are always reminded to note closely with bare attention.

Many *yogīs* have described to me how they can note the rising and falling closely. When you note rising, rising is the corporeality or matter. When you note falling, falling is the corporeality or matter. This is the group of corporeality. Sometimes you cannot note this main object closely, but you want to note it closely. You are eager to note it closely as you have been instructed. Your mind does not stick onto the object closely. When you note the rising and falling, you notice your mind goes away such as thinking or wandering. Sometimes you are unable to note the rising and falling. So you do not feel happy. If you can note the rising and falling closely, you are satisfied with your noting and practice. You note very closely. Without thinking, your mind is so concentrated onto the abdomen. At such a time, you feel happy. You are satisfied with your practice. Noting good or bad feelings is *vedanākkhandha* which is the group of feelings.

*Rūpakkhanda* is the group of corporeality. *Vedanākkhandha* is the group of feelings. You have experienced them. Then, *saññākkhandha* is to know the rising as rising, falling as falling. You have to know 'it's rising, it's falling'. The mind must recognise 'it's rising, it's falling'. So *saññākkhandha*, is the group of perception. The mind perceives 'it's rising, it's falling' if you can note it closely. To be able to note the rising and falling closely, I have repeated many times, pay attention. To know the rising and falling, we must pay close attention. Paying close attention is *saṅkhārakkhandha*, the group of mental formations. It is



very obvious while making a mental note which is the group of consciousness, *viññānakkhandha*. If you can note in a single rising, there are five aggregates. In the same way, if you can note falling, there are five aggregates.

For me, it is very easy to explain to you. However, if you do not pay close attention or if you do not listen carefully, you may not understand what I am saying. Even though I would like to proceed to other topics, I would like to explain some more. Do not think that Sayādaw is repeating or long-winded. I want *yogīs* to understand clearly. When you practise walking meditation by noting right step, left step, in a single step, there are also five aggregates. Noting is the group of consciousness. The footstep, right step or left step is the group of matter or corporeality. Sometimes you can note very well. If you can follow the movement closely, you feel happy. If you cannot note the footsteps closely, you may not be happy. You may be disappointed. If you are ardent practitioners, you might be disappointed when this occurs. Happiness or unhappiness is the group of feelings.

To know the footstep as right step or left step, you must know. The mind must perceive 'it's right step, it's left step'. This is the group of perception. Paying attention is the group of mental formations. If you understand in the walking meditation, you will understand everything because you have understood very well in the rising and falling. If you want to know more clearly in the bending, stretching, sitting down, getting up and all the activities, there are five aggregates. At the moment of seeing, hearing, smelling,

tasting, touching and thinking, there are five aggregates. In this way, *yogīs* experience empirically the five aggregates.

When you meet your *Dhamma* friends or spiritual friends, you may discuss aggregates (*khandha*) which you have experienced. If you do so, you are a noble worldling. You are not a blind worldling. How do you experience insight knowledge? Yesterday I explained how *yogīs* understand mind and matter clearly, the knowledge of discerning mind and matter. Noting is the mind. Rising and falling is the matter. Noting is the mind. The footstep is the matter. There is nobody in the rising. No 'she', no 'he', no spirit or no soul. Do you see anybody in the rising? No, you do not see anybody.

In this way, you have gained right understanding or right view (*samma ditthi*). You get rid of wrong understanding or wrong view. Before we practise meditation, we may think that there is a soul or spirit in our body. This spirit orders us to do something, speak something or think something. "Now when I note very carefully and practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, I can't see anybody in the rising. I can't see anybody in the falling. I only understand mind and matter." So you have clear vision. You are not confused. This comes from your experience. You ask yourself, "Is that true?" If you really can see, you will say "Yes, it's true because I'm very mindful of my object. That's why I can see." If you cannot see, it is not easy to understand. You have understood because you are mindful of each and every moment. You understand mind and matter. You get rid of wrong view or wrong understanding.

Yesterday I also told you about the cause and effect.

While you are noting the rising and falling and when the mindfulness is strong, you will notice your breathing. "Ah, because of the breathing, rising and falling appears. If there is no breathing, no rising-falling movements appear." In reality, you will understand. When you note rising, falling, rising-falling movements appear. If there is no rising, falling, do you still note rising, falling? You do not note rising, falling. You say to yourself, "Ah, because of the rising and falling, the mind notes rising, falling. If there is no rising, falling, the mind does not note rising, falling." Therefore, you understand the cause and effect.

While you are noting the rising and falling, you will feel the warmness or heat somewhere in your body. When you note, you will know there is heat or cold. Why do you note heat or cold? Because the warmness or coldness appears in your body. Hardness or softness also appears in your body. There is cohesion because the weather is quite hot. Sometimes fluidity arises when you notice saliva flows, tears come out or sweat in your body. Why is there sweating? Because the weather is hot. Your body sweats. So you note sweating. In this way, you understand cause and effect. You do not need to say, "I understand cause and effect."

With regard to matter (*rūpa*), the form of the body is being changed by elements. Do you experience how your body changes because of the elements? When the air is very cold early in the morning, we sneeze. We have a runny nose. Why do you get a runny nose? Because of the cold weather or cold air. When it is very cold, our body changes. When the weather is very hot, temperature in the body rises. You feel very hot. Your

body changes. You come down with a fever. Due to fever, you have a headache. Nobody makes us sick. Nobody makes us warm. We experience these conditions because of the elements. Because of the cold or heat, our body changes. When we experience personally in this way, we can understand cause and effect.

*Yogīs* note "intention, intention, intention", especially when they practise walking meditation. Not only in the walking, but also in the sitting meditation, you have to note intention. Note "intention to lift, lifting, then pushing forward, placing". *Yogīs* note intention when they practise walking meditation. If you want to note intention before you get up, you have to note intention of getting up. Before you sit down, you must note intention. Before you speak, you note intention to speak. So you have to note intention in many things, not only in the walking meditation. If we note it very closely and if our mindfulness is strong and powerful enough, we can notice there is intention even though we do not note intention purposely. We are aware that there is intention when our mindfulness is very good. It does not matter if you should note intention first, but you have to understand. When the mindfulness is constant and sustained, *yogīs* can be aware of intention even without prior noting of it.

How can we understand cause and effect? Understanding of the cause and effect comes about because of the intention to move, lift, push forward, put down, speak, bend, scratch and so on. In this way, you understand cause and effect. When you really experience cause and effect, you also get rid of doubt.

How do you get rid of doubt? There is no one to control these movements. It comes about from cause and effect. So now you will understand clearly cause and effect. I forget to mention that sometimes *yogīs* describe in this manner, "I can't see the rising and falling clearly." Some *yogīs* say, "I note the rising and falling. When I note the rising and falling, the rising and falling slowly becomes gentle and subtle. I note this. Then, when I note, slowly the rising and falling becomes less distinct. Then, I can't see the rising and falling." The way they express it, is different. Some *yogīs* just say, "I can't see the rising and falling". Some *yogīs* can note the rising and falling very closely and clearly.

If you are careful and mindful, you can describe it clearly. If we cannot see the rising and falling clearly, you do not need to use force to see it clearly. Just let it be. Do not use force. Do not take heavy breaths. Let it be natural, but you have to understand whether or not you have strong mindfulness. Sometimes if our effort is weak, you cannot see the rising and falling clearly. Our mind becomes cloudy. We have drowsiness because our effort is not strong enough. So you have to understand that you have to put forth effort. You have to put more mental energy to see the rising and falling. If you think your mindfulness is very good and strong without much thinking, then you can note the rising and falling closely. You also notice the rising and falling seems to become slower, smoother and more gentle. Then, slowly rising and falling vanishes. In this case, you do not need to use force to see clearly. You have to understand this advice. When you note rising, falling, you can feel the movement; upward movement or downward movement. When you note sitting, touching, you notice

stiffness or hardness in your body. You feel tightness in your upper body when you note touching. There is pressure. You might feel hardness or softness.

You cannot notice immediately. You have to develop your mindfulness. You may say, "I can note the rising and falling. Slowly, the rising and falling becomes gentle and smooth. Then, rising and falling disappears." This shows that your mindfulness is very good. When you note sitting, touching, you can be aware of something immediately. It will not take long. You can describe something in the sitting and touching. In this way, while you are noting rising, falling, sitting, touching, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting or thinking, you will notice the characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self.

If the mind is concentrated and if you have strong mindfulness, when you note the rising and falling, you can see the rising and falling changes. When the rising movement ends, then falling appears. You note falling. Then, the falling disappears. In this way, rising and falling changes from one to another. Changing is impermanent. If you note closely, you will notice the movement slowly vanishes, then getting weaker and weaker, smoother and more gentle. There are several stages taking place. You can catch the beginning of the rising, the middle of the rising and the end of the rising if your mindfulness is getting stronger. In a single rising, many changes occur.

While you are noting mindfully in this way, knowledge arises. This is what the Buddha taught, *anicca* that is impermanent and ever-changing. You notice there are changes in the rising. There are changes

in the falling. When you note, your mind is concentrated. Your mindfulness is very good. By noting this main object many times, you may feel that you do not want to note something that is boring. However, you do not stop noting. You still note. You are still noting the rising and falling even though you get bored. Even though without saying *dukkha*, this is *dukkha*. Seeing the constant change is *dukkha* because of the continuous arising. You also notice when there is no rising and falling. You say, "I don't need to note. While I am practising, I feel bored." But you do not stop. In this way, you understand the nature of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*. This is the insight knowledge.

I mention other things, but my main object is the rising and falling. Just now I said that we do not have the ability to note the rising and falling or the present object closely all the time. We also experience thinking, wandering, imagining, planning, remembering or sometimes criticising. We have to note all of them. I have to say again. Note them closely. We should not follow the thought. We must not follow the thought. We must note it closely. If we follow the thought, our mind is out of control. I have explained that when we see an object, we must note it closely. If we do not note it closely, our mind is so sensitive, fast and quick that in a twinkle of an eye, thoughts will appear and fade away millions and millions of times.

If we are unable to note seeing or hearing, defilements (*kilesa*) will take over our mind. I will give you an example when we see or hear a member of the opposite sex. I will relate to you a story from the *Dhammapada* Verse 147. Once, there lived in Rājagaha, a

very beautiful courtesan by the name of Sirimā. Every day Sirimā offered alms-food to eight *bhikkhus*. One of these *bhikkhus* happened to mention to other *bhikkhus* how beautiful Sirimā was and also that she offered very delicious food to the *bhikkhus* every day. Upon hearing this, a young *bhikkhu* fell in love with Sirimā even without seeing her. He was not mindful. The next day, the young *bhikkhus* went with the other *bhikkhus* to the house of Sirimā. Sirimā was not well on that day, but since she wanted to pay obeisance to the *bhikkhus*, she was carried to their presence. When the young *bhikkhu* saw Sirimā, he thought to himself, "Even though she is sick, she is very beautiful!" He felt a strong desire for her.

If we do not note seeing for example, our mind catches the form that we see. When it does so, do not think about the theme or subject in detail. If we note "seeing, seeing, seeing," there is no form or there are no details. Do not say, "These are the features of a person; face, nose, ears, and so on." The scriptures mention not to think about the theme or subject in detail. If you are mindful, you do not think about the theme in detail. Just note "seeing, seeing, seeing". Your mind does not go beyond that. I have to remind you again because you can be misled. Note the object closely and immediately. Do not follow the thought. Following the thought is not *cittānupassanā*. Noting it closely is *cittānupassanā*, contemplation of the consciousness.

You can note rising, falling closely. You can note right step, left step closely. When your mindfulness is getting stronger, you can catch the beginning of the rising, the middle of the rising and the end of the rising; the



beginning of the falling, the middle of the falling and the end of the falling. This means that your mindfulness is getting better and better. You have strong mindfulness. When you have strong mindfulness, you will find sometimes that you cannot catch the beginning, the middle and the end of the rising. Then, you ask yourself, "What is happening? Now I can't catch the beginning, middle and end. What is happening to my practice? Is it good enough?" However, you can feel the movement. You can feel the movement, but this movement changes rapidly, arising and fading away very quickly. You can see. That is why a *yogī* says, "I can't see the form like before. I can't see the form, but I can feel the movement. I can't see the form of rising and falling. I can't label rising and falling, but I can feel the movement. I can't catch the beginning, middle and end."

*Yogīs* at the beginning of the experience may be confused. The meditation teacher advises you not to worry. Go ahead, note it. So your mindfulness becomes very good. You note not only the rising and falling. Your mind opens up. Now you see not only the rising and falling. At the same time, you also may notice there is warmth in your hand or somewhere in your body. You may also notice the stiffness and itchiness somewhere in your body. Some *yogīs* may feel crawling sensations on their body. Initially, you can catch only the rising and falling. When your mindfulness is very strong, you will note not only the rising and falling, but also itchiness as well. You note it. Your noting mind catches this unpleasant feeling and note it. If you note, it soon disappears. Then, stiffness arises. When you note this feeling, it also disappears. In this way, you say,

“There are so many things to be noted, not only the rising and falling. There are so many things in my body.”

*Yogīs* here have personal experience when they are very mindful. They can see the rising and falling as well as other objects very clearly. In this way, you are seeing or discerning your mind and body. You will notice at times something difficult. There is a lot of *dukkha* or suffering. In this way, you want to be detached from your mind and body. If you understand and have personal experience, you will agree to what I am saying. I will relate a brief story in this respect to make you understand clearly.

During the Buddha's time, a very famous king, King Kosala was very close to the Buddha. He had a queen called Mallikā. She was a very clever queen, but she was not of royal blood. Before becoming the queen, she sold flowers. King Kosala fell in love with her and married Mallikā. At the palace, King Kosala treated her well. He did not want Mallikā to feel inferior because of her common heritage. One day, King Kosala spoke lovingly to her, “Tell me, who do you love most?” Queen Mallikā thought that the king would love to hear that Malika loved him the most. In truth, Mallikā loved herself most. She did not want to tell a lie. So she replied, “I love myself most.” King Kosala did not know what to say when his queen replied in this manner. He expected her to say that she loved the king most. True we love ourselves most. When we see very clearly the arising and fading away of the rising and falling as well as so many things happening in the body, noting rapidly one after another, where is happiness (*sukha*) or comfort in

the body? We cannot feel *sukha*, but only feel suffering or unpleasant feeling in the body. We want to be detached from our body.

To experience this knowledge, our late Most Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw gave an example of a fisherman. A fisherman uses a bamboo trap to catch fish. When he catches something, he knows that something is inside his bamboo trap. He thinks it is a fish. So he is delighted. He is so happy because he thinks he has caught a fish. So he tries to put his hand into the bamboo trap to grab it tightly because he does not want to let it go. When he takes it out, it turns out to be a poisonous snake. Before seeing it, he thinks it is a fish. He likes this thought very much. When he sees it is actually not a fish, he becomes frightened because it is a poisonous and dangerous snake. In the same way, when we really see that there is nothing pleasant in our body, only suffering and changing from moment to moment, we feel alienated to this body. We do not want our body. We do not want to be reborn because we have realised that form is *dukkha*. In this way, you have experienced the nature of arising and fading away when you practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. I have only explained the rising and falling. The same way you can experience in the stretching, bending, sitting down, getting up, right step, left step, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and so on. You will understand clearly that they appear and disappear.

If you understand very clearly, you will understand everything when your mind opens up. So this is the insight knowledge when we practise meditation here for two weeks. I cannot explain further because you

have practised for only two weeks. That is enough I think. However, if you want to know more about insight knowledge, you have to practise more. Within two weeks, I think you may experience these kinds of knowledge. Two weeks are not enough actually. Just when the mind settles down, the retreat is over. After the retreat, you go back to normal life. Then, you come back again. At the beginning, you strive very hard. Your mind goes everywhere and you cannot concentrate. After two, three or five days, the mind settles down. Just when the mind settles down, the retreat is over. When I taught meditation at the Blue Mountains Insight Meditation Centre in Australia, it was only a ten-day retreat. So these *yogīs* asked me to teach them more about the cause and effect. However, I had to stop. "Anymore? Anymore?" they asked. I replied, "Yes, a lot." "Please tell and talk about the insight knowledge." "I can't because your practice is over." I also said that they would not have experienced further insight knowledge because they practised for only ten days. I wanted to encourage these *yogīs* to practise more. So I told the committee members to arrange for a one-month retreat. They heeded my suggestion. Every year, they arrange for a one-month retreat.

Now I want to say something about the Noble Eightfold Path because it is very important. In one single rising, there is the Noble Eightfold Path. In the falling, there is the Noble Eightfold Path. You have experienced and know very well what the Noble Eightfold Path is. It comprises right speech (*samma vācā*), right action (*samma kammanta*), right livelihood (*samma ājīva*), right effort (*samma vāyāma*), right mindfulness (*samma sati*), right concentration (*samma*

*samādhi*), right understanding (*samma diṭṭhi*) and right thought (*samma saṅkappa*). You have experienced the Noble Eightfold Path, but you do not know how you have experienced it.

I have to tell you briefly. Before we practise meditation and the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, what do you do? You take eight precepts. You have already got morality (*sīla*) by practising right speech. You do not use abusive language. You tell the truth. You use right speech. Then, there is right action by refraining from killing, stealing and so on. Your actions become gentle. You are mindful when you practise meditation. For right livelihood, you do not deal in drugs or poison. To be able to note the rising and falling closely, you have to make effort by putting forth effort or mental effort to understand things clearly as they really are. This is right effort.

Then, you practise right mindfulness. When you develop right mindfulness, your mind is concentrated. This concentration group consists of right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. Then, we have right understanding. I have already explained how you can understand clearly, correctly and thoroughly. If we do not practise meditation, we mistakenly regard *anicca* as *nicca*, *dukkha* as *sukha* and *anatta* as *atta*. The Buddha taught through his personal experience. We think happiness is permanent. What we think as *sukha* is really *dukkha* or suffering. Every split second, things change. We mistake suffering for satisfactoriness if we are not mindful. When I talk about suffering, a story comes to my mind. I will not talk about the 'monkey's mind'. This has nothing to do with it. In this story, the

monkey wanted to know '*dukkha*' because its master always mentioned '*dukkha*' or suffering. When it sat down, he mentioned '*dukkha*' or suffering. When it got up, he mentioned '*dukkha*' or suffering. When it ate, he mentioned '*dukkha*' or suffering. The monkey on hearing that asked, "Why does my master always say '*dukkha, dukkha*'? I want to know what '*dukkha*' is." The monkey wanted to know. However, it had also experienced '*dukkha*' without realising it. I will not go further for today. So we mistakenly regard *anicca* as *nicca*, *dukkha* as *sukha* and *anatta* as *atta*. This is how our mind works. However, if we practise meditation, we can remove this wrong view. Then, we have right view or right understanding.

I hope you will understand just what I have explained. Then, we come to right thought. While you are noting, right thought will arise such as thoughts on renunciation, goodwill and non-cruelty. Right thought can also be referred to right aim. What is right aim? To be able to note the rising and falling, you must direct your mind onto the object. You must aim your mind onto the present object. If you do not direct your mind onto the object, you cannot note it. If you do not aim your mind onto the object, you cannot note closely. So this is called right aim. I hope you will understand, but I want to give you an example. In this country, people play darts. When they play darts, they aim the dart at the target. When they throw the dart, it hits the target because they aim carefully. So when you note the present object, you must aim your mind onto the object closely. Then, you note it. This is called right aim or right thought. By practising in this way, you experience the Noble Eightfold Path.

*Yogīs* have practised for two weeks according to their effort and mindfulness. Some of our *yogīs* may have experienced what I have explained earlier. If you have not experienced yet, do not stop. Keep on practising. Come and practise meditation here. Then, you will gain some knowledge. If you really have experienced them, you may have some qualities. By noting the rising, falling, sitting, touching and so on closely, your mind is different. You have gained some other qualities. One of these qualities is called the seven noble treasures (*ariya dhana*). You have confidence or faith (*saddhā*) in the Buddha, his teaching and noble disciples. When you have the experience, your mind becomes soft and so is your heart. Then, you want to keep your precepts (*sīla*). You also listen to the *Dhamma (suta)*. You do not give up easily because even though you practise, a negative thought may arise. You are satisfied with your practice. You are very grateful to the Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha*. You want to support by giving (*cāga*). If you have the experience of meditation, you refrain from any unwholesome deeds. You have moral shame (*hiri*) and moral fear (*ottappa*). You also have wisdom (*paññā*) from your practice. From your practice, you possess these noble treasures.. Try to be mindful. You have learned a lot. You have experienced a lot through your own practice. That is why I say, "Don't stop. Keep on practising."

May you be well and happy. May you be able to practise meditation ardently and energetically. May you be able to continue your practice until you attain *Nibbāna*.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**





## 14

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### *Acknowledgements and Questions & Answers*

The two weeks' retreat at Tathāgata Meditation Centre is over. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to my respected teacher, Sayādawgyi U Paṇḍitābhivaṃsa who has given me the opportunity to teach meditation here. Because of Sayādawgyi, I have the chance to teach meditation and help our *yogīs* here. So I would like to express my gratitude to my teacher.

Secondly, I would like to express my happiness to be with other Sayādaws at Tathāgata Meditation Centre. I am very happy staying with Sayādaw U Sīlānandabhivaṃsa. I respect him very much. I am also very happy staying with Beelin Sayādaw, Sayādaw U Paññādipabhivaṃsa and Sayādaw U Jotila. Beelin Sayādaw and I are going back to Myanmar to assist Sayādawgyi when American *yogīs* organise a two-month retreat. Beelin Sayādaw was very concerned about the retreat at the Tathāgata Meditation Centre. He reminded me to send an e-mail to Sayādaw U Paññādipabhivaṃsa who was also concerned about the retreat. He telephoned Sayādawgyi and then telephoned me when I was in Australia. So because of



their great effort, I could come here and teach meditation. I am very grateful to them.

I would also like to express my happiness to the members of the working committee of Tathāgata Meditation Centre. I notice that during my first visit to the Tathāgata Meditation Centre, the members here are very united. They take good care of the *Saṅgha*. During my stay here, they have supported me with all the requisites. That is why I would like to express my happiness, working with the committee members and helpers. I would also like to express my happiness on behalf of the *Saṅgha* to our supporters, food donors and requisite donors to the *Saṅgha*. Without their support, we cannot teach. We will not be able to practise safely and comfortably. Lastly to our *yogīs* or practitioners, I want to express my happiness that they practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness diligently and ardently during the two weeks' retreat. They patiently listened to my *Dhamma* discourses in broken English. So I am very happy for their support.

Last night before I slept, I was thinking about what to say for the successful end of the retreat. I do not want to say "goodbye" yet. This morning Sontu gave me some question papers. When I look at the papers, these questions will be my topic.

Question 1:

Does purification of mind only happen at the point of contact before the mind identifies with the object?

Answer:

If you have listened to my *Dhamma* talks carefully, you might remember many times that I mention present

moment, not before and not in the past. We do not have purification of mind before the object. It must be the present object, not before and not in the past. As you know, when you keep your mind or direct your mind onto the abdomen, you note the rising and falling carefully. Many times I have mentioned from the beginning to the end, the noting must synchronise with the object. In this way, you can have purification of mind at the present moment. It should be at the present moment. That is why we say, "Be here and now."

Question 2:

Do the stages of insight knowledge have to be reached successively or does the mind stabilise at one stage before reaching the next?

Answer:

To gain insight knowledge, when your mind sticks onto the object, your mind becomes pure and clear. A pure and clear mind can see the nature of things as they really are, that is what we call insight. Last night I mentioned that without a pure mind, we cannot see the changes or nature as they really are. That is why the consistent purification of mind can make us gain insight knowledge.

Question 3:

What causes the mind to be "penetrated"? In my experience, it seems to happen spontaneously and not as a result of effort.

Answer:

This might be your experience. You have listened many times to what the Buddha taught. Before we practise meditation, it is so important why the Buddha

reminded us of the tool to apply in the practice. What he told us first is '*ātāpa*', putting forth effort. Without putting forth effort, our mind cannot penetrate the object closely. The Buddha taught us that without effort, we cannot be mindful of each and every moment. To get rid of greed, anger and other defilements, we must use strenuous effort. We must put forth effort in order to uproot defilements. In order to eradicate defilements completely, not for a moment, but completely, we have to use successive effort. We must have effort to prevent the unwholesomeness which has not arisen in our mind. We have to exert effort to abandon the unwholesome thoughts arising in our mind.

We are unenlightened ones. We are wordlings or *puthujjana*. We, worldings do good and bad. We have done bad deeds in the past. We also have done good deeds in the past. We are still doing them. In future, we may also do good and bad deeds. When we practise meditation, we note the present object of rising and falling. Sometimes an unwholesome thought may arise in our mind. We have done something like unwholesome deeds (*akusala*) in the past. So if we do not note closely, these unwholesome thoughts will arise. So the Buddha taught us to use effort so as not to allow unwholesome deeds which we have done in the past to arise. Try to recall your practice. Once you forget your mindfulness, unwholesome thoughts mostly just come into your mind. That is why *yogīs* say, "I have this fantasy on this and that." Once you forget your mindfulness, unwholesome thoughts or unwise thoughts will appear in the mind quickly. So if you make strenuous effort, the unwholesome thoughts or unwise thoughts do not have the chance to appear in

your mind. That is what the Buddha meant by putting forth effort. So if you are able to put forth effort, there is no chance for the new unwholesome thoughts to arise. In the great efforts (*samma padhāna*), the first effort is to prevent the arising of unarisen unwholesome states and the second is to overcome the unwholesome states that have already arisen.

Now for the wholesome deed. We have done wholesome deeds in the past. We are still doing. As we are practitioners, we understand the teachings of the Buddha. In future, we will also try to cultivate wholesome deeds. While we are noting the rising and falling and able to note the present object closely, confidence will arise. *Saddha* will arise while you are noting because you are so grateful to the teachings. You may say, "I will support the *Sāsana*." Such devotion will arise. The wholesome deeds which have not yet arisen will appear in the mind.

Based on the *yogīs'* experience, I will try to explain so that you may understand well. At the beginning of the practice, you try to keep your mind onto the abdomen. Why do you keep your mind onto the abdomen? Because according to the instructions, you want to note the rising and falling closely. So when you keep your mind onto the abdomen, you make effort. You make effort so that you can note the rising and falling from the beginning to the end closely. What I have said in my talk, if you can note a single moment of the rising from the beginning to the end, you accumulate *Vipassanā* meritorious deeds. Before that, you have not got *Vipassanā* meritorious deeds, but when you note the rising and falling closely, you accumulate *Vipassanā*

meritorious deeds. So you develop these meritorious deeds in this manner. How do you maintain these meritorious deeds that have already arisen? You do it by noting closely again and again whenever an object appears. You do not forget about it. You try to remember it. You do not ignore it. You try to note it every time. In this way, wholesome deeds have been developed and maintained by your mindfulness. The Buddha stressed on the importance of exerting effort (*virīya*) in order to remove greed and other defilements. You may remember listening to my talk regarding initial effort, successive effort and progressive effort. Without putting forth these efforts, our mind cannot penetrate an object. So I think that is enough.

Actually the questioner wrote in English. He said, "May I respectfully ask Sayādaw the following questions?" There are three questions.

Question 1:

During the meditation practice, I notice two different kinds of mind. The two different kinds of mind are the noting mind and conscious mind. Can you please explain the different kinds of mind and their role in the meditation practice?

Answer:

According to our practice, what I understand is to give the example of this main object always. If you understand the rising and falling of the abdomen, you understand everything. That is why it is so important. So you note the rising and falling. When you note the rising and falling, it is actually the mind that notes the rising and falling. When you say you note, the mind remembers or recognises, "it's rising, it's falling". This

is the quality or nature of the mind. (Sayādaw recited the poem in Burmese written by our late Most Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw). This means that we are walking with the mind. When we walk with the mind, we try to know. The mind tries to know which is rising, which is falling. Have you experienced that? Yes, you have experienced it because you note. While you are noting the rising and falling closely, you notice another mind. Is it right? Another mind. Something is watching the noting mind. Is it true? So you notice the mind closely. The nature of the mind is knowing or remembering the things. While you are noting the rising and falling, you may notice your mindfulness is not good enough yet. You may not remember. When you are aware of the mind that notes immediately, I would say your mindfulness is really good. You can note the rising and falling closely. You know every rising and every falling by noting this main object. Suddenly, your mind goes off. When your mind goes off, what happens? Maybe you are thinking, wandering or imagining. So when you are thinking, your strong mindfulness will catch the thinking. Then, note "thinking, thinking, thinking". The thinking disappears. Then, come back to the rising and falling. Suddenly, the mind goes off again. Another state of mind appears; maybe wandering, imagining, thinking about happiness, thinking about unhappiness. There are different states of mind.

Whatever appears, the mind notes it immediately. When the seeing object arises, the mind notes seeing. When the hearing object appears, the mind notes hearing. So you notice the process of noting. The mind notes first. The mind leads other things. So as a leader,

you have to watch and should not be lazy. A leader always leads the group or association. In the *Dhammapada* Verse 1, “*manopubbaṅgamā dhammā, mano seṭṭhā manomayā.*” This very well-known stanza states that all mental phenomena have mind as their forerunner. They have mind as their chief.

When we practise meditation, we note the rising and falling. Whatever arises in the mind and body, the mind just quickly notes it. If you note, then you will know the process of the mind. The mind is not continuous. It appears one after another. Another way of saying it, is the successive mind. When you note one thing, it disappears. The noting mind also disappears. When you note the rising and falling, you notice the rising disappears. The noting also disappears. Then, another rising arises. The mind notes rising. When this object or matter disappears, the noting also disappears. In this way, when your mindfulness is very good, you can notice the mind and matter. They appear and disappear. Then, another mind and matter arise and disappear. You can notice them clearly. So that is why I think you may see that when you note the rising and falling closely, it is something like “my mind is watching the noting mind”. So you can see the process of your mind. So when a *yogī* is very mindful, he or she has this empirical experience. This kind of *yogī* will now have much more devotion and confidence. “What the Buddha taught is true. I have realised it myself,” the *yogī* may say.

#### Question 2:

When a *yogī* is noting the object mindfully and closely, the object is so rapid that he cannot label it. The

reason is because the object is so quick and fast, for example the rising-falling movement. So what should I do?

Answer:

While you are noting the rising and falling of the abdomen according to your mindfulness, you might experience the movement is very fast. You cannot follow the movement closely. What you should do is always try to note as much as you can. If you cannot follow the movement, just let it be. If you try to follow the movement until you catch it from the beginning to the end, you may be very tired. That is why note as much as you can, follow it or you just observe or watch it. You do not need to label rising and falling. I sometimes tell the *yogīs* that it is just like looking at people from your veranda. When there are not many people, you can count. You also know who you can see, but when there are too many people, you cannot count. If this is the case, you just watch or look. So when you see the rising-falling movement very fast, you just follow and note as much as you can. If you cannot give a name, just let it be. Just leave it or you just watch.

Question 3:

We have feelings of suffering when faced with extreme pain. When confronted with great fear like an accident, a bomb or an impending heart attack, how should one face such fears mindfully and die peacefully?

Answer:

In Myanmar, most of the people are Buddhists. When a person is about to die, they invite monks and listen to the chanting. At the same time, relatives perform *dāna*.



In this way, they can be mindful and can die peacefully. As I live outside Myanmar, I know quite a number of people. Some are not Buddhists, some are not practitioners and some are practitioners. So for Buddhists, they know what to do. When they are sick, they listen to the *Paritta* chanting. They invite the monks and do *dāna*. They can listen to the *Paritta* chanting. Their families remind them of what good deeds they have done. So we should practise meditation earlier as I have said in my topic. If a person practises meditation and when he is sick, we remind him easily to be mindful. If a person does not practise meditation and when he is going to die, it will be very difficult to remind him of his good deeds and to make him understand the prayers. Even though we remind him to be mindful, he cannot be mindful because he is suffering. He might even get angry.

I will tell you my true experience. When I was in Blue Mountains, Australia, one day I was invited by a Burmese doctor who said that her friend was going to die because of cancer. The patient had been to many countries such as Europe and England to seek medical treatment and eventually he went back to Australia. On his deathbed, he wanted to see a monk whom he had known, but that monk was away. He could not be at the patient's presence. That was why the Burmese doctor asked me to see him. He did not mention anything. Just go and see him. That was all. The dying person wanted to see a monk whom he knew. So I accepted the invitation and went to see him. Actually, the dying person was not a Buddhist. He had played host for one or two nights for that particular monk. That was why he wanted to see him. I went to see him. I did not keep



quiet because I wanted him to understand the teachings of the Buddha. At least he could have some benefits.

I told him I wanted to do chanting for him. He agreed. I chanted *Mettā Sutta*. I also just chanted "*Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi, Dhammam saraṇam gacchāmi, Saṅgham saraṇam gacchāmi*" with translation. I just recited. I did not ask him to follow. At least he could know the teachings of the Buddha. That was my intention. I asked him if he agreed, I would also like to teach meditation a bit. He also agreed. I was very happy with him. I told him how to note. "Do note rising, falling." That was all because he could not note everything. "Do note rising, falling," I told him. Then, I stayed with him for about ten to fifteen minutes. I told him that I would come and see him the next day. I told him that I was going back. The next day I went to see him again. I asked about his health whether or not he was comfortable. Then, I asked him whether he could note the rising and falling. He said, "Yes." So I told him to note again rising, falling. Only rising, falling. He looked happy. "Stay with me. Spend time with me," he said. His wife also looked happy. So I told him that I would come again the following day, but before lunch I received a message. He had passed away. The wife requested my presence for the cremation. I told her I had to conduct a retreat. I could not be back for one week. The lady said, "I will be waiting for you. I will keep the body at the hospital." She waited for me until I returned. Then, I led the ceremony. The lady told me how her husband died. "He died peacefully," she said. So what I found out was that he died quite peacefully. I believe he might have gained some benefits from the prayers.

So depending on the patient and if he can accept the chanting, just chant. Then, remind him of the good deeds he had done. At least even though he does not offer food or requisites to the *Saṅgha*, with his love, he has helped other people, not necessary the monks. Helping other people is also a good deed. Remind the patient. At least when he realises this, he may be happy. So when you are asked such a question, you can do all these things according to the prevailing conditions.

There was another lady who was also suffering from cancer. She was in her thirties. She practised with me for two weeks. When I met her, I encouraged her to practise. She just smiled. She did not practise. Later, when I went back again, she was hospitalised in a coma. I was invited to chant. I remembered her good deeds. I reminded her that she had done good deeds. She had offered food to the *Saṅgha*. She had also donated the requisites. I reminded her to remember what meritorious deeds she had done. I also reminded her to be mindful as she had practised meditation. I saw that she also died quite peacefully. As meditation teachers, we like to encourage patients to be mindful and to practise meditation. At least they will have the *pāramī*.

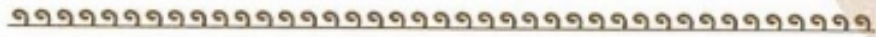
What I want to say at the beginning of the discussion is not to say "goodbye" yet, but to continue practising. That means you must strive on until you attain *Nibbāna*. You understand this very well. I do not need to remind you. To conclude, listen mindfully, "*Jhāyatha bhikkhave mā pamādattha, mā pacchā vippaṭisārino ahuvattha, ayaṃ vo amhākaṃ anusāsani.*" "Oh *bhikkhus!* Practise meditation. Don't be forgetful or negligent of the five aggregates. Don't be filled with remorse for your failure when you

are getting old, feeling sick and dying." This is, indeed, the admonition of the Buddha. Do not forget to practise diligently and ardently until you attain *Nibbāna*. Do not say "goodbye" yet. You continue with your practice.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**

May the merits accrued from this gift of *Dhamma*  
be dedicated to the well-being and happiness of all generous donors.  
May all mindful *yogīs* tread along the Noble Eightfold Path  
and finally attain the bliss of *Nibbāna*.  
May everybody be hale and hearty.  
May everybody be happy and healthy.

*Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!*



The *Dhammapada* Verse 354

*Sabbadānaṃ dhammadānam jināti  
sabbarasaṃ dhammaraso jināti  
sabbaratiṃ dhammarati jināti  
taṇhakkhayo sabbadukkhaṃ jināti.*

The gift of *Dhamma* excels all gifts.  
The taste of *Dhamma* excels all tastes.  
The delight in *Dhamma* excels all delights.  
The eradication of craving overcomes all ills.



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216	Lim Chiok Heng	10.00
217	Lim Chong Gnoh	5.00
218	Lim E-Ling & Family	10.00
219	Lim Eng Lee & Family	50.00

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
220	Lim Guat Looi	5.00
221	Lim Guat Tin	5.00
222	Lim Haidee	20.00
223	Lim Hong Yann	3.00
224	Lim Huat An	5.00
225	Lim Hun Chiang & Ng Poh Wan	100.00
226	Lim Hwee Hoon	10.00
227	Lim Jo Ee	5.00
228	Lim Joo Bee	10.00
229	Lim Joo Geok & Family	10.00
230	Lim Kai Chin	10.00
231	Lim Kai Ling	10.00
232	Lim Kai Wei	10.00
233	Lim Kee Wan	10.00
234	Lim Kuok Wei & Family	10.00
235	Lim Lay Thian	5.00
236	Lim Lee Pin	10.00
237	Lim Min Rui	5.00
238	Lim Min Zhi	5.00
239	Lim Phaik Sim	10.00
240	Lim Saw Yean	10.00
241	Lim Sheng Li	3.00
242	Lim Siew Hong & Family	10.00
243	Lim Siew Tiang	10.00
244	Lim Song Yong	10.00
245	Lim Su York @ Sin Su Hik	100.00
246	Lim Sui Loong & Family	10.00
247	Lim Swee Chard	10.00
248	Lim Swee Gaik & Family	10.00
249	Lim Swee Leong	5.00
250	Lim Tuck Weng	20.00
251	Lim Wei Sean & Family	20.00

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
252	Lim Xin Jie	5.00
253	Lim Yew Meng & Family	100.00
254	Lim Zi Heng	5.00
255	Linda Goh	50.00
256	Loh Lean Khim	10.00
257	Loh Yi Jiun	10.00
258	Looi Chooi Beng	20.00
259	Looi Yong Jeen	20.00
260	Looi Yong Sean	20.00
261	Low Saw Hoon	2.00
262	LWE Engineering Sdn Bhd	30.00
263	Mahindarama & MBMC Yogis	100.00
264	Malini Theipmanee A/p Charon	50.00
265	Mandy & Family	50.00
266	Mary Chen	10.00
267	MBMC Ah Hooi	10.00
268	Melinda Cheah Phee Foong	20.00
269	Milly Quah	10.00
270	Mimi Vijaya & Family Members	100.00
271	Mok Pin Chuan & Family	10.00
272	Molly Khoo	25.00
273	Neoh Ah Cheng	10.00
274	Neoh Ah Yew	2.00
275	Neoh Eng Kean	2.00
276	Neoh Eng Keong	5.00
277	Neoh Pei Ee	2.00
278	Neoh Pei Qi	2.00
279	Neoh Pei Teng	2.00
280	Ng Ai Lim	10.00
281	Ng Peek Khoon & Family	10.00
282	Ng Seng Hock	10.00
283	Ng Yen Shen	10.00

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
284	Ng Yi Wen	10.00
285	Ngan Hooi Kin & Family	20.00
286	Oh Hun Kwang & Khoo Ah Sim	100.00
287	Oh Lean Choon	10.00
288	Ong Ah Choo & Family	30.00
289	Ong Ah Luan	5.00
290	Ong Chiew Hsiung	10.00
291	Ong Chiew Sern	10.00
292	Ong Chin Chye	1.00
293	Ong Chin Hin (Mr. & Mrs.)	10.00
294	Ong Ghim Chuan	20.00
295	Ong Gin Thin	10.00
296	Ong Hui Leng	10.00
297	Ong Jiun Cai	10.00
298	Ong Jiun Yen	10.00
299	Ong Kar Ban & Family	20.00
300	Ong Khoon Jin & Bee Suat	5.00
301	Ong Kim Chai & Family	10.00
302	Ong Lay Lee	10.00
303	Ong Lea Ching	20.00
304	Ong Lea Chin	10.00
305	Ong Phaik Leng	10.00
306	Ong Phaik Luan	10.00
307	Ong Phui Siang	10.00
308	Ong Poo Tee	10.00
309	Ong Siak Bee & Family	50.00
310	Ong Teik Huat	10.00
311	Ong Wai Siong	10.00
312	Ong Yoke Choo (Mr. & Mrs.)	10.00
313	Ooi Boon Thye	2.00
314	Ooi Guat Kin & Family	50.00
315	Ooi Hock Hin	10.00

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
316	Ooi Hock Hin	10.00
317	Ooi Hock Huat	10.00
318	Ooi Hock Huat	10.00
319	Ooi Hooi Bin	20.00
320	Ooi Hooi Theng	20.00
321	Ooi Jing Yong	10.00
322	Ooi Kok Hooi	10.00
323	Ooi Lee Lee	50.00
324	Ooi Liang Beng	5.00
325	Ooi Liang Toon	20.00
326	Ooi Poh Suan	3.00
327	Ooi Teng Beng	2.00
328	Ooi Tze Xin	2.00
329	Oon Cheng Wah	5.00
330	Pang Siew Nam	5.00
331	Pat May keng	2.00
332	Patt Sue-Ann & Family	20.00
333	Patt Woei Sheun	20.00
334	Peh Jia Wei	20.00
335	Phang Ee Choon & Family	100.00
336	Phung Guat Eng	10.00
337	Poh Tin	50.00
338	Quek Soh Bee	10.00
339	Quek Soh Ngoh	10.00
340	Robert Loo	25.00
341	Ruby Loo	25.00
342	S. M. Goon	10.00
343	Sannie	5.00
344	Saw Chee Ling	10.00
345	Saw Keng Khai	10.00
346	Saw Kok Chong	10.00
347	Saw Li Mun	10.00



No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
348	Saw Poh Choo	10.00
349	Saw Siew Yin	10.00
350	Saw Siew Yong	10.00
351	Saw Zer Fung	10.00
352	Saw Zer Sheng	10.00
353	Sayalay Candavati	10.00
354	Sayalay Chandasobha	50.00
355	See	10.00
356	Siew Yuen Pong	10.00
357	Sim Hong Beng & Cheah Siew Nee	30.00
358	Sujiyati	10.00
359	Susie Yeoh & Family (IMO Yeoh Eu Hock (Dr.), Khaw Liang Im & Patsy Yeoh Kooi Sim)	500.00
360	Sylvia Tan Hooi Sien	50.00
361	T. K. Ang & Family	50.00
362	T.T. Chan & Family	30.00
363	Tan Ah Chiew	10.00
364	Tan Ah Ngoh	10.00
365	Tan Ai Hwa	20.00
366	Tan Ai Li	10.00
367	Tan Bee Chin	10.00
368	Tan Beng Guat	5.00
369	Tan Beng Guat	10.00
370	Tan Boon Keat	5.00
371	Tan Chelsea	10.00
372	Tan Cheong Ho	20.00
373	Tan Chew Peing	10.00
374	Tan Ching Keat	20.00
375	Tan Di Xing Nicholas	10.00
376	Tan Guat Keng	50.00
377	Tan Guat Kooi & Family	10.00

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
378	Tan Hooi Leng	10.00
379	Tan Ing Chen	10.00
380	Tan Ing Chuan	10.00
381	Tan Jit Ngoh	20.00
382	Tan Joo Mooi	5.00
383	Tan Kan Whye	10.00
384	Tan Kean Huat	5.00
385	Tan Kean Thye	10.00
386	Tan Lean See	10.00
387	Tan Leng Seong	10.00
388	Tan Peng Wah	10.00
389	Tan Qiao Ling	2.00
390	Tan Saw Tin	10.00
391	Tan Siew Kew	5.00
392	Tan Soo Tin	10.00
393	Tan Suat Hong	10.00
394	Tan Swee Joo	20.00
395	Tan Wen Chin	5.00
396	Tan Yiu Huat	5.00
397	Tan Zher Yao	10.00
398	Tan Zher Zhao	10.00
399	Tang Chook Kuan	10.00
400	Tang Kok Weng	10.00
401	Tang Lay Cheng	5.00
402	Tang Lay Theng	10.00
403	Tang Lay Theng	20.00
404	Tang Seok Wah	10.00
405	Tee Chu Hee	5.00
406	Tee Gek Hong	10.00
407	Teh Ah Beng	10.00
408	Teh Ah Kim	10.00
409	Teh Ai Peng	10.00

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
410	Teh Chong Yang	10.00
411	Teh Geok Khuan	10.00
412	Teh Geok Khuan	10.00
413	Teh Jia Jie	2.00
414	Teh Jia Ming	2.00
415	Teh Jia Yi	2.00
416	Teh Lai Soon	5.00
417	Teh Poh Lan	10.00
418	Teh Seok Phaik	2.00
419	Teng Pow Ling	20.00
420	Teoh Ah Suan	10.00
421	Teoh Book Kee Family	20.00
422	Teoh Book Kee Family	30.00
423	Teoh Ho Oon	20.00
424	Teoh Jia Hang	10.00
425	Teoh Jia Run	10.00
426	Teoh Jia Xuan	10.00
427	Teoh Lean Hock	10.00
428	Teoh Lean Hoe	10.00
429	Teoh Lean Seng	10.00
430	Teoh Oon Hean	10.00
431	Teoh Oon Theng	10.00
432	Teoh Seok Pin	10.00
433	Teoh Sin Hock	5.00
434	Teoh Soo Bee	20.00
435	Teoh Sook Lean	1.00
436	Teoh Suai Lian	5.00
437	Teoh Sum Ming	2.00
438	Teoh Yang Khim	10.00
439	Tew Teck Huat	20.00
440	Thow Siew Pheng & Family	100.00
441	Thum Kheng Onn (Mr. & Mrs.)	15.00

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
442	Tjoeng Sioe Lan	20.00
443	Toh Beng Guat & Family	10.00
444	Toh Gaik Hoon	20.00
445	Toh Soo Lee & Family	10.00
446	Uncle Chew	10.00
447	Ung Bee Hock	10.00
448	Wendy Quah Yee Min	5.00
449	Wong Ann Khang & Family	20.00
450	Wong Khang Shane	10.00
451	Wong Khang Wayne	10.00
452	Wong Paik Kim	10.00
453	Wong Paik Kim	20.00
454	Yang Hong Kee	5.00
455	Yap Bok Teik & Family	10.00
456	Yap Chin Keong	10.00
457	Yap Chin Khoon	20.00
458	Yap Chin Thye	10.00
459	Yap Choon Tee	10.00
460	Yap Ean Nee	10.00
461	Yap Tong Hoey & Family	10.00
462	Yap Yam Cheng	20.00
463	Yap Yean See	10.00
464	Yeap Choon Gaik	10.00
465	Yeap Ean Chuan & Family	5.00
466	Yeap Phaik Cheng	5.00
467	Yeap Saw Gim	10.00
468	Yeap Yi Li	2.00
469	Yeap Yi Tian	2.00
470	Yeap Yuan Chuan	2.00
471	Yeoh & Cheah Family	30.00
472	Yeoh Ah Nya	10.00
473	Yeoh Bee Sim	10.00

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
474	Yeoh Jit Sum	20.00
475	Yeoh Oon Kooi	10.00
476	Yeoh Seong Beng	100.00
477	Yeoh Suan Im	10.00
478	Yeoh Suan Tin & (IMO departed relatives)	50.00
479	Yeoh Way Hup	2.00
480	Yong Kim See	10.00
		9,056.00

### IN LOVING MEMORY OF

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
1	Ang Siew Kheng	2.00
2	Ang Siew Kim	2.00
3	Ang Swee Leong	2.00
4	Chan Kee	10.00
5	Chew Beng Huat (Mr.)	10.00
6	Chew Miew Sian (Mr.)	10.00
7	Chuah Chow Chean (Mdm.)	10.00
8	Eow Poh Hin	10.00
9	Fong Phoay Ham	10.00
10	Fong Phoay Sam	10.00
11	Fong Seng Cheong	10.00
12	Gan Thuay Neoh (Mdm.)	5.00
13	Geh Or Poh (Mdm.)	5.00
14	Goh Ah Lee (Mr.)	5.00
15	Goh Cheng Tee & Ooi Ah Ho	5.00
16	Goon Fook Seng	5.00
17	Goon Gok Siang	5.00
18	Goon Hiang Lai	10.00
19	Goon Swee Yen	5.00
20	Iris Baptist	5.00
21	Khoo Ah En (Mdm.)	10.00
22	Khoo Chai Lean (Mdm.)	5.00

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
23	Khoo Cheng Bee & Lee Ah Bee	50.00
24	Khoo Hock Lye	10.00
25	Khoo Saw Tuan (Mdm.)	10.00
26	Kok Ah Hoe	50.00
27	Lee Kim Huat	10.00
28	Lim Boon Hock (Mr.)	5.00
29	Lim Boon Lam (Mr. & Mrs.)	5.00
30	Lim Boon San (Mr.)	5.00
31	Lim Boon Thye (Mr.)	5.00
32	Lim Cheng Choo (Mdm.)	5.00
33	Lim Moh Khin (Mr. & Mrs.)	5.00
34	Loh Siew Mei (Mdm.)	10.00
35	Loh Son Har (Mdm.)	10.00
36	Lum Weng Kin (Mr.)	5.00
37	Mak How	10.00
38	Moey Siew Loon	10.00
39	Ng Ah Too	20.00
40	Ong Boon Eng	10.00
41	Ong Char Kor (Mdm.)	5.00
42	Ong Kok Leong	5.00
43	Onng Gaik Lean	10.00
44	Ooi Chin Tean (Mr.)	5.00
45	Ooi Eam Cheng	5.00
46	Ooi Liang Choo (Mdm.)	10.00
47	Ooi Phee Heong	20.00
48	Ooi Saw Wah	10.00
49	Ooi Sek Cheah	10.00
50	Quah Keow Tuan	5.00
51	Quek Ban Thye	5.00
52	Ramu	5.00
53	Saw Ham Seow	10.00
54	See Yeow Lum (Mr. & Mrs.)	10.00
55	Soon Kean Choon	10.00
56	Tan Ah Beng	20.00

No.	Name	Dāna (RM)
57	Tan Chiap Lim	100.00
58	Tan Gek Heoh	5.00
59	Tan Kim Poh	20.00
60	Tan Saw See	20.00
61	Tang Eu Tee (Mdm.)	10.00
62	Tang Kim Teng	5.00
63	Tang Too Sai (Mr.)	5.00
64	Teh Geok Pin	5.00
65	Teh Kok Ee	5.00
66	Teh Swee Huah	50.00
67	Teoh Lee Hong	2.00
68	Wong Fook	10.00
69	Yap Poh Geok	2.00
70	Yeap Ah Ong	100.00
71	Yeap Poh Huat & Lim Chooi Gim	10.00
72	Yeoh Jin Aik (Mr.)	10.00
73	Yeoh Hung Seng (Mr.)	5.00
		895.00
		14,051.00

*Idaṃ me ñāṭīnaṃ hotu*

Let this (merit) be for my relatives

*Sukhitā hontu ñātayo*

May they be happy.

(Recite three times.)

The total cost of printing 1,000 copies of this *Dhamma* book (including one bookmark) is RM 8,200.00. The total donation (*dāna*) is RM 14,051.00. The balance of RM 5,851.00 will be channelled to Mahindarama & MBMC Yogis *Dāna* Fund which will be donated to Paṇḍitārāma meditation centres in Myanmar this November 2013.

**SĀDHU! SĀDHU! SĀDHU!**





## The Dhammapada Verse 361

Kāyena saṁvaro sādhu  
sādhu vācāya saṁvaro  
manasā saṁvaro sādhu  
sādhu sabbattha saṁvaro  
sabbattha saṁvuto bhikkhu  
sabbadukkhā pamuccati.

Restraint in body is good,  
good is restraint in speech,  
restraint in mind is good,  
good is restraint in all the senses.  
A bhikkhu restrained in all the senses  
is freed from all ills (saṁsāra dukkha).