

Contemplation of the Mind

Practising Cittanupassana

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CONTEMPLATION OF THE MIND

PRACTISING CITTĀNUPASSANĀ



by

Bhikkhu Khemavamsa

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CONTEMPLATION OF THE MIND : Practising Cittanupassana

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NAMO TASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO
SAMMA SAMBUDDHASSA

HOMAGE TO HIM, THE BLESSED, THE WORTHY
THE PERFECTLY SELF-ENLIGHTENED ONE.

*

For the peace, sanity and freedom of beings

*

FOR FREE DISTRIBUTION ONLY

DEDICATION

It is my great honour and privilege to dedicate
this book to my parents and all my teachers supporters
and friends on the Path through the years,
as well as all striving and opened
minded meditators
everywhere.

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PART ONE

THE NIBBĀNA
ASPIRER'S
GUIDE TO
THE MIND !

INTRODUCTION



THIS BOOK

To put it simply this is a ‘hands on’ manual for *Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā* yogis / meditators who are interested in emphasizing the mind in their meditation practice.

As you read through you are likely to find it different from your regular *Vipassanā* practice but very interesting, beneficial and enriching. Also it could be helpful in understanding your own practice better without having to ‘convert’ or change the way you meditate.

This is about ‘the watching of the mind by the mind’ but not separating the mind from the rest of the Foundations of Mindfulness (*kāya* / body, *vedanā* / feelings and *dhamma* / mental objects), as this is impossible.

They arise together and are inseparable.

A good meditator must be skillful with all of them. By practising *Cittānupassanā* one is practising all of them because when you observe anything, all Four Foundations of Mindfulness / *Satipaṭṭhāna* are already there anyway.

‘Whether you are doing Kāya or Vedāna or any other combination, you have to reach the knowing mind, because this is how the Path is. There is no other way.’

Why do I like this approach? Because of the obvious distance that appears between object and observing, which leaves you without a doubt that there is ‘nobody there.’

The question most yogis ask at this point is: But does it work as with the *Vipassanā Ñānas*?

Yes it does !

As you go through these pages don't expect to understand everything at a glance. However, it will all become very clear and simple to you once you go on retreat.

I would like to make it very clear that this was written with enthusiasm but **not** antagonism towards other methods of practising *Satipaṭṭhāna* or *Samatha* as I have an awful lot of respect for other ways of practising too.

It was written because of appreciation and love for this very intelligent, effective and compassionate practice as taught in the style of Shwe Oo Min Sayādaw of Burma for the last forty-two years, but not as taught by any other teachers.

There is a big difference between this practice and other approaches in teaching *Cittānupassanā Vipassanā*.

It's aiming to make this practice known to as many meditators as possible especially those who would be interested in the ‘mind’ aspect of *Satipaṭṭhāna* as well as those who are not entirely happy with their current practice.

In case you are wandering, switching from regular *Vipassanā* to *Cittānupassanā* is not going to hurt your meditation. Rather it will make it richer. At least this has been my own personal experience.

It feels like a big step up from where my practice was before although I can combine the two when I want to.

There are two main reasons for putting this book together:

— Demand. There is absolutely nothing like it in print.

And there never has been. When I was first interested in the ‘contemplation of the consciousness practice*’, the first thing I did was to try to find information about it.

I went to teachers and other monks, yogis and publishers and they all gave me the same answer. There is absolutely nothing about it in print. Even later, in the

Tawya, when I asked about it they said: ‘We don’t have any booklets, this practice is so simple, no need for books!’

— I must confess that this book was not my own idea. I never intended to get into all this amazingly distracting trouble of putting this together (just think of the critics alone!)

But I was eventually persuaded by a publisher acquaintance of mine.

In no way is this to introduce me, as some ‘Dhamma book author’ but if by any chance and coincidence you appreciate it, that’ll make me very happy. It is more like a gift of *Mettā* to all striving meditators everywhere.

Most people ask, what is the difference between the Mahāṣī method and this one?

1. At the end of my retreat with Sayādaw U Paṇḍita, after reporting to him he said: ‘I want you to turn your attention to the mind now, the body doesn’t get into any finer particles.’

The practice is the same, the technique is different because the emphasis is on the mind.

One more thing should be said here about practice. This is not an attempt to undermine any other method, as the 'perfect method for everyone' does not exist.

Everyone must find his or her own way. And although this is a very big and interesting issue it lies out of the scope of this book.



THE TEXT

Some of the text is exactly as it was said, in the interviews, some reconstructed from notes and memory, some from memory only and some was from the teacher's agreeing with what was said.

But in all cases although some actual words might have been altered the meaning has been meticulously and uncompromisingly maintained. In any case **if you need to blame somebody about anything at all that will be me alone.**

In the text, because of effectiveness as well as for sanity's sake I'm not using 'a question and answer' format but rather the question is in the answer itself (look for it if you wish).

As you go on you will find that this helps a lot to keep the flow of understanding of this teaching without missing anything at all.

Sometimes you get the same question answered again but in different ways. That is a bonus for you. The comments, answers and instructions are not for the same level of meditators or at the same stage of progress in the retreat, but it is all displayed in such a way that it should leave you with no doubt about 'where you are.'

However everyone must keep in mind that different instructions and advice are given to different persons in the course of practice depending on their understanding and mental and physical capacity.

To many ‘advanced’, ‘Dhamma spreading’, ‘know it all’, or ‘over fifty and idle!’ meditators out there this manual might seem like some ‘Teaching others how to meditate guide.’

Please make sure you understand this correctly: **It is not !**

So save your self and others the trouble. This is a meditator’s aid, a simple way of understanding what this practice is about.

A qualified teacher must be approached for the purpose of getting help with this practice.

Please keep in mind that the last chapter of Part I, titled ‘Transformer’ is not an attempt to ‘guide through’ or ‘teach’ the *Vipassanā Nāṇas* / Insights.

But rather it highlights some of the most colorful, deep and transforming ones while ending Part I, in a rather inspiring way.



CITTĀNUPASSANĀ

I am not going to write pages about it but only briefly define it, as you are expected to be familiar with the subject. If you are not, it’ll benefit you to do some of your own investigating before going any further.

Cittānupassanā is the ‘Contemplation of the Consciousness’ as mentioned in the Mahāsatiṭṭhāna Sutta, or as most people understand it simply, ‘the watching of the mind.’

In the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta, The Buddha teaches the Four Foundations of Mindfulness:

Contemplation of the body / *Kāyānupassanā*

Contemplation of Feelings / *Vedanānupassanā*

Contemplation of Consciousness / *Cittānupassanā* and

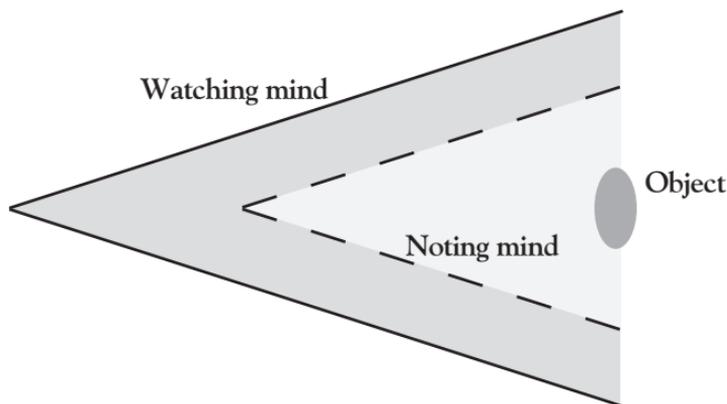
Contemplation of Mental Objects / *Dhammānupassanā*.

*But what is Contemplation of the
Consciousness in practical terms? How is one to approach
and work with the mind in a way that leads to
'Liberation through Wisdom?'*

This is the question this book will try to address to the fullest. If you know your mind then you can use the mind to look at your body and your feelings. The body you know with your mind, the feelings you know with your mind.

It is basic to this form of meditation that you must know mind and body, **but the mind is more important**. That's why it is emphasized here.

The watching of the mind by the mind:





SHWE Oo MIN SAYĀDAW

This is not easy. One feels not up to commenting about the Sayādaw. So this will be just an attempt to make him a little known to you if you have not yet heard of him.

The Sayādaw's monk Pāḷi name is Ashin Kosalla and he was born on the 15th of September 1913. It is the custom in Burma that well established Sayādaws are given the name of the area they live in and teach.

Most people know him as the most senior monk in the Mahāsī Sayādaw's Sangha who forty years ago left the Mahāsī Sangha and started teaching in a modest and frugal monastery, the way he believed it really did justice to the practice. However he says that this is not his way of teaching, but the Buddha's own.

After Mahāsī Sayādaw died in 1982, Shwe Oo Min Sayādaw was offered the most prestigious position of being the incumbent teacher of the Mahāsī Yeiktha.

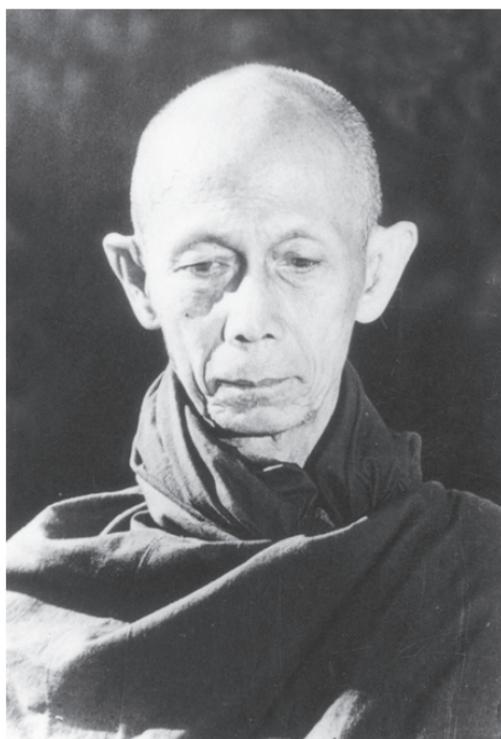
He declined the offer because it would not allow him enough time for practising he said!

And practice is another thing the Sayādaw is famous for. He has been practising every day of his life and he still is practising all day every day at the age of 88!

The Sayādaw, who would have been one of Burma's top exports had the world known about *Cittānupassanā*, is very well known and respected in Myanmar (Burma), as well as outside Myanmar for being very advanced in his practice.

But there is also something very different about him that you cannot miss.

He is nothing like any other well-known, 'big time' Sayādaw and he is not interested in being one.



The absence of ‘persona’ on that monk is so obvious that it can be seen even in photographs! Something else you cannot miss is that this 88-year old Dhamma Teacher is always aware and sharp.

Shwe Oo Min Sayādaw does not himself teach any longer, although he is open to discussion and prearranged interviews.



DHAMMA SUKHA TAWYA

Dhamma Sukha Tawya translates as Hermitage of Dhamma Happiness. It is Shwe Oo Min Sayādaw’s second monastery. His International Centre.

Both *Vipassanā* and *Cittānupassanā* are taught in the centre in the style of Shwe Oo Min Sayādaw.

The main characteristics of the Tawya would be:

- **Not** a tension factory!
- Definitely Dhamma conscious. In other well-known places monks and nuns who are not ‘fast progressing’ according to certain expectations are simply and coldly told to ‘go somewhere else to practice’ or are looked down on, and so on.

That’s not the case at all in Dhamma Sukha Tawya where patience and compassion are plenty for all. They also cater especially for people with depression problems.

The schedule in this monastery is arranged in such a way that one can practice, without having to take a pause if one wishes, indefinitely.



EVAM ME SUTTAṀ...

Mind is the forerunner.

*Everything that we know and experience is seen
and touched first by the mind.*

*It is the mind that is 'The most amazing show
on Earth and beyond', by far.*

*And so much more interesting and exciting
than anything else, in this Satipaṭṭhāna practice.*

So would you like to watch?

To follow, you may take with you one thing only:

Awareness!

*You might experience some difficulty
leaving everything else behind!*

*As for myself I am eternally grateful to those
who taught me Satipaṭṭhāna.*

The Buddha, The Dhamma, The Sangha.

*

*When we practice in a way that,
what we experience is a 'pair',
an object and a knowing of it,
we don't experience the knowing of it as an object by itself,
but very easily we take it as an 'I'.*

We are told that this knowing is not an 'I' and
that it is unstable; but that,
is an understanding of an intellectual nature.
Because it is not easy for us to experience
it first hand in this way.

When we actually practise it,
is very hard to see that it is not 'I' who is
thinking, paining, wanting, planning, and feeling angry.

So most people don't know the knowing mind and
very rarely they might get to the point where
they can see the knowing mind which
is aware of the object.

The only way to go beyond this kind of understanding is
to experience that knowing or noting mind as object.

Only when we practice *Cittānupassanā*
we can clearly see that another knowing mind arises and
becomes aware of the noting mind as its object.

And yet another knowing mind arises and
is aware of all of the above!
And so on.

Then we can clearly see that noting mind is object and not 'I'.
The idea of 'knowing' as 'I' simply doesn't make sense any more.
And that, is not intellectual understanding,
that is experiential understanding, that is *Dhamma*.

People who come from other kinds of practising, often find it difficult to stop having as reference point-anchor the rising and falling, of the abdomen.

Once you get familiar and able to see the noting mind you will find that the noting mind is just as big and reliable if not bigger than the abdominal movement to have as reference point-anchor, in the practice.

The noting mind in this practice is the reference point-anchor, and all other minds are objects.

However *Ānāpāna* and the rising and falling of the abdomen can be used here too.

CITTĀNUPASSANĀ



SHWE Oo MIN DHAMMA SUKHA TAWYA

VASSA 2001

*‘There should always be the greatest effort possible
without forcing, without creating tension.’*

*‘Insight comes from the realization
that observation is going on without the observer.
Witnessing is going on without the witness.’*

‘An ounce of practice is worth more than a ton of theory.’



FROM SHWE Oo MIN SAYĀDAW:

Put your mind at the solar plexus. Don't label. Just be aware of what is happening. If you hear something, just know there is hearing. If you know what sound it is you are hearing, this is not meditation.

*It's only meditation when there are two minds:
Knowing / noting mind and observing mind.
If there is only one mind, ' I ' is always there.*

*The object is not the dhamma,
The dhamma is the mind
That is being aware.*

You don't need to follow the objects or identify or know them.

Awareness will do it's own work.

Even when the person sleeps the *Dhamma* does not sleep, even when you are near death and you are overcome by exhaustion, the feeling of being overcome is just the feeling of being overcome, **knowing it, is separate from the sensation.**



INITIATION

The watching of the mind by the mind.

With all practices, in all postures: Standing, walking sitting, lying down, eating etc.

Watch the mind.

Look into the mind, don't worry about the body so much. With daily activities watch the mind's reactions to objects. (The outside world and the inside world, so to speak, always react they are in a cause and effect relationship).

There's no need to walk and move very slowly, just the way you normally walk and move in a relaxed manner will do fine. Adapt to an easy normal pace. If it helps you, slowing down, you can by all means.

In sitting meditation stay with that 'which knows' everything. Don't try to go to objects. Let the object come to you. Try not to react to objects. Whatever arises, greed, aversion, pain, itchiness, *Mettā*, likes or dislikes etc. — watch with equanimity, without getting involved, without clinging to anything. Stay in the middle path.

As the watching mind 'looks' directly at the noting mind, passing by objects are seen as if they are being looked by the corner of the eye — not directly —

Watch the quality of the mind as it contacts objects. If you see any kind of tension in the mind relax immediately. Tension is excessive energy.

You can also start with rising and falling and as the mind encounters objects observe the mind not the object. That is the easiest way for some, including my self.

Move with the mind not with the object.

So don't think in terms of, what's the object? When you sit, but what does the mind know of as its object. Look at that knowing of the mind.

Don't fix your attention on the object of the knowing mind but look at what that mind knows next, as you let the objects come to the mind.

The next moment might be a knowing of a sound, the moment after that a knowing of a rising of the abdomen, next moment a knowing of a sensation in the body or mind and so on.

Follow that trail of knowings, from moment to moment continuously and *in a relaxed manner*.

The mind that arises and observes the knowing mind is what we call the watching mind.

It will all become clear to you once you get familiar with the practice. The knowing mind is also known as noting mind and the watching mind is also known as the observing mind. Both these 'minds' are consciousness or *citta*.

Note the mind constantly but silently, without labelling.

At all times don't worry about the body.

Try to see the observer, the one who watches that mind.

Be mindful at all times, continuously.

Don't fix the mind on anything at all.

Let the mind do the job and just watch.

Watch that anger, watch that greed, and watch that impatience or confusion. Watch these emotions and mind states, what are they doing, as they are being watched?

If you experience pain watch the reaction of the mind to it, don't worry about the pain at all. (More about pain to come.)

Can you see what wisdom is in the mind, or *virīya*, what is concentration like in the mind or mindfulness?

It's not hard to watch, just recognize: that is the nature of this — this is what it feels like.

The mind has a strong desire to practise, what does that feel like? Eagerness to think so much is intention. Observe intention.

As you watch the invisible forces that move you every day and bounce you around, discover and face a new world appearing.

Just keep practising and all the questions you have, will be answered.

Wisdom just arises by practising and answers all your questions!

Try to see why the mind is tense or relaxed, what lies underneath that?

*Do not do any labelling — labelling is
a hindrance to this practice.*

Key word: Look into the mind moment to moment. When 'I-ness' is there it's because of delusion.

When tension is there defilement creeps in strongly, but when wisdom gets strong it easily protects the mind.

To be able to see the mind that observes the noting mind and the noting mind, you got to have the right balance, not try too hard.

The more you try to see the harder it becomes.

Remember the Burmese four-fold saying:

*'Not too forcefully,
not controlling or manipulating,
not trying to make it happen and not causing tension:
observe it as it is.*

What it seems like is seeing it from the corner of your eye.

Don't look at it forcefully with open eyes!'



FROM SAYĀDAW U JOTIKA:

(Transcribed from a talk by the Sayādaw)

In all human activities, this meditation practice is the most important. (But note that when we say ‘without thinking about it’ we don’t mean absent minded.)

Let’s see why we don’t even use noting. For example when we hear something and try to label, ‘*This is a dog bark*’. To come to this conclusion we need a very complicated process in the mind.

First you hear the sound and recall from the past similar sounds that you heard, you put the two together, then the mind works very fast like a computer.

Recognizes. This is the same as that, and then you recall what it was called in the past, and you remember that, that was a dog barking in the past and you bring that past to the present, ‘*This sound is a dog barking*’.

You go through four different processes, four steps, in order to get to that.

In this meditation you stop at the first step, no more.

Even to name something you go through many-many steps, like when we hear one word, if the sound is one syllable you go four full steps, if it has two syllables we go though more than four, maybe six or eight sometimes and if the sound has three or four syllables we have to go through many-many steps to get to the conclusion.

The mind works very fast very hard. In this meditation practice we stop all that process we stay with the first step. That simple.

But it’s not easy to do that because we have a habit of going through the whole process.

*But as I said before if you practise it, you don't find
it very difficult either.*

It is just the act of being, when you see there is just 'seeing' when you hear there is just 'hearing' when you have any sensations in the body, there is just sensations, when you taste there is just 'tasting' when you smell there is just 'smelling', when you think there is just 'thinking.'

Not even 'I' experiencing that. Because that 'I' can make things become very complicated. Of all human activity, body and mind, this is the simplest.

The act of just 'being' in all it's simplicity and naturalness with nothing added at all.

That is the most important point: **nothing added at all.**

It's just the experience of simple 'being', experience of simple process. So in practising this meditation do not expect anything to happen.

That is also another important thing.

Especially for those of you who have been meditating for quite a while, a long time and who have had good experiences before; whenever they meditate again they always want to get to that state as quickly as possible. They expect that.

'I have been into that peaceful state before. Now I am going to sit and get there as quickly as possible'.

The harder we try the harder it becomes.

So don't try, don't expect. This is another paradox.

If you really don't try anything at all you will find that you are there.

To be as simple as possible — nothing added — sit as comfortable as possible, without overlapping anything.

The most important thing is to be balanced and to be at ease. If you can sit full lotus it's ok. I used to sit like that before but I don't try it any more. It's not necessary.

*In those detached, peaceful clear moments
nothing seems to be very important.
Only a few fundamental truths
appear very clearly such as
impermanence, egolessness, craving,
suffering, greed and delusion....*



WHY CITTĀNUPASSANĀ

Emphasizing the mind is most important.

If you know your mind then you use the mind to look at your *kāya* / body and *vedanā* / feelings. The *kāya* you know with your mind, the *vedanā* you also know with your mind. If you get skilful with *Cittānupassanā* then you can do *Dhammānupassanā*.

The basics of *Vipassanā* meditation requires that you know both the body and mind, **but the mind is more important**. So that is why it is emphasized here.

When we meditate, we use our minds — that is why we should look at our mind. *Cittānupassanā* is part of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness; therefore we should know the mind. When you observe anything, all four foundations of Mindfulness are already

there anyway.

You must know *rūpa* and you must also know *nāma* — only then you will have an all-rounded view and knowledge. The mind will be able to work smoothly only if you understand the nature of the mind that is working.

When you understand the nature of the *sati*, the *samādhi*, the *virīya*, then you can really ascertain whether they are working properly or not.

Next, the defilements / *kilesa* only happen in the mind. If you are not aware of their presence in the mind, you will find you cannot meditate well.

If you don't know what attitude you are practising with and you are having the wrong attitude, you cannot achieve anything in the *Dhamma*.

Between the knowing mind and the object, if you don't know the mind, you cannot see true *paramattha*.

If you know-observe just only the object, you cannot be completely free from concepts.

And whether you are doing *kāya* or *vedanānupassanā* or anything you have to reach the knowing mind because this is how the Path is. There is no other way.

The practice of the *Dhamma* is such that you must come to this point where you know the knowing mind, awareness; being aware of your awareness.

Every practice must come to this point.

Knowing mind is the mind that knows the object, watching mind or 'one step up mind' is the one that knows of both of them.

Most people don't know the knowing mind, and don't get to the point where they can see the knowing mind that knows the object.

According to the Abhidhamma, these *cittas* / consciousness that arise one after the other and know of the process of consciousness that proceed them can actually arise infinitely. But to know just these two or three, is enough for you to be able to see that process and not confuse it with a self or personality.

It's only when you get to the mind that you get to real *paramattha*.

When you get to reality you don't see any more concepts. You see just the basic reality; only *paramattha* and you can see this only through the mind.

If you don't see how the mind works you don't know how the mind creates these concepts.

Concepts are created by the mind.

If you do not see that the concept is created by the mind you cannot see through it, you cannot stop it.

About the practice, when you are very high level and your *sati* and *samādhi* is very strong then what happens is, that you are looking at the knowing mind and the objects come to the knowing mind.

You don't have to go looking for the object. **The objects keep coming to the mind.**

You are aware of this, you are aware of that; The rising and falling, The way the mind makes up things, something is always there.

Of course you don't see a head or feet or hands or something like this, there is no concept involved, but some object is coming to the knowing mind.

It is not like we are aware of being aware of nothing, the object doesn't disappear. The objects are always there, we don't need to go down and focus on the objects.

Like you don't have to choose what object you want to know; you know the mind and the mind knows objects continuously one after the other. Objects do not stop.

*With Cittānupassanā you have to have
a teacher who teaches from experience,
it can not be taught from the book.*

To teach *Cittānupassanā* effectively the teacher and the student must have a close relationship and close contact and the student must be very honest and be able to explain his experiences very clearly and openly.

The kind of mind and attitude one practices with is very important.

Satipaṭṭhāna is the most important thing.

It is the way of continuously practising and if you are practising really continuously there is no way you are not going to see the mind.

*Your sati and samādhi will be so strong
that you are going to know that
this is the mind;
you need a lot more strength of mind
to see citta than to observe rūpa.*

If you want to be very effective you have to practise quite diligently.

The mind you see is very subtle and very fast.

You really need to apply your self.

If the mind is completely relaxed then the body will be relaxed too. If there is some tension in the body it means that the mind is not completely free of tension.

That is why you have to continue to watch what you can watch, that is, the tension in the body.

When the tension in the mind becomes completely zero all this will be very clear to you. (Zero is a balanced level where everything is nice and balanced and makes you feel very awake and light).

*So remember, body relaxed, and mind relaxed
— but alert!*

First you have to ask the yogi to watch his mind or what does he feel in the mind. If he can feel the mind that is fine. So it is not so much to look but **feel** it and observe it like this.

Pay attention to the feeling rather and not the place (where one imagines the mind to be).

As a teacher you always have to separate the conceived reality from the absolute reality for the student.

You always have to remind them that this part is concept, and that part is reality.

Ask the yogis: what is the mind doing now? Everyone can tell you what their mind is doing now.

They know what the mind is doing but they can't observe it. If you know what the mind is doing, you get to learn how to observe the mind. But it's difficult to explain the whole thing, you have to

let them practice, explain, practice, explain and so on.

The other thing is you have to tell them to make *sati-samādhi* strong. How you do this? **Continuous** practice.

You practice continuously, moment-to-moment awareness.

Then your *sati-samādhi* become more and more continuous, your mind becomes very strong, and becomes easier to see the mind.

Actually people think that this mind is so difficult to look at, but who is I?

Every body goes round making this mind into 'me' and **that** makes it so difficult to look at, because of the personality in between.

If *sati-samādhi* is weak you can't see it. If *sati-samādhi* is strong then things become very clear. Actually there is not 'I'. It's just the mind.

You ask people: What's happening in the mind? Observing this is *Cittānupassanā*. What work is the mind doing? What is the function of the mind?

If you are aware of anger for example, that is looking at the state of the mind. That is also *Cittānupassanā*. *Cittānupassanā* is the watching of the mind.

With everything we do, all activities without exception, there is the mind that knows of what we are doing, and the mind that observes that, and makes sure we don't get forgetful. 'The watching of the mind by the mind.' Anything to do with the mind is *Cittānupassanā*.



UNDER YOUR SKIN

A Quick Look At The Hindrances:

- There are pleasant and unpleasant hindrances. For example, pleasant visual hindrances such as the Buddha or the Sangha, Temples, Teachers etc.
- They promote faith. But too much faith brings blind devotion unless it is balanced with wisdom.

If there was wisdom in the first place one would have ignored the encouraging images.

Pleasant Bodily Sensations:

- Just look at them until they disappear.
- *Pīti* gives rise to joy; calm / *passadhi*, gives rise to comfort, to no pain, mental clarity inner happiness and so on, (caused by *samādhi*).
- Note, observe, and do not get attached.

Unpleasant Hindrances:

- Sleepiness-restlessness-boredom-doubt-remorse, (caused by lack of *samādhi*).
- **Sleepiness:** With good *sati* look at it directly without getting involved. If *sati* is weak look at the properties of sleepiness: dark, heavy, foggy and so on.

By continuously applying your self you will be able to overcome it. Sleepiness is only a mental state.

- **Restlessness:** Return to rising and falling until your mind gets calm enough to overcome it. Check for tension in your body and mind. Tension is the mother of restlessness.

- **Balancing the mind:** Look straight into the thinking mind. That will cause it to disappear. Then turn your attention to the rising and falling for three or four times and look right into the mind again checking for thinking / restlessness.

If there is restlessness turn your attention again to the rising and falling for a few breaths and look again into the mind checking for thinking.

Work like this again and again balancing the mind until thinking mind is totally overcome.

- **Boredom:** Seeing repetition and getting bored. Remind yourself that what you are seeing is always new.

Every breath, every thought, every image, every step or movement, you experience is brand new.

Mark the ending of experience carefully.

- **Doubt:** Before anything else see the teacher because different methods apply.

Look into this doubt mind, no reason to get alarmed, it's a very natural thing, but if questions arise while you are practising don't try to answer them. Leave them for later.

- **Remorse:** Again, see the teacher before anything else, because different methods apply. Don't let it affect you, or the present moment.

Doubt and Remorse will arise when the practice is good. Look directly into the mind that's causing it.

- **Sensual Desire:** Ask sensual desire — Why do you arise? Who are you?

Human life is the perfect environment for fighting and extinguishing defilement. Forget suppression, *Samatha* practice and

locking up yourself in a volt!

An experienced practitioner would check his mental attitude first and then check bodily sensations and would avoid looking at the mental image. Will drop the image immediately, and again and again if necessary.

The difficulty one faces with the dropping of the image, shows the strength of the attachment.

This last method works with all sense objects.

This latest practice will help you understand how mental attitudes and mental feelings cause you to suffer.

- **Sexual Desire:** In this case check your mental attitude first, then chest-heart area for mental feelings, totally ignore image and keep checking as before again.

If there is change in mental attitude you will feel it; i.e. mental heaviness, contraction, chest-heart area, or pleasantness and so on.

Also use your wisdom, see the bad side in what seems attractive and desirable, think of the results or the price you have to pay for sense pleasure.

Look at what's coming, what's following pleasant feeling. Observe that feeling.

This does not mean start feeling guilty!

As you observe continuously, the unpleasant feeling will decrease. (Your observing has to be at present moment, but to be able to do that, your mental attitude has to be right.)

Observe sensation until it goes down to zero.

This is very important, because if it doesn't work, it means *sati* is weak.

To increase *sati* look continuously into sensation area persisting, increasing *virīya*; i.e. Putting out fire — if its not much, a glass of water will put it out, if your whole house is burning a glass of water its useless.

This means that you have to face the situation at the beginning and not ignore it until it's too late.

Check very carefully your attitude: If there is wrong attitude there and you are able to see it clearly, acknowledge it, **that 'seeing' by itself will change and turn in time that negative attitude into positive.**

Do not change object until your present object zeros. If *sati* is strong, usually the mental feeling will decrease to zero, then the mental attitude will change to *upekkha* / neutral feeling, and the mental image will disappear and bodily sensation will break up or it will be just another sensation.

For a seasoned *Cittānupassanā* meditator the looking at the mental attitude changing will cause the image to disappear and the bodily sensation to break up.

So zap it with the X rays of your *sati* !

- **Motivating Citta:** Motivating mind is that mind-idea that arises as you are practising and makes you feel that you must attend immediately to some kind of job, before it's too late, or because this is the best time, or before you forget and so on.

This is one of the most devastating weapons in the destructive mind's arsenal. Very effective in dragging you right away from the practice. Can you feel its powerful force?

You must be aware and take care of it as soon as you encounter it. Watch it until it disappears. Even when it seems to have gone at the back of the mind it is still there and it will come to

the front again. You want it to go for good.

(Back and front of the mind are just concepts).

- **The arising of lobha / greed:** When you come into contact with objects the mind conceptualizes and says to you: 'This is good, useful, harmless...you can't do without it... just this once!' Gives you all the positive qualities.

That's when *lobha* arises. That's the cause of *lobha*. If we just observe the 'seeing' process then *lobha* will not arise.

Lobha can not differentiate between want and need. *Dosa* / anger, cannot differentiate between right and wrong.

These mind states are already in *moha* / delusion, and cannot know what is appropriate or not and cannot see causes and effects.

Kilesa is not mature. But if you can see your mind feeling *lobha*, *dosa*, comparing itself to this or that, then this mind that is aware is more mature, it has *sati*, it is knowing, it is not blind.

Defilements are not simple, and they don't let you be simple. They confuse you (they are of a confusing, deluding nature) they delay you on the path, distract you and push you out of the right way.

Always remember, whatever arises in the mind and body in this practice, is to be observed with equanimity. We never get involved or identify with the objects in any way at all.

We let them go their way and just watch. They are just temporary activities of the mind and can be overcome.

What's important about defilements is to understand their nature, not to avoid them.



IN ACTION

When you start practising a skillful teacher should be able to see where you are in your own practice, whatever that practice might be, and skillfully guide you to the observing of the mind (consciousness).

So assuming that you can look into your mind, *Cittānupassanā* starts with observing the characteristics of the consciousness; if you recognize the work that they do, that is their characteristic.

You are aware of some object and the mind that is aware of that object. You know this mind as the noting mind or consciousness or *citta*.

Then another *consciousness-citta* arises which is aware-watches over the first one which is aware of object and arises with the object and because of the object.

It knows what this first one is doing, knows its 'whereabouts' object and behaviour.

This consciousness is called watching mind, or one step up mind.

Once an object hits the field of awareness the noting mind is automatically there.

The watching mind is watching-knowing what the noting mind is doing-experiencing.

*Don't try to make your meditation experience better
but be with whatever is happening completely.*

That's the most important aspect of meditation.

Very important: to live in the present moment.

Every moment is a moment of meditation.

When sitting, look at the defilement that tells you to move. It's like a demanding child underestimating your wisdom. Look at it. Ask: Why?

Look at all these perfect reasons that it gives you. Don't take it for real, just keep looking at it. Then if you have to move, move. There's no rule that says not to move.

Try to see the ending of the noting mind. It happens very suddenly; like a snap of the fingers.

Don't get attached to happiness, to peace, to comfort, in sitting meditation. Keep your mind balanced all the time. Fly free.

You don't think, do I like this or do I not like this, but think should I do this or should I not do this.

Watch out for that liking mind!

Don't try to stop others disturbing you, it is impossible!

Personality is more like an idea in the mind, a thought. Which way are you going to go concept or reality?

The frowning face shows the state which the mind is into (especially in sitting).

Judging and 'I-ness' go together.

When you find you are self-judging you are caught in identification.

• **Blank Options:**

- Stay with the consciousness that knows of the consciousness which is aware of that blankness.
- Be aware of that neutrality as feeling.
- Don't stay with the blankness, go back to rising and falling.

When there is blank as you watch your mind, don't take it as 'practice gone wrong'. Blank, is object.

Nothingness is not nothing !

Also your reaction to it, the mental state that arises because of it: No object, what do I do now? It's another object, don't miss it.

Save your energy to last you until the end of the day.

Never think like: 'In the morning it is best, let's put all the effort then.' Just practise. Save your energy to go through the whole day, until the end of it.

The mind needs to slow down, become stable.



WALKING

The Buddha said that the *samādhi* you develop from walking meditation is much stronger than the *samādhi* that you develop from sitting meditation.

Very important to know because in the moving process if you can stay with that, the awareness is stronger.

When you walk it is the sensation that should be the object of meditation. Not the seeing of the lifting of the foot in the mind.

How do you feel in the muscles? And also the mind, how do you feel in the mind?

As you do the walking meditation what is in your mind? Let the mind choose the object, and just be aware of it. What is it doing now? What does it know?

It is important to know and note what is the mind doing. You can take any object in walking meditation as long as the mind is known.

Don't go to objects let them come to you.

Do you have greed, anger, expectations, or aversion in that mind that is meditating?

If you don't see your own mind (seeing your own mind is meditating) as you are meditating, and your own attitudes, your own mindsets, opinions, views, prejudices and ideas in that mind, **you can't say that you are practising.**

Attention of 50% to body and 50% to mind. Gradually go to 100% mind. Use the step as an anchor, begin by putting your attention at the sole of the foot, when mental activity appears turn your attention to the mind for as long as it takes.

Deal with it until it clears, then turn your attention to your walking, until something appears in the mind again. Then turn your attention to the mind, observe the mind.

If some powerful, overwhelming mental state appears, stop and deal with it. Sit down on a chair if you have to, giving it 100% of your attention for as long as it takes to deal with it.



DAILY ACTIVITIES

Where is awareness?

What is it doing?

What is it aware of?

Aware of something?

What does that feel like?

What are the sensations involved?

Use body movements and sensations as reference point-anchor, and observe the mind. (Mental impressions, states, reactions).

Again, when a powerful mental state appears turn your attention to it just like we said in walking.

- *Speaking Mindfully:*

In the speaking process there is nobody involved!

When you speak bring happiness to everybody. Others will respect you for it and take you seriously.

When you are mindful you are above all things and people will respect you and pay attention to what you have to say.

No talking is for beginners, the Buddha said, be mindful when you are speaking or when you are silent. So learn to speak and be silent mindfully.

Speak with awareness, listen with awareness.

As soon as you are approached by people alert yourself to be mindful with talking, **without getting emotionally involved.**

Watch out when the other person stops talking and its your turn to speak.

Don't rush into it out of control, like we usually do and lose our mindfulness.



Speak slowly and short so that the other person slows down too.

Speak mindfully and to the point.

Don't over speak and get carried away. In life you have to be able to do both or spend all your life in a silent meditation centre.

In order to keep mindful when you speak, **don't follow your emotions.**

The moment you start liking this or disliking that — clinging — the mind gets carried away.

Every phrase you say, look at the mind over and over again and check for right speech and mindfulness.

The mind has to try to be aware of itself.

Try to be aware all the time of the mind watching the mind.

Keep the finger on the big one!

Keep the finger on the big one means:

Are you in control or being controlled?

Is the mind collected or scattered?

Maintain that distance between object
and knowing mind.

Stay with the 'one step up mind'.

Apply this to all practices.

When your mind has a lot to do, has to do more work, it progresses better.

Watch the mind all the time. Then you will understand how it works.

Then you will be able to do everything and be watching the mind: reading, writing, speaking, going out in the city, and so on.

You will be an observer, watching a show!

When you feel discomfort, pain, agitation, that is the moment to look into your mind! (All postures)

No noting! This is true Vipassanā!



DO YOUR BEST
THAT'S ENOUGH

***Sitting is not the highest level of practice;
to be able to live in the world mindfully is.***

No need to sit for hours on end. Sit as long as you can, do your best. That's enough.

Vedanā, is not only pleasant or unpleasant feeling. When you smell something and you feel like you want to eat, when you see a pretty girl and you feel like you want to have it, that is also *vedanā*.

When greed arises look particularly for the specific characteristics (form, taste) that make you want it so much, look at it carefully. Do you really want it so much? Just how much? For how long?

Viriya is the effort you make to be constantly observing the noting mind. When the mind is tired and not strong enough change to an easier object (in sitting). Now and then look in the mind and body, check for tension.

Use the noting mind as your reference point-anchor and the other minds as objects. In this practice the noting mind is the anchor.

Do not do a word of contemplation as you are sitting.

It weakens the mind, it weakens *sati* and *samādhi*. Even a why or what is bad enough. The mind gets tired in a way that **it loses energy and needs rebuilding.**

When it comes to knowing for yourself, you do not need to use words because you already know what it is. In fact when you start knowing really subtle sensations and mind states, no words can describe them because words are mostly for all the gross realities we know. So words are really not helpful, they can even get in the way.

Thought happens in the mind. The mind is immaterial. (Immaterial here means: not of matter).

Don't negotiate with hindrances and unprofitable things. Look at them straight in the eye, look straight into that mind. Whatever it is it will disappear and won't come back. Do not put it aside.

The easier and simpler your lifestyle is, the easier it is to keep your mindfulness. Mindfulness keeps your life simple and easy, you make less mistakes, in life and you suffer less.

Meditating is knowing what is going on, being mindful.

*Not about trying to stop what is going on,
or trying to have an experience that is not there.*

The most basic and important factor in meditation is to be in the present moment and have no thoughts or words about what you are knowing; **this is *paramattha*.**

Whatever happens in the moment is your object.

The mind cannot remain without an object to attend to, when it's not knowing anything, it tends to think and that **tires** the mind.

Our minds are in the habit of identifying with concepts that have been given to us since we were born. These concepts hide reality from us.

When meditating, the mind is taking a rest from concepts. It **gives no name** to what it is experiencing. It **only knows** what is happening directly without any thoughts about it.

This can be an amazing experience.

With all practices just ask: where is awareness now, what is it doing? That's *Cittānupassanā* the correct way.

Another way, is to be able to watch constantly, if the mind is forgetful or collected, and this instruction **comes directly from The Buddha himself**, about the contemplation of the consciousness.

In sitting when *sati* gets stronger you'll see that the mind doesn't go anywhere, objects come to its field of awareness. But the mind moves very fast within its field of awareness.

Bored? Look at that boredom, until you can see what is behind that. Most likely it is unhappiness. Look at this unhappiness until you can see what is behind that. You will find *kilesa* there.

Once you can see *kilesa* and come face to face with it and acknowledge it, a change of attitude, will take place in the mind which will eliminate that *kilesa*. Without you having to do anything at all.

This process of contemplating like this, can take place as you keep walking or sitting down. If walking, you stop watching the step and turn your attention fully to the mind.

Kilesa will disappear and won't bother you again for days!

You will find there are **two things** there: *sati* and *kilesa*, both trying to take over the mind. So don't be surprised that in the process of contemplation, it might take you up to thirty minutes sometimes before *sati* predominates and the mind is really cleared.

Be aware:

***aware in every context-contact in time and
whatever the experience might be
without resisting anything.***

This is the only spiritual exercise worth practising.

Only what you can know by feeling-sensing directly is real. Thoughts-concepts are just that, they are not reality. The life of the spirit is the life that lives exclusively in the present, here and now, nowhere in the past or future.

***The knowledge you get from meditating is so direct and simple,
you need not philosophize nor analyze to know it.***

It just is, you just know.

People think they know themselves well, but this is not true; what they know is a lot **about** themselves. If you really know your own mind the greed, the delusion, the anger, the unwholesomeness that drives the mind, then these will slowly decrease.

When you understand your mind you are no longer at its mercy. Then you truly find lasting happiness; you know how to keep yourself happy.

You will be able to see how the mind creates its own problems and unhappiness. It is necessary to just **look and know** the state of the mind. There is no **need to correct, or change, or control** the mind, just know what it really is.

*Know your feelings, how a mind state affects you and
without thinking further on the subject,
just know what you can experience directly,
i.e. the feeling of anger or doubt, disgust.
And when the feeling decreases
see how the state of the mind has changed.*

There is **no need to justify or stop** what you are feeling. (What you can sense and know directly).

*Thoughts are merely your assumptions not
what you know really or directly.*

When meditating, if you come across interesting experiences do not try to make them happen again. You don't want to re-experience second hand experiences. That will cause unnecessary agitation.

What you can experience is only what is happening in the present, **now**.

Samādhi on it's own, is not worth achieving unless it helps in getting greater *sati*.

When there is hearing of something, keep your mind at the ear. You will know what it hears — no need to turn your attention out towards the object. Keep the mind at the ear and note what sensations arise at the ear.

No mind can last while you look at it. As soon as you look at it, it disappears.

Most important, the mind has to be in the present moment. Only then it can see *paramattha*. Truth. Ultimate reality.

A person with *sati* chooses simply what has better quality, whether it is his actions, words, speech or thoughts, and so the quality of his or her life improves.

If you do not do what you have to do with quality, it can destroy your whole life.

With *sati* you are aware, the moment you get excited, angry, upset, so it doesn't grow to extreme limits. So you regain calmness and control more quickly.

At this point in time it is good to have a teacher to guide you.

***Don't try to get higher and higher in the practice but
first try to maintain what you got.***

When some memory (good or bad) comes what's important is that you **don't let it affect you any more**. Just stay with the present moment.

With all practices: everything you do, see arising and passing away.

Where is the comfort?

Slowly if you have awareness you will automatically see. The mind by itself will see this impermanence everywhere. This is wisdom.

This way the mind becomes mature and strong and less attached.

Maturity has nothing to do with age; some people are sixty but they are not mature yet.

Some people are thirty but they are only fifteen in the mind.

When bad, unpleasant things will come in the practice, you must keep going on so that the mind will get up to the point when wisdom wants to be free from this process.

If you want freedom from suffering first you have to see what suffering is. (Every *nāma* and *rūpa* is suffering).

You will not want any arising and passing away any more. You will want to be free from all that.

Just stay always in present moment and you will see; all this wisdom is in you and slowly growing and knowing what to do.

Use your mindfulness to wake up this wisdom and help it grow. To see the arising and passing away of the mind and object is important for the realization of the three characteristics (*anicca*, *dukkha*, *anatta*).

*Can you see that the mind that wants to be active
and the mind that is sleepy are separate?*

*If you are aware of these as separate,
this is Cittānupassanā.*

*Kilesa mind is separate, Viriya mind,
Ñāṇa mind is separate,
you must always be aware of these and
with sati you can know it.*



MILE STONES

Meditation is the way of knowing the true nature of what is happening in our bodies and our minds as it is. It's more like observation rather than investigation.

There is a sense of investigation but it must not be clouded by our opinions and judgements.

Meditation is to teach the mind to become cultured, refined and flexible. There is no expectation of the practice on you because you want to see what it presents to you, as it is.

In order to realize the *Dhamma* you will need to see arising and passing away eventually. But as you practice meditation you should have no expectations to see arising and passing away.

Everything is actually arising and passing away; so you just watch whatever you see. If you have expectations to see arising and passing away you won't see arising and passing away.

Don't expect *nāṇas* (insight knowledge) or anything. What you need to know is how to meditate the right way. If you do that, all phenomena will show their true nature to you.

Do you have greed, anger, expectations, or aversion in that mind that is meditating? Can you see in your mind as you are meditating your own attitudes, your own mind sets, views opinions and ideas in that mind? If you don't, **you are not really practising.**

If you are practising with the wrong attitude, for example and you are not aware of it in your own mind you won't be effective in your practice.

If you check the mind regularly then it tends to be calm because you are always checking it.

Those who practice *Cittānupassanā* see the hidden side of their minds more. They see the defilements and this is important because only if you see your own defilements you know how to note and deal with the defilements when they arise in the mind. This is very important. When you have no defilement and your practice is going ok that's not a problem, but if defilement arises what are you going to do?

When you come across the hindrances you must know how to handle them, how to note them effectively so that you can get past them because they are obstacles on the path. They block progress. So to know the mind is very, very important in order to progress. If you only know the wandering mind it is not enough.

You have to practice *Cittānupassanā* as well as all other *Anupassanās*, (Four Foundations of Mindfulness) other wise your practice is not complete.



NOTING EFFECTIVELY MEDITATION EXPERIENCES

Always remember that when we say 'noting' in this practice we mean ***wordlessly***.

Labelling in this practice is not used at all.

- ***Dealing with Anger:***

Say that you are experiencing anger. Anything to do with that anger you observe it, whether is the feelings, your body sensations, your mental activity and sensations. Any of it, if you look at it, is called noting your anger.

But if you are repeating anger, anger, anger, to your self, this is not called noting. Because now your mind is looking at the word anger, and you are not thinking about what you are angry about any more.

You are not thinking about the story line any more.

But you are also not looking at anything that you are experiencing directly that is related to anger in your body and your mind.

If you are not observing any of this bodily and mental activity you are not noting, you are just repeating a word to your self.

Noting means looking at the bodily and mental activity that is happening in the present moment.

Others — in other traditions — when they feel anger they start asking: Who is angry? Who is the entity that is angry. And they forget all about anger and noting that anger!

That is not noting. You are **not noting the direct effects** of the experience you are having, **but diverting the attention to something else**. It has to be the direct effects of the experience. Has to be direct experience.

Try not to judge your own anger, because that doubles the trouble. You have the anger pain and the judging pain to deal with at the same time.

Look at the feeling of anger and it loses its power. Look at the story and it gets stronger.

When you are dealing with anger, look straight into it.

Don't want it to go away. If you have that attitude no matter how much you try it's not going to go away.

So simply look at it. Look right into it. Sometimes people watch their anger and expect it to disappear immediately.

Don't expect that. Just learn how to look into your mind. Use that anger to learn from.

Consider these two ways of dealing with anger:

- Being reasonable and thinking if the other person is actually not aware of making you angry or he has a reason to behave the way he does.
- Watch that sensation in your body and mind, don't judge and don't elaborate. Just stick with the knowing mind, don't worry about the object.

Also do not expect all sorts of pains and problems to disappear quickly. Even when you take medicine pains do not go away instantly.

With *Vipassanā* you cannot hurry things up. Just stay mindful all the time and in good time things will happen.

*

When the yogi does walking meditation he notes 'lifting', his *samādhi* is very strong and he can see the lifting of the foot in his mind but does not feel the sensations of the lifting at all ! This is not noting.

So if things do not work, if the object does not decrease, or it is not clear enough you have to check your noting.

Another thing that is good to check always is your attitude. What is your attitude about the practice now? Is there lazy mind, bored mind, not relaxed?

Clear the mind so that you can apply yourself.

Cittānupassanā is about the content of the mind, observing it, feeling it. Whatever happens in your mind do not avoid it, don't try to make it go away. Look at the feeling, let yourself experience it, see the reason why it arose in your mind and make this a habit in your practice always.

Don't get carried away by pleasant feeling or unwholesome feeling.

If the rising and falling becomes subtle look at that mind that observes the rising and falling. Watching the subtle object requires more effort. Beginners can take a grosser object for observation if they cannot observe it.

However trying to see the subtle object will make your *satisamādhi* strong. When you look at the mind but you are not so strong the mind wanders.



PAIN

If you don't want to look at the pain that's fine; then look at the mind. You must start looking at the mind the moment that the pain begins, not when it's already very strong, because then it'll be too difficult to be able to watch the mind.

Watch the mind, the way it reacts, the way it feels, the way it speaks to you. Then you'll find that the pain disappears. (This also works with likes and dislikes).

To be able to look in the mind you have to be more skilful, because it is not as easy as looking at the pain, which is very obvious.

If you look in the mind and you still see the pain, change and look at the discomfort of the situation. There are many different levels of discomfort that you can look at, there. Just choose one. With pain the most important thing is to relax, clear the mind, do not allow agitation to reach high levels.

If you choose to watch the painful sensation, then just relax into it. Don't use the word pain for noting it. It will only make things worse. Don't think this is pain, you don't even think at all. You are just with it relaxing into it.

You might have realized by now that pain or any other sensation is not yours, does not in any way belong to you. It is only sensation, just sensation going its own way. You don't think about you. If you practice this way you will find it is not that difficult either.



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

*When it seems to you that it is difficult or
even impossible to meditate,
that is the most important time for you to meditate.
(Must never forget) !*

Keep the level of *sati* steady throughout the day. No gaps, no loops. Do not get involved with mental impressions, stay in control, don't listen to the mind don't follow the mind, or what the mind wants. Just observe. This will lead to equanimity.

*Practising mindfulness,
in the beginning without labelling
might feel not so strong, or not so solid but
that kind of mindfulness is actually much stronger
than when you are practising with labelling.*

In all practices see arising and passing away, in this way the mind gets stronger and less attached.

Then mindfulness will see *anicca* automatically everywhere.

Keep the finger on the big one (mind), know what the noting mind is doing.

Don't label; just know.

Reactions, moods, motivations, and postures: are to be kept aware of.

Look and feel at the effects that ideas and the outside world have on the mind.

Check out that relationship there. Let things come to you. Don't go after them. Don't get too slack in the last sitting !

Go to sleep meditating.

Don't get tense during the day. That is making you tired. Check always for tension. Don't react automatically — be mindful.

Your life depends on the quality of your mind.

Never do anything in a hurry, never be upset, and never boast!

Look at that mind and liberate the moment, each moment.

Make *sati* your companion.

'I will not harm myself or others.' If you harm anyone in any way it is going to affect your practice and hinder it. Be patient and forgiving, you can't go through life without being hurt.

If the 'worse person in the world' happens to be next to you doing the most unacceptable things and you start judging, disliking, comparing, hating, even trying to control, you have totally failed in your practice !

Difficult or unpleasant situations or people? Accept, watch sensation, stay inside yourself, and don't go out of yourself.

If you see a person that you don't like, don't look at that person, look at your mind. (Do not follow the dislike in your mind! Just watch it).

That person might be passing you by. You don't like that person at that time but that person is not doing anything to you. You are doing it to your self.

So don't react, keep going, staying in the now as it is. If you do react then watch your reactions.

When you are retreating, you must try not to make enemies and arguments with people and not to take sides with people who have arguments or fights. If you keep mindful, you'll be able to go through without trouble.

Every time you experience something new, anxiety comes into the practice. Don't worry about the cause of your anxiety. That's irrelevant. Just be aware of the feeling of anxiety.

Use your *mettā* to protect you from enemies and negativity.

Before you act look at who is behind the scenes.

Is it lobha? Is it dosa?

If so, do you want to please or get rid of lobha and dosa?

*'Do not follow the mind,
do not go against the mind,
just look at the mind.'*

You don't do things because you like them but because you are interested.

When you are experiencing something directly without thinking about it, that's *paramattha*.

Meditation is happening by itself.

Nobody does meditation.

Cittānupassanā: awareness of mental impressions, thoughts, consciousness, mental states.

While you are meditating don't try to keep notes. If you think: Oh! This one is very good I better write it down before I forget — then the practice is gone.

*You have to go beyond that.
You have to even let go of your insight.*

In this practice your object is changing continuously, all the time, but awareness is continuous. No matter how fast objects arise and pass away, you can keep up with them.

Effort is about being continuously watching the object without a break. Not focusing too hard, or harder. **It is relaxed effort, not tense effort.**

Moment to moment continuous attention leads to *Vipassanā Jhānas*. That leads to being able to see arising and passing away. Every moment there is something to learn. So pay attention to the moment.

You start feeling bored when you judge the experience you've experienced. Just know, keep knowing what's happening as it is.

Why you want to come back to what you've been doing before? You have this **expectation** that what you've been doing was so good!

If you feel tired look at that tiredness. Don't think about what's happening. Just pure awareness, pure watching. **Knowing by knowing.** That brings the best practice and builds the best quality, stronger *sati-samādhi*.

RIGHT ATTITUDE

(The centre's own pamphlet for yogis)

- ❖ The most important thing when you are meditating is to have the right attitude. When meditating:
 - Don't focus too hard
 - Don't control
 - Don't try to create something
 - Don't force or restrict yourself
 - Don't try to create anything
 - But don't reject what is happening.

- ❖ But as things happen or stop happening, don't forget. Be aware of them.

- ❖ Trying to create something is *lobha* (greed).
 Rejecting what is happening is *dosa* (aversion).
 Not knowing if something is happening or
 has stopped happening is *moha* (delusion).

- ❖ Only when the observing mind has no *lobha*, *dosa*,
 nor *soka* (worry-anxiety) inside it,
 then the meditating mind will arise.

- ❖ You have to double check to see
 what attitude you are meditating with.
 You have to accept and watch
 both good and bad experiences.

You only want good experiences.
You don't want even the tiniest
unpleasant experience.
Is this fair? Is this the way of the Dhamma?

- ❖ Don't have any expectations.
Don't want anything.
Don't be anxious.
Because if these attitudes are in your mind,
it's difficult to meditate.
- ❖ Why are you focusing so hard when you meditate?
You want something to stop happening?
It is likely that one of these attitudes is there.
- ❖ Is the mind getting tired?
Something is wrong with the way you are practising.
- ❖ You cannot practise when the mind is tense.
If the mind and body are getting tired
it is time to check the way you are meditating.
Meditating is waiting and watching with awareness
and comprehension-understanding.
Not thinking, not reflecting, not judging.
- ❖ Don't practise with a mind that wants
something or wants something to happen.
The only result will be that you will tire yourself.

- ❖ The meditating mind should be relaxed and at peace.
- ❖ Both the mind and the body should be comfortable.
A light and free mind enables you to meditate well.
Do you have the right attitude?
Meditating is, whatever happens good or bad,
accepting, relaxing and watching it.
- ❖ What is the mind doing?
- ❖ Thinking? Or being aware?
Where is the mind now?
Inside? Or outside?
- ❖ Is the watching-observing mind properly aware?
Or only superficially aware?
- ❖ You are not trying to make things turn out
the way you want it to happen.
- ❖ You are trying to know what is happening as it is.
- ❖ Don't feel disturbed by the thinking mind.
You are not supposed to reject the object
(phenomena: things that are happening —
being known).

- ❖ You are to know (and thus note-observe)
the defilements that arise because of the object
and thus remove them.

- ❖ Only when there is *saddhā* / faith,
virīya / effort will arise.
Only when there is *virīya*, *sati* will become continuous.
Only when *sati* is continuous,
samādhi will become continuous.
Only then *samādhi* is established,
then you will know things as they really are.

- ❖ When you start to know things as they really are,
saddhā then increases further.

- ❖ Just pay attention to what is,
exactly in the present moment.

- ❖ Don't go back to the past!
Don't plan for the future!
The object is not important.
The mind that is working in the background,
working to be aware i.e. The observing-watching
mind, is more important.

- ❖ If the observing-watching mind is done with the right
attitude the object will be the right object.



OBJECT

Although you look at the body you don't see the body you only look at the object; that is the sensations that you want to focus on.

So depending on where you are practising you might find you are doing the same thing using different technique.

When you have wandering mind it's not you, that's the nature of the mind. Stop blaming it on your self.

If you look at an object directly, the mind in order to know has to visualize the object and in visualizing, form always comes in. So concept is not lost.

When you look at the mind and you know that the mind is not doing any kind of visualization then you know you are at real *paramattha*.

Then you get to *Dhammānupassanā*.

Real *paramattha* then is *Dhammānupassanā*.

What is real *paramattha*? Real *paramattha* has only its characteristics, when you see the object you see only its characteristics, the characteristics are changing, are impermanent.

When you get to real *paramattha* you don't know this is heat, cold, tension, fear, agitation, craving. You just know that this is the **changing nature** of the object.

The object is just object, all objects become the same as well, because identification with heat is still identification. Because identification is just a sense of what it is and it is changing.

When you look through the mind you don't think, where does this object come from, that is why you get closer to *paramattha*. Absolute reality.

Because the **object** comes into the mind you don't have to identify with the object any more. Because you know this object, object, object! Object has only one nature: **Object**.

If you know that you are relaxed, that's object. You can't say that you don't know of anything.

So if you don't think that you know of object you still know your state or mind.

Later things won't be subtle any longer, keep acknowledging that awareness is still present. You can watch your wandering mind but don't get involved.



BE WITH WHAT EVER IS

You don't select objects, just be there and aware.

You don't try to experience past experiences.

You don't try to get anywhere.

Don't encourage thinking, encourage seeing.

You develop sharper awareness

if you watch closely the passing away.

Real happiness is not wanting anything.

Don't lie down too long it makes you lose your sharpness. If you have to rest maintain some mindfulness, keep sharp alert, awake and balanced. Do not encourage sleeping.

If you get lazy, motivate yourself, self-motivation is very important.

Thinking makes you lose awareness.

Note ego, wrong views, comparing, competing. Have no thoughts or words about what you are knowing. You already know.

When meditating the mind is taking a rest from concepts. It gives no name to what is experiencing. It only knows what is happening directly without any thoughts.

It is necessary to look and know the state of the mind. Know what you can experience directly. There is no need to justify or stop what you are feeling.

Don't let memories affect you, or the present moment.

If you want freedom from the process, (mind and body) you must see what the process is first. **Do not depend on externals-material things** for your peace of mind, depend only on your own mind. Do not think of thoughts or wandering mind as a disturbance. That is just another object.

It's not worth it getting upset about anything at all!

When you meditate it is important to keep your mind on par-amattha (movements, sensations of body and mind etc.)

If you don't, the mind can still become calm and concentrated but you cannot feel reality, you won't be able to develop deep insight.

We cannot directly experience concepts. Only by experiencing the quality — hard, soft, cold, heat, stiffness, pressure, heaviness, tension, pain, fear, craving, doubt — we are experiencing directly without thinking about it.

Growth is a process of trial and error.

Life is a series of experiments until the day we die!

Tension is excessive energy.

Be in control and not controlled by the mind, don't react, who's the boss?!

Attention moment to moment; see disappearing? Watch that thought-thinking, very closely but **don't get involved**. What you see: Is it satisfactory? Is it controllable? Is it lasting? Is it *Atta*?

You will see all things, just stay in present moment.

What's important about defilements is to understand their nature, not to avoid them.

Attitude:

even if you go to a relaxed place, don't stop trying.

Attachment:

watch that mind that says, I know so much.

Note the interpreter, the explainer, **the one who reacts**, in the mind when these thoughts come just be aware of them and that you are interpreting (car sound, bird,) and they will go away gradually.

If you don't interpret, react and explain for a long time something strange happens again: It seems like you are not experiencing anything very well. Your experience is not very strong any more. **This is normal.**

Don't do any labelling, it'll get in the way and slow you down. In *Vipassanā* you can change object as long as you are aware, as long as you don't think. It works on *kanika samādhi*.

When you are meditating whatever is happening right now is your object of meditation. Be ready, be present, an object is always there.

Do not expect what will happen next, do not try to create experience, or to make your meditation experience better, just be with whatever is happening completely. That's the most important aspect of meditation.

Be with whatever is.

Meditating is very-very simple. Are you willing to be simple?

Train yourself to be mindful of all six senses, seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, body feeling and **thought**. (Thought, as well as everything that arises in the mind is sensation).



SURVIVAL

Concepts, Ideas, and Names are Prisons, they are useful to use, but they are also prisons.

If you want to free the mind you have to find what they really are, their limitations, how they affect you and also go beyond concepts, words and ideas.

So this is one form of reality.

If we don't interpret things in the right way we will not survive.

So this is necessary for our survival.

In the evolution process we have learned to interpret things the right way. But to go beyond ordinary reality you leave these things behind.

Knowing your wandering mind is *Cittānupassanā* but on a very gross level.

Knowing what you are hearing, is not *Cittānupassanā* it is just hearing.

When you've been meditating for some time you don't stop looking at the subtle object and not let the subtle object disappear.

This takes more skill and strength from the mind but now you have that.

So exert energy and keep going. In Burmese 'meditate' also means exert energy. So try a bit harder, wake up!

The *samādhi* required to look at the gross object, and the *samādhi* required to look at the subtle object is not the same.

By trying to stay with the subtle object the level of *samādhi* increases. And only when you look at more and more subtle objects, only when it gets very subtle, you get closer to *paramattha*. Before that, you are with lots of concepts yet.

In daily activities practice, look and watch the mind, don't follow it. Look into it, watch what its doing, what's happening in the mind and don't force anything.

The mind always compares, you always like some dislike some, You don't have to follow the mind.

Some times it is more effective to look at the *vedanā* / feeling, what is happening, what does it feel like, then the next thing you know is the presence of mind.

Focusing on pure reality is helpful. Just sensation.

Right attitude helps immensely to go through difficult times: painful times, tiredness, boredom, so check that state of mind always.

*When you see the object and the knowing mind
arising and passing away together
then you understand the watching mind,
because it's the watching mind that sees that.*

The watching mind is also a knowing mind, which appears when we want to observe the knowing mind.

If the watching mind is not so interested in the object, it tends to fly away. Then wandering mind appears.

Try to look at many objects and keep the momentum happening so that wandering mind does not interfere. If the momentum slows down then patches of wandering mind will appear.

• *Eating:*

It is more important to note, than it is to eat.

Watch the eye scanning the food table, watch the opening and closing of the mouth as food enters it. While eating, watch flavour, pay attention to your self, don't go outside yourself.

When eating is not so pleasurable, meditation is going well! So you've had your meal, being mindful of all your sensations, eating it, and then when you ask your self, 'well what did I eat?' You can't remember! Or it takes you a while to recall!

That's because you didn't pay attention to concepts. You forgot what you ate because you didn't pay attention to the

concepts like: 'I ate chicken or carry.'

All you did was sensations, sensations, sensations and sensations!

No meaning comes into your mind about what you are eating, so when you get up you can't remember, or it takes you a while to remember. You can remember the whole process that you ate but you can't remember what you ate!

With eating remember three things always: sensations, taste, mind states. You can include movements as well as intentions as you go on. When you get very relaxed even eating is very calming.

When your mindfulness is lacking you tend to eat too fast! On the other hand when you are mindful it seems that it takes so much energy just to eat!

Because you are so calm! It's exhausting! And being aware of all your sensations, makes it feel so painful!

Every moment something is coming through the five sense doors to the mind constantly. So you are aware of something.

With all practices, try to have awareness of yourself every moment. If you really have awareness first, and awareness is first place and everything else comes second, then you will find really you start going up in the practice. The mind becomes obedient and tamed. The more you look at subtle sensations the stronger the mind becomes. Choose the subtle sensations, the neutral ones that make you work harder and make *satisamādhi* strong.



NOTHING ADDED AT ALL

The act of just being, in all its simplicity and naturalness with nothing added at all. Seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching, thinking, not 'I am' thinking.

That is the most important point, with nothing added at all. It's just the experience of simple being of simple process.

No noting. As much as you learn to do that, you will find that you become more and **more peaceful** because peacefulness and simplicity go together.

If you want to be peaceful be very simple.

If you want to 'get somewhere' in meditation, some certain stage or experience, remember that the harder you try the harder it becomes.

*If you really don't try anything at all
you'll find that you are there.*

Without developing sufficient energy-intensity of the first insight you cannot go to the next insight. Actually one insight leads to another when it is ready. When it is developed sufficiently and strongly enough.

But you cannot voluntarily go into another insight. We cannot do that. That will happen so don't be in a hurry. Stay where you are and develop deep enough.

You cannot push your self too hard.

Right attitude behind the practice will turn into the foundation, into the strength that you need to be aware of every moment

of your day. Eventually the mind becomes obedient and tamed.

*The priority of the yogi is to be mindful,
not to finish the job.*

The most important thing in sitting is to be balanced and at ease. When you think of sensation, like pulling or pressing, stretching, pushing, all that, has direction so don't think of it like that. Just be aware of it.

In the mind the arising of liking and disliking, impatience and wanting is amazing and constant. It is subtler than thoughts and images and mental states because of the feeling that accompanies them.

Note the boredom, joy, determination, deciding, ego, identifying, attitude, clinging, intending, and all kinds of mental feeling.

When you have wandering mind, just try to be aware of it, if you try to get rid of it, it'll make you very tired.

*The burden of life is not so big;
the burden of greed is bigger. Greed is limitless.*

Never look-stay with the quietness and stillness because then you will really start going down. The reason you are losing it-slowing down, is because you don't look at it clearly. Focus on it clearly. Just keep noting your main object focusing on it clearly.

The moment you start knowing that your mind is becoming quiet put in more energy immediately. When awareness becomes stronger it becomes able to go closer to the object. But you don't try to force that energy, let it happen naturally.

You will find that you start to see more detail. Gradually you become very skilful looking and seeing many objects in both the body and the mind. Just keep looking at it.

The more you know the practice the more it makes you know more things. Many things here means the mind knows many things.



COMPASSION IS THE ONLY WAY

*It is much more rewarding to study your own mind
and your own life than anything else.*

When pain starts, look at your mind as soon as you know of it, and stay with the mind. In this way you will not have to experience pain at all.

Try to know about your 'wanting' when you walk and you start looking around.

Try to know the 'wanting' before all things that cause you to lose your mindfulness.

When you begin the retreat just keep your awareness continuous, be relaxed and check always for tension building up.

Don't try to focus too much or too hard. Later the continuous mindfulness will strengthen your mind and focusing will come naturally strong.

In the beginning the watching mind cannot follow, later it becomes more workable and flexible and the watching mind can follow the noting mind closer. The mind becomes obedient.

How do you know which mind is the noting mind? It is the mind that is with the object and knows of the object, arises with

the object and because of the object, (and passes away with the object and because of the object).

How do you know which mind is the watching mind? It's the mind that knows where the noting mind is and what it is doing.

If you have to choose between many sensations you should choose the more subtle one so that *sati-samādhi* increases because of the effort.

The more you look at subtle sensation the stronger the mind becomes.

When you are aware of the presence of *kilesa* and you are tempted to follow *kilesa* mind, before you do anything ask: Do you want to please *kilesa* or get rid of it? And act accordingly.

Please be mindful even though it is hard sometimes. When you think it is impossible to be mindful **that's the time when it is the most important to be mindful.**

If you understand how to practise then you can teach it to others. If you like to teach others there's only one-way to do it.

It's like you've found something good and precious and you wish to share it with others. Don't perceive your self as a 'teacher' because things start getting complicated there.

One wants to be in a certain way, adopts a 'teacher' persona, starts looking down on others and feeling 'one step above', 'everyone depends on me', 'I have to be treated in such and such a way', 'everyone has to do exactly as I say' and so on.

All these things will come and hurt you and the students. Rather see your self as a giver.

Don't try to use the students as your record of some 'amazing' teacher! Don't try to be some 'amazing' teacher, just be a proper teacher.

The Buddha said:

Compassion is the only way, sharing with others.

Happiness is having a quiet mind. Happiness is being completely mindful, so mindful that there is no thought, no sense of 'I'!

This happiness comes when all thoughts of past and future do not occur. No 'I', no tomorrow, no plan. In that time that moment there isn't an 'I' experiencing that bliss. There is only the happiness.

Real happiness has no reason.

When you are really happy you cannot say 'I am happy because....' If you try to be happy, you are sure to fail. Real happiness comes without being invited. 'Why am I so happy?'

See, when you are happy you want to know why you are happy. That's the way the mind is. Always wanting to know why.

Keep watching how the mind creates stories and pulls you in.

You don't look at the story, you look at that function of the mind. You don't look at the concept, the story, look at how the mind creates the story, and not you.

The mind is one thing the story is another thing.

The mind makes a story and serves it to you. You buy it. By watching that, you will be able to see how the mind creates its own unhappiness.

Look how things affect the mind; desirable things rob it from its mindfulness, calm and wisdom and turn it into a slave of greed.

Look how delusion (the stories created by the mind) drag it away from *paramattha*.

Watch how anger arises and takes over it and controls it unwisely even dangerously.

You can see the anger arising, but can you see the **cause** of that anger? Can you see that it is **pride**?

It is because of that pride that this 'how can you do or say that to me' arises.

This is very important. This is how one really learns. Learning from the defilements, anger, frustration, lust, envy, pride, jealousy, desire, greed, all that. Watching them can teach us so much about the Dhamma, and ourselves and by watching them we can overcome them.

Protect the mind and be patient, it's all just passing by.

Seeing images in the mind, thinking, remembering, and imagining, planning, are not *paramattha* reality.

All these different things arising in the mind are not *paramattha*.

The knowing of it is.



RUBBISH !

When you find yourself just looking, note it as looking, **wordlessly**. Don't look for the mind separately; the mind is there with the object 'knowing' so try to know a lot of objects.

When your awareness is very strong then because of the momentum and the strength of your mind that momentum carries it along.

Then the wandering mind doesn't come in. When the 'momentum' is not strong now and then you will experience wandering mind. Conversely, if awareness is good wandering mind

won't stay for long.

Note continuously (wordlessly) but check for tension.

Noting not continuously is rubbish!

Focus your mind in a relaxed way not too much.

If you are calm and concentrated but you are not alert, it's not good.

Stillness reflects your *samādhi* and at that time your mind is also working to be aware.

You see the object clearly, distinctly, and then it's good it is balanced. **This is *virīya*.**

When the mind becomes stronger, it becomes able to go closer to the object-process, but you don't try to force that energy. Let it happen naturally, you will find that you start seeing more detail.

The present moment is our destination; our wish is to know what is happening now as it is.

***Every moment should be lived completely
and whole-heartedly.***

Viriya is not force it is perseverance.

Laziness often comes disguised as 'exhaustion' so do not let that mind go unnoticed. **Relax** and watch that lazy mind with interest.

If there is wandering mind, just relax and watch it.

Late at night if you feel very tired and painful don't look at the pain, look at the mind until the pain goes away and then you can go on.



DON'T QUIT !

You must always note the liking and disliking mind because it is when the mind gets involved and it likes or dislikes, that mindfulness disappears.

Note the thinking mind always in daily activities and walking (not only when you are sitting). If it persists look straight into it. It's just another mind.

So you know there is thinking process. Know that some thinking process is going on.

Ignore the content of it. Never get involved in the content, in the story. Thought content is concept, that function of the mind that 'makes' thinking is *paramattha*. Ultimate reality.

*The mind is not concept but the voices you hear in it are;
the images you see the words, and thoughts in it are.*

The mind is paramattha.

*Thought is movement you can observe that
when the mind goes from stillness to thinking.*

So note the thinking mind if it persists look straight into it. In the case of irritated mind, don't note, just look at that mind. What's it irritated with? Find out first and keep watching it.

Be constant and don't expect anything soon.



GENTLE EFFORT

If you are mindful when you go to sleep you are not going to have dreams.

A dream is a manifestation of your own manifestation. Clear the mind before you sleep so that you go to sleep at peace.

When you need to speak have awareness when you finish speaking still have awareness. Before, you speak, during and after!

Things like depression and sadness, are to be noted, not to be thought of.

If you think for a long time about it you'll go crazy. In meditation never get involved with anything, only be aware of everything.

Viriya, (effort) is usually misunderstood by people as force.

Viriya is not force. It is perseverance.

Mental effort. Gentle effort.

Sometimes when you walk, lazy mind arises; don't fail to look at that mind and watch it disappear.

In daily activities practice, when the mind pushes you to go faster, (note the intention in there) don't follow that mind, stop and look at that mind.

Never do anything in a hurry.

Stay always mindful.

Being able to be aware of your mental and physical sensations can save you a lot of energy throughout the day. This is real mindfulness.

You don't have to control your movements but they are so soft, gentle, coordinated. Your footsteps are soft, not heavy, not tense, moving comfortably!

We have to think of ways to make our daily routines as simple as we can so that we don't suffer but preserve our energies.

If you are practising the right way year after year you should be progressing, but if you are not practising the right way, no matter how many years you practise you will not get anywhere.

Don't look for the mind separately; the mind is there with the object 'knowing,' so try to know a lot of objects.

When awareness escapes you just catch it and bring it back!

If there is destructive mind and constructive mind then don't follow the destructive mind.

Seeing intention helps you sustain your mindfulness a lot longer.



SATI COMPASS

The nature of the body is to be born, decay and die.

Don't try to get calm or peaceful. Do just one thing. Watch the noting mind.

If any questions come up in your mind just watch it and let go.

The answer will come to you later.

After you have watched your mind for years, you get to know it so well, recognize it so clearly; how stupid, tricky, jealous, foolish, covetous, bossy, overpowering, and controlling it can be and because you can be aware of it, it cannot carry you away.

We cannot afford to be careless, always try to be very careful and **use your *sati* as your compass.**

The mindful mind will always warn you when you are getting into trouble. No control, just simple bare awareness of mind. Can you hear the chattering, the monologue or dialogue going on in the mind, the comments, the judgements and so on.

The mind is always tricky and craves for something, but is that what you really want to do? Run all day slaving for the mind?

Just because many other people are running mindlessly after all kinds of stimulation?

Watch how the mind creates its own problems. Most of our problems are mind made. Most problems will disappear just by the understanding of the mind.

The present phenomenon is the only thing I have whether I like it or not. So it is more important for me.

Having little distraction we can observe things easily. When you will become quite mindful you will know how to live your life. You will know what to do in any situation.

Looking for satisfaction is looking for pain. Understanding this deeply we learn to let go.

See how much you hurry yourself when you are upset. Be mindful. See anger as anger, not 'my anger'.

If you are upset because you enjoy music you are too demanding, you are asking and expecting too much of yourself.

But if you see the enjoying mind and watch it with equanimity then only you will see it for what it is.

Being upset which is a kind of aversion, is a close companion to greed and pride. Because you think: 'I am a meditator so there shouldn't be greed and pride arising in my mind'.

But you should be thinking: 'Now is a good chance for me to study and examine them!'

A stream enterer still has greed and anger. But he has no identification with mind and body. Only fully enlightened ones are free of greed and anger. Only the Arahant is free from comparing oneself with others.

Meditate also when you are restless when you think it's impossible for you to meditate because your mind is crazy. That is **the most important time for you to meditate**.

The Buddha said: 'When the mind is restless he or she knows that the mind is restless'.

You are not expected to do more than that. You don't feel guilty because there is anger or greed, etc. You know anger or greed are happening, you don't deceive your self.

That's all you can do.

So just be mindful, don't beat up your self !

About consciousness-awareness-knowing, remember and observe these things always: The arising and passing away of consciousness. That every mind that arises is another and new mind. Consciousness arises because of the object and passes away because of the object.

It is consciousness that sees hears, smells, tastes, touches, and thinks, not or me or mine. It is consciousness, the mind, which experiences all sense objects.

When you are not mindful you get gaps of knowing.

Understanding comes to those who are not in a hurry to understand. Understanding is like a fruit tree. It takes some time to mature. One cannot force it to bear fruits.

*A person who is 'role free, game free, I free.
Accepting the truth frees the mind.*

Understand your limitations, you can only do so much. Seeing ones own limitations clearly is very important.

How hard it is for me to see where I am stuck and how to become unstuck. Only when you see clearly where you are stuck, there is a chance that you might become unstuck.

People behave like they are doing something and as if they know what they are doing. Do they really know what they are doing?

You may stop thinking for a while just how important you are!

Life is very short. There are things to be done.

Only deep understanding of attachment can free the mind from it.

If you force your mind to let go of attachment without really seeing the nature of it, attachment will come back very soon.

The practice is being with whatever is there, regardless of speed and quantity of objects. The pace might be fast, medium or slow, even still, just some or many objects.

Moment-to-moment awareness is the objective.

Sometimes is like every moment needs to be liberated from identifying and grasping, and awareness does that automatically by keeping that space between mind and object.



BEAUTY OF THE HEART

Progress in meditation comes from skillfulness.

The mind without effort in meditation becomes dull.

Don't drop the attention. Keep the mind going, being aware of something (preferably *citta*), don't stop.

Keep seeing how things affect the mind.

When things go wrong in meditation or with the retreat in general **accept** it. It's all part of it. **Relax!**

This is the cool practice. No tension, check attitude, expectations, *lobha*. Do not react in practice, or outside it !

Keep your mindfulness no matter what the problem.

Keep that beauty of the heart !

If you want to get a good result in meditation don't be in a hurry. This 'being in a hurry' makes the mind agitated.

Sometimes when you enjoy something you are not attached to it.

That's a kind of freedom. Enjoying something without being attached, without being greedy.

As long as you are not lost in thought you are meditating, being here and now.

Don't think and run around too much. Save your energy.

How is your meditation these days? When you stop thinking, when you even stop labelling, when your mind comes to a complete silence, alert, aware, then you see that fleeting nature, the dream like nature of things.

*If you cannot be mindful in your daily life
you cannot develop understanding of life.*

Understanding of life and understanding of Dhamma go together.

First of all learn to live your daily life mindfully, sanely.

Do you understand wholesome and unwholesome states of mind? This is most fundamental in the practice, really seeing them immediately and by seeing the difference of quality of mind whether they are wholesome or unwholesome.

Let it happen and watch. Don't interfere just be aware.

When *citta* becomes very subtle, easy to lose, or difficult to find and follow, just stay with one thing until things improve. Don't try hard to follow or strain.

If you give, with expectations of getting something back then you get back small. If you don't expect nothing back but you are happy to give, then you get back big.

Just big heart, and you do get a lot back.

'The whole world is in flames' says the Buddha. By what fire is it kindled? It is kindled by the fire of greed, hatred and ignorance. By the fire of birth, old age, pain, lamentation, sorrow grief and despair.

It is not enough just to read an idea or just listen to an idea. It is very important to live it. If you live it then it can affect your life and change your life.

The best way to learn Dhamma is from someone who is living it. But you have to be fit to be taught.

There is a point when one has to travel alone. No place, no thought.

Let go of views and opinions (especially good or bad meditation).

Resist Nothing.

*You can be aware of one thing or many,
if you see how one thing behaves
you can see how all of them behave.
When you know one you know them all.*

Watch bodily and mental sensation arising and passing away. You can stay with one object only if you like.

That can be the rising and falling for example. You can stay with it as long as you like.

Listening mindfully, is not just concentrating on the talk, and trying not to miss anything but being aware of that too.

Reading and writing is pretty much the same. 'Keep the finger on the big one.'

'Keep the finger on the big one' means: Know where your mind is and what it is doing.

Starting out small: Observe obvious objects and continuously. If an emotion appears watch that emotion then go on.

If it is hard to observe one object, start observing more. If observing many objects is hard, observe just one stable object. Be always mindful of something.

Mindfulness: Keep the mind only on what you are doing. (No externals, staring, thinking, listening, planning etc.) But don't focus too hard because that will only tire you more.

When you feel tired, don't worry about it. That's all!

Happy! It is important that you are happy, feeling content and

not wanting when you practise. Happiness and contentment are very supportive factors to concentration.

Note the wanting mind, check the mind's attitude when you practise.

*See clearly what's happening in the mind,
don't look only at the object.*



ON THE ROAD

When you go out of the monastery the mind has a lot more stimulation from a lot of different places and people. So you have to be more mindful then.

When you can practise outside as well as you practice inside the monastery then you know that your practice is good.

Even in the midst of crowded noisy places you can stay calm, in touch with your mind.

The watching of the mind becomes a strong habit.

Note your feelings too. Are you feeling isolated, lonely, is that wisdom, is that *kilesa*?

When you are out always watch *kilesa* arising. Stay close to yourself.

When people talk to you speak slowly and mindfully so that they slow down too. It takes a greater effort, so try relentlessly. Keep to yourself as much as you can especially when it's difficult.

When you go back to your country, it's like, 'my friends, my room, my clothes, my familiar hangouts, my possessions, my family.' So you forget the whole thing.



But that is when you must understand the nature of the mind. Out there in the real world your concentration is useless. Mindfulness is what will show you how things are.

Keep the mind interested inwardly not on the road. When you go out the mind starts partying: 'I'm going to break free now!' It tells you: 'Okay, just a little of a much needed break'! And out it goes for the whole trip!

You might find it 'being cold.' Just keep up your *viriya* / effort, keep trying again and again.

*You are not meditating in order to calm down the mind
but to observe it.*

To look and see why is the mind like this now and how was it different before. So that wisdom arises from this watching.

You get to know what's happening in the mind.

In sitting meditation don't worry about if the objects are very clear or not. Watch the mind follow the awareness. Of course, it is better if the objects are clear, but that will follow later.

The *kilesa* when they know that you are meditating, they stay away from you. They say: Okay, meditate now! But when you don't, they come and attack you when you least expect it! So watch out always, watch the mind carefully.

*If you can watch the mind,
watch it in real life situations
where it is more natural.*

If the mind is not strong enough then return to your ordinary practice.

See how different the mind feels when you are in your room, in the Dhamma hall or the dining hall.

Samādhi is good for developing *paññā* / wisdom. It is not good only for sitting practice; you must have it at all times if you can, and investigate things.

Viriya is a mental thing, not posture. When you are dying your body has no control, it's the mind that stays mindful.

Sitting on a chair and lying meditation is good exercise for *viriya* because you have to apply more *viriya* without the support and aid of posture, but you must not keep falling asleep!

When you are not doing sitting meditation, and you don't have the support of the posture but instead you are sitting on a chair or lying down, the mind relaxes and you need to try mentally harder to keep your mindfulness.

If your *viriya* is really strong, no matter how your posture is, it doesn't matter. You can be upside down!

Keep *kilesa* noted regularly, don't let it accumulate.

Keep relaxed, check for tension now and then, check your emotions.

Are they involved? Are you in control?

Don't panic if you are not, just relax and get in touch.

The Buddha is not the statues and images in the pagodas that people go and visit all day long. The true Buddha is inside you.

Just observe whatever the mind can be aware of at the moment, see how it goes to objects how it feels, be aware of it.

When it gets stronger it will be aware of many objects.



ACCEPT

If *samādhi* is decreasing, check your mind, what attitude are you practising with?

Just accept that your *sati-samādhi* is not very good at the moment. Just accept it.

You don't have to have great *sati-samādhi* to be aware of what is happening now.

How do you feel about your awareness not being so good? Check that too. Keep looking how the mind is feeling always. The mind is always reacting to everything.

When the mind is travelling around the world that is an indication that interest in the present moment is not enough. Put more effort into staying with the present moment.

Are you properly aware? Is the mind interested into what's happening in the moment?

When you are experiencing something new the mind starts thinking. That is natural, nothing to worry about. But when you are aware that the mind is thinking you must take care of it.

Realize that there is not anything we can do about our emotions. They just come and go and feel in certain ways.

That's the way it is. No need to worry just be aware.

*Sometimes you find yourself with a wrong attitude,
and you have to sit and meditate
knowing that the attitude is wrong.*

*Just turn this attitude into you meditation object.
Embraced it fully with your attention-awareness
and watch it closely.*

That, can be a very interesting experience.

Be aware of greed, laziness, expecting — whatever might be there.

How much greed hides in habits?

It is because of greed that habits develop.

*Automatic reaction is always unwholesome,
because it comes from habits formed by greed.*

If you practise the way we practice here — it doesn't matter how long you have been practising for. If you are feeling very tired you are not practising the right way.

Watching the mind means: knowing what is happening in the mind (emotions, thought process, story making, intentions). Without getting carried away by it.



PICK IT UP AGAIN...

Just observe whatever the mind can be aware of, at the moment. See how it goes to objects, how it feels, be aware of it. When it gets stronger it will be aware of many objects.

You can stay with one object but don't force awareness to stay with one thing and start struggling with it.

Don't think that you have to stay with one object for the sake of developing *samādhi*. That is not good practice. Just be aware of what is happening in the present moment.

When something fruitful happens in meditation the mind feels like it's done its job and starts getting slack. Watch out for that mind. Get to know it.

*You can't help losing your mindfulness.
Your effort is to start again and again.*

Kilesa are always waiting there for a chance to creep in.

What can you be aware of when you are walking? Your whole body? When you find that you are not comfortable look at how you feel about it in the mind.

When mental feeling occurs make it your priority. There is always a certain way the mind feels about things. Look at that mental feeling be aware of it. The same applies to daily activities practice too.

In order for the mind to be observed constantly, it has to be balanced, relaxed, settled. Check all the time the state of your mind. Relax and watch, relax and watch, and the practice balances up. So balance the mind, be mindful, happy and keep going on.

Never think or ask about the momentum to come. Just meditate. Peacefully. Continuously check attitude and relax.

In the evening when it feels like the practice is not so good, don't try harder in order to 'fix' it or something. Fix your attitude and meditation will happen by itself.

*Meditation is paying attention
and not the result of it.*

The mind in the background (watching mind) is the important thing not the object.

Never do anything in a hurry.

If you feel groggy! (unsteady, shaky) take some mindful deep breaths.

An American professor arrived today and introduced us all to this latest American term: Obsessive Compulsive !

When the mind gets calm, *samādhi* arises. The mind should use these qualities for attentiveness, otherwise sleepiness will come in.

When restlessness arises, turn it into your object of observation. It does not matter for how long. Awareness is what matters. Later on when you see the cause of it all it will stop by itself. Don't try to stop it.

Keep looking and asking: How does the mind feel?

The simplest thing in daily activities is to know if you are aware or not. That's all. The important thing is that you are aware all the time.

*The state of the mind is what is important
not the actions, movements etc.*

See the thought process but not the content. Just process, just feeling. You don't identify, you don't analyze, you don't reject what you are experiencing. You don't identify with anything at all. Not even good thoughts.

Thinking creatively all the time can become a problem.

If you like you can stay with one object that's fine. Get into it, below surface level and observe it. But you don't have to. You can switch to another object or other objects.

When you feel hunger, coldness, don't judge and name these sensations, just observe them and they will go away.

If you know that there is awareness, it means that you are mindful already.



SUFFERING

Suffering...? It's no problem!

We have to know suffering in the smallest detail!

*We can't learn the Dhamma in luxury
because in luxury and comfort
we don't get a chance to go against
the defilements and develop pāramī.*

*We must depend on patience, restraint,
renunciation and frugality.
When you feel distressed it's not
that the mind is distressed,
defilements are distressed.*

Lobha is not me or mine. Lustful mind is not me or mine.
Anger is not me or mine.

You don't ask 'good attitude or bad attitude'. Just feel, does it feel good, comfortable or uncomfortable and painful; that's how you know.

The mind is one object of awareness; the breath is another and mind object is another. They are all present in the field of awareness.

In meditation you don't get into a fight and you don't run away from it.

You watch. You don't blame yourself about what's happening. Just watch what's happening.

The problem is short and little but we make it very long and carry it around and exaggerate it.

*You must not look at images and concepts
because the more you look at them,
the more they grow and expand.*

*The moment you stop looking at reality
the mind turns to concept.*

The more you stay with paramattha the easier it gets.

Look at the increasing and decreasing intensity of things, and don't try to stop their impact, their force. If there is niceness look at that niceness, don't just have a good time.

You shouldn't try to create any particular feeling. Just know what feeling feels like as it disintegrates and vanishes.

The past and the future, they are a trap! No matter how attractive they look. When you go to sleep observe your mind but don't drift into past and future.

When we practise we give our selves a direction and from there we observe what's happening on the way.

And that experience gives rise to wisdom and knowledge about ourselves also.

*To be able to go through the hard times
makes one more skillful and courageous.*

Don't think how tiring, boring, difficult, frustrating, competitive things can be (how hard to be mindful is). Because you will exhaust yourself and hinder yourself.

Think instead how meaningful it is. Think about the benefits that come with the practice.

The negative thoughts are hindering, they are *Māra*, defilements trying to stop you from trying.

Any kind of thought that makes your mind uncomfortable, unhappy, tired, disheartened is definitely a defilement.

So always challenge your ideas.



THAT IS THE SOLUTION

When you are on retreat meditating, you are in the shade, in the coolness but you don't realize it. Only when you go out in the heat of the sun do you see how beneficial, not boring, not hard it was in the shade, and how hard it is now in the sun.

Don't think, trying to find solutions to your problems.

Relax, let the mind become clear and relaxed again and you will see clearly.

That is the solution.

If you are thinking, it's not 'as it is.' You are creating something.

In ultimate reality there are conceptual consequences i.e. if you kill somebody you will suffer the consequences of all kinds that come along with that action.

In practice it takes thirty to forty-five days for *samādhi* to reach full development.

Your life is a reflection of your mind.

What gives our life meaning is wisdom.

You have to have the courage to live with just yourself.

Watch how the kilesa arise constantly in the mind. The *cittas* are *kusala* / wholesome or *akusala* / unwholesome. It's not your *kusala* or your *akusala*.

Whatever feels good or bad, as in seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking and your state of mind are related and connected. Don't overlook that relationship there.

Never act with agitated and blurry mind. It will always cause you to do wrong.

Develop equanimity towards all phenomena. By not reacting, not getting involved, just observe.

Keep checking, is the mind pure, clean, or not? It is very important and useful to see the state of the mind clearly. If it is not pure, **you must work** to purify it.

When *sati-samādhi* is not so strong and you look at the mind, the mind wanders. Meditation is not long and big. It's moment-to-moment awareness.

Who is meditating? A series of consciousness!

Who is experiencing? Formations!

Meditation is happening by itself, nobody does meditation.

Watch out for the interpreter in the mind! You interpret, you react, you interpret, and you react!

But if you don't interpret you stop reacting. So keep doing that for a long time until you stop interpreting and reacting. Then you see what's really there.

Wisdom is not you it is just a function of the mind.

That distinct space created between the object and the observing mind. That is the way things should be in this practice.

Note that, I am a better meditator than others, mind, it's very, dangerous.

Somebody walking, somebody talking, it is too noisy in here so many cars pass by, what shall I do? All sorts of thoughts come to your mind. So be aware of your thoughts coming in your mind, and that you are interpreting and commenting. Just know, that **because** of that sound **there is** feeling going on. When you become more aware of your reactions they become less and less.

After awhile when you become aware that you interpret and react, interpreting and reacting stops.

When we stop interpreting and reacting we experience something new: **Not thinking.**

Just become aware of it.

Things there stop having identity.

So when you stop thinking you just come in touch with it. You can't grasp at anything any more. It becomes slippery and vague and that is the way it should be actually.

When you stop wandering, you can be aware of that thought, liking or not liking. It's our interpretation, we are conditioned to like or dislike something. So it is our conditioning.

The important thing is not to react too much. But don't try to not react too much!

So when you notice an odour, you are just aware of it, because of this odour there is this consciousness.

So, object and sense base and consciousness. You can be aware of all three of them in your meditation, but to be aware of one is enough.

When you change objects don't think about them. It is the way the mind looks at experience that makes things better or worse.

Joy is very close to interest, if you have interest, you have joy.

Watch your greed and desire just as mental processes arising and passing away without backing anything up with an I.

*What we want is limitless, but
what we need to be happy is
very little.*

Watch that disappearing again and again, if you watch the passing away you develop sharper awareness.

If you need to keep alert note two phenomena (objects). If two many objects come and hit the field of awareness and the mind cannot cope and gets agitated (seeing, hearing, bodily sensation) and you are experiencing loss of clarity, then try to limit the objects. Stay with one or two only.

Can you see the observing mind arising and passing away?

The only way to overcome *saṃsāra* and become liberated is to watch this mental and bodily process. Through and through. Keep your *sīla*, purify your views. **This is the only way.**

Why do you need more-so much knowledge? Then you don't really develop the emotional, spiritual, and psychological aspects.

Self discovery-mindfulness: You learn more and more about yourself, about your mind and body, how they are related to each other, how everything affects the mind and body and everything all the time.

You see, you hear, you touch, you smell, you taste, you think. It affects your body and mind. Every relationship with each other will affect your body and mind. Depending on how healthy that is, it will have an influence on the world around us.

You have to carefully watch how you affect others in every way, whatever you do, whatever you say, **how does that affect people and surroundings?**

Also to get absorbed mindfully in something, any activity (watching the sunset) is a kind of meditation.

Don't create. If you create in *Vipassanā* it is very dangerous.

Be aware of the liking and enjoying mind when you are thinking.

Look at the knowing of the mind experiencing mind objects and the knowing of the mind that is separate from mind objects. See the difference?



JUST MINDFULNESS
IS ENOUGH

*The main concern is whether awareness is there or not.
Not the object.*

Just observe: Is there knowing or forgetfulness, collected mind or scattered mind?

All these techniques can be combined and used, all in one sitting if that helps to keep attention flowing.

You don't need the aid of *samatha-ānāpāna*, etc. in order to boost your concentration. **Just mindfulness is enough.**

You can just keep it simple when dealing with hindrances. Just **Zap** them! With your Super-Mindfulness rays!

Keep reading and writing to an absolute minimum and do it mindfully or it interferes with the momentum.

If you are already tired, the motivation in your practice is not wholesome. Check that out. Tension might also be behind that.

Present moment: That's what we do here. If you practise like this, everything will be revealed to you because everything is in the present moment. Nibbāna is in the present moment!

Consciousness is energy.

Every thought is a different mind.

Just observe, don't fight.

The mind doesn't need to be tense because the object is tense or whatever. The mind watches calmly. (Actually tension can only be felt in the mind, tension is in the mind but the observing mind can be relaxed.)

It is important to understand the nature of defilement, not avoid it. Watch it pass away.

Even though you might be watching concept and defilement arises, watch the defilement. Because when you are knowing the nature of a defilement then it becomes *paramattha*.

Just like when you watch your thought process. It is just another thought. It is just another defilement. Defilements are not you or yours.

They are just passing by just like thoughts and sensations.

Just because you know them does not mean that you own them too !

Then you will understand, you don't need to act upon them. Turn them into your observations. That is all. Let them go. No matter how tempting they dress up for you.

Keep that observing distance between you and them.

So when you observe a defilement arising don't stay with the identifying panicking mind but that mind which knows about it and is *paramatha*.

Stay with that mind. By doing so you don't identify and you repel *kilesa* / defilement at the same time.

When you are thinking with awareness, and you are separate from thought, that is practising, that is mindfulness. But better still, to get the mind used to watching *paramatha* rather than concepts.

Make it **aware** of concepts. It's okay to know you are thinking, but don't get involved.

*When you return from forgetfulness,
don't look for an object look for awareness.*

*Where is awareness? Take it from there.
What is it aware of? What does it feel like?*

It's okay to stay with one object only, for some time, maybe just to give yourself a break for a while. And you can stay with one object for the whole session if you like as long as you are aware of seeing arising and passing away.



TRANSFORMER

In the *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice there are also *Jhānas*. These are degrees of absorption into moment-to-moment mindful observation, which leads to very powerful states of mindfulness and concentration known as the *Vipassanā Jhānas*. No thought, no hindrance, no *kilesa*, can disturb the mind now. This is a totally new experience and new practice. The dawning of a new world...

*

Double trouble.

Two realities, conventional and ultimate / paramattha.

Hurting... at the same time !

Moment after moment... Hour after hour... Day after day...

And never for one moment apart from...

Sickness, decaying and dying !

'Because the 'arising and passing away' started at this stage you tend to get overcome by feelings of anxiety, uneasiness, stress or even terror, and so on.

'But not necessarily, only if you identify with the phenomena of experience and you think there is a you there, then that is going to happen.

'But if you don't, if you can see that these phenomena are impersonal, it will be a different story. Just watch, **without thinking.**'

Everything is constantly falling apart..!

There is not some 'God creator'. This is not somebody's creation.

Just natural phenomena according to the Laws and Order of Universal Intelligence.

'Of course you get a bit exhausted and sick and tired by the intensity of the arising and passing away but you must not lose sight of it. Never.

Kilesa will attack immediately as *paññā* weakens because of failing to observe the incessant transience of phenomena and creating gaps in the practice.

'This is **not the time** to stop watching arising and passing away, no matter how sick you might be from it.'

We... are not living, we are dying!

'The only way to deal with the body and mind process is to look at it even more closely.'

Nothing seems real... Meaninglessness... Delusion... No control...

*

It so happens, that when you are sitting, you might be feeling like you are in a different place, other than the one that you are sitting -lose your sense of place. And that it is a different time and not the part of the day that it is -lose your sense of time.

That is so because time and place are concepts. Concepts start dropping at this stage in meditation. Ultimate reality becomes so evident that it shines right through concepts. You come into contact with the 'conceptless'...

*

Welcome...

To the world of disintegrating phenomena. The land of instant arising and passing away. The instant you are aware of any object, it starts dissolving, disappearing.

All experience here, loses totally all significance. And nothing can be ever owned or gained. Because whatever that experience might be, is disappearing along with the awareness that knows of it as soon as you can know it.

Just phenomena.

Due to that kind of nature, whether it is experience of the body or the mind, it cannot possibly be owned by me or anybody, it cannot possibly be me, or anybody, it cannot be created by me, or anybody.

Just phenomena.

*

Face to face with Ultimate Reality and... concept free!

So far apart and yet so close.

'When you understand your own self, you get to understand everything.'

There is no more man or woman, no human race, no animals no birds, no snakes no insects, no fish, no trees no clouds, no good no bad, no time, no place no Universe! No 'borderline' in between. All is One. One kind of nature.

Just phenomena.

Having a different mind, being in a different world!

... *The mind is just not the same any more*
... *The world is just not the same any more.*

*Causes and conditions, because of causes and conditions,
causing causes and conditions !*

Kamma... Possibility and Change...

Sitting behind the wheel !

The dawn of a brand new Terror...

There is **only one path** that's **got** to be walked down now. Out of delusion. Out of suffering. Out of *Saṃsāra*.

*

'So now you are able to see clearly and beyond any doubt what you are. And because of that you can see where you are going.

'When you can really penetrate and understand phenomena in this way you can understand what you have been in all your previous lives and what you are going to be in all your future ones!'

Just phenomena.

And all that suffering.

So we started looking into this mind and body in order to understand its nature and we discovered that... We don't exist... Never have existed !

Things become very clear to you now.

'The effects of 'equanimity', this 'automatic', blissful and effortless state of practice in both body and mind are very appealing. But don't have any expectations, don't try to interfere, let

them just occur without manipulating, without getting involved, without getting attached. Let it all happen naturally.

'People who know how to handle this kind of situation can experience it for a long, time. You just do your practice.

'Yes, you may say, there is nothing to look forward to in life, and you can see it very clearly. You know for yourself about body and mind now. But you don't feel unhappy or upset about it. You feel fine. That's because your mind is balanced now. Keep practising like this and you will get to Nibbāna!

'Well, when you go to the dinning hall and sit down to eat or talk to somebody or do anything outside formal meditation you find that your mind is still 'automatically noting incessantly'! And your body is floating and feels just like when you are doing your sitting meditation! That's the **power of momentum** at this stage in the practice!'

It is a very special clarity of mind we experience now. Mindfulness is very strong and cannot be abandoned even if you wanted it to go away. It is stuck there like glue! You would like it to stay like that forever!

About equanimity: At this stage you experience everything but you are not affected by anything, you do not cling to what you know.

'When the effects of equanimity start waning don't panic! That is the worse thing you can possibly do. Let it take its natural course. It may come back if you don't create any tension and don't get involved emotionally. So don't worry about it. The moment you desire, you kill all potential.'

‘So, after a few days, equanimity faded out. It finally disappeared and your *sati-samādhi* is not ‘automatic and fantastic’ any more and you have to sweat and struggle again!

Stop being in a state of shock! **It’s ok !**

‘No point trying to get strong *sati-samādhi*, no point trying to get some ‘level’ of practice. **Check attitude** (wanting, attaching, expecting).

‘*Kilesa* has the capacity to eliminate your practice. Just be with the moment, mindful, watching in a detached way.

‘The momentum is still there. Just don’t ask for anything. The moment you start wanting and expecting you hinder the practice and you strain and exhaust yourself.

*Start again, start small,
be patient, do not expect.
Just do it !*

‘The mind without the effort in meditation becomes dull. Don’t drop the attention because you think that you might be focusing too hard.

*All progress in meditation
comes from skillfulness.*

‘Keep the mind going, being always aware of something, don’t stop and when things go wrong in meditation or out of meditation...

Accept ! It’s all part of it. Relax !’

This is the cool practice!
Start again!
Check for tension! Balance the mind!
Check attitude! Expecting!
Craving! Never create!
Never react!
Just do it!

PART TWO

THE
DEATHLESS
WITHIN

MOVING ON...



2002 was not the most memorable year in Dhamma Sukha Tawya. The good Sayādaw was obviously on his last legs and new influences had clearly started changing it almost beyond recognition. Nothing in the phenomenal world stays the same for more than an instant and everything is subject to change.

Shwe Oo Min Sayādaw departed this life quietly, on Wednesday the 20th of November at the age of eighty nine...



PRACTISING DHAMMĀNUPASSANĀ
AND MAHĀSATI



SOMEWHERE IN THE THAI FOREST

VASSA 2003



RELEASED FROM DARKNESS

... The Buddha said, that if we continue practising diligently, this simple practice of *Satīpaṭṭhāna* will lead us all the way out of suffering. And this is something that we are all capable of attaining; but he also said, don't believe in me, come and look for yourself... So we keep on practising...

Consciousness is not something apart from object because it cannot arise separately from object and object is not something separate from consciousness because it cannot arise separately from consciousness.

This has been our experience in this practice so far and it is the law or the phenomenal universe as we know it.

However as we keep contemplating phenomena of body and mind we come across a new experience when this universal law does not seem to apply any longer.

This is not something easy to put into words clearly, as the words that could explain this state simply do not exist.

But perhaps it could give the reader some idea when described as the occurring of a separation between phenomena. When one is perfectly aware of the incessant arising and passing away of phenomena of experience — just going their own and natural way — but consciousness that would normally arise and pass away with them is not there.

But instead it stands still and separates from phenomena while they arise and perish very swiftly, separately and at a distance.

Just foreign matter, not belonging anywhere.

And the awareness that knows and sees all that is not caused or supported in any way by these objects or anything else.

But it's unconditioned.

An awareness, beyond arising and passing away !

At that moment a totally undeniable understanding arises. That the process of arising and ceasing of phenomena which carries with it — which is — all defilements, unawareness, thinking processes, delusion, neuroses and all suffering that held us prisoners and tortured us for so long, is not in any way ours, me or mine, self or part of self.

But a completely separate process, without any substance, beyond anyone's control, independent, arising at a distance and going its own way and having absolutely nothing to do with us or anybody in the slightest.

Identification with mental processes, sense consciousness and feeling is dead!

Process clearly and really seen as not me or mine, but just as a nightmare once we have awoken. Self as we know it does not exist.

This is the moment when one for the first time enjoys total freedom from *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha* and that whole process of arising and ceasing of phenomena. And that gives rise to a totally unprecedented sensation to arise. Totally inexpressible, nameless and certainly not of this world.

Felt in the beginning for an instant as the touch of a tiny dot in the middle of the abdomen and disappearing; then gradually expanding from that spot and taking over the whole body, a sensation appears which simply leaves one without any doubt that this is nothing else but a taste of Nibbāna !

Nothing that we have experienced — or even dreamed of before — naturally or artificially or through meditation practice, like crude or refined rapture, calm, bliss — or if we combine all these together and then add anything else we can imagine to it, in terms of pleasantness of all kinds and even intensify them — can amount to anything other than painful piles of excrement compared to this extraordinary experience.

*This is true Freedom !
At long last, this is true Peace !
This is true Love !
Tremendous sense of relief —
released from jail —
off the hook —
tons of weight off of the chest.*

It was all just a nightmare !

(True Freedom, Peace and Love here means, these qualities beyond the human perception, not as the product of conflict.)

So on this level it's not so much the degree of detail of impermanence and artificiality that can be observed about phenomena of experience but the simple fact that **they are not us or part of us in any way at all !**

Their fleeting, suffering and impersonal kind of nature is what makes that separation from them the most liberating and happiest event there is.

Somewhere round this time if not earlier a silent, and pure mind will arise and make itself evident. **Don't** overlook that mind. Cultivate and take good care of it. Without forcing anything stay with that mind and observe its characteristics.

What's it conditioned by ? !

What's it created by ? !

We must not force this mind to be. It cannot be forced or controlled. If you try to force it — by suppressing thinking for example — tension will arise and later manifest as breathing problems. We can only practise patiently until it reveals itself to us.

This mind is never a created,

never an achieved state.

It's always a natural state.

Effortless and ever-present.

There is no profundity in the silent mind which is created.

*So now we know what we are not.
And once we know what
we are not at the same time
we see and we know who...
we really are !*

Then automatically we know what all other beings are not and what all other beings are !

*And we are all one and the same,
but we don't know it !
Because in Truth
there's no fragmentation, no separation !*

When we understand our selves, when we can see what is made up, only then that which is not made up can be seen. First we got to be able to see what is false. Once we know the false then we will know That which is **True**.

*

We come to understand that all experiences are just the temporary activities of the body and mind. And that the non-created the unconditioned is permanent and not changing.

But this understanding does not arise by way of thinking or by means of self hypnosis by repeating words.

It's an amazing insight which is revealed to us in a very special and abrupt way.

Suffering is not the same anymore because we have seen beyond any doubt that it is clearly and really not ours. It does not belong to anyone but we have adopted it because we don't know

who we really are. The jail door has opened and we are not held prisoner any longer !

Mundane happiness reveals itself as alien and useless !

It can really be seen and understood that it is the absence of conditions that is Nibbāna. Simple as that. For all those who ask, who or what makes it to Nibbāna, I hope that this gives some idea about how to approach their question.

So where does this unconditioned freedom come from? Is it the product of morality, concentration and mindfulness or hallucination?

The **Satipaṭṭhāna** practice is certainly the path that leads to it. But it's not something 'out there'. But rather somewhere deeper and lying dormant in each and every being and never external to us.

The deathless within. Our true nature.

When it is not obscured by delusion and defilements, and everyone can experience it.

Nibbāna is not separate from us for one instant !

So this is why we practise. To reach the end of suffering, real freedom, and it certainly is well worth it.

And a quick word for all those 'knowing ones' who are too quick to praise themselves and condemn and put down other people's experiences: I am not looking for... a following !

Or anything else for that matter. Look for yourself if you wish.
And do keep that distance.



SUFFERING DOES NOT EXIST !

Well, practice never ends until we leave our last breath, so we keep on going. Then we find that things are not what they used to be. There's a special kind of peace, aloofness a great sense of relief and happiness which are always there. Indifferent to the worldly and out of reach of the worldly. Like a huge safety net that will always catch you if you fall !

Suffering is a lot more bearable and renewed interest, zeal, and faith in the practice arise now as well as equanimity, and the Path still carries on.

Obviously there is a long way before the end of the road and a lot more space for realizing. From time to time some quite remarkable experiences occur, but above all now we are at Home. And no longer anxious seeking and searching.

Then a time comes when the understanding of one's own mind to a certain degree has some very important things to reveal.

Again in an abrupt way, a separation occurs between phenomena of experience and awareness allowing for a clear seeing into the nature of the mind. And what we see, to our astonishment is that... **suffering does not exist !**

But it's created by the mind.

The mind creates its own suffering !

And once we are able to catch the mind red handed

and on the act, doing that,

we are automatically free from that suffering !

Again words cannot say it, and cannot explain it. Suffering is not really there but it is made up, manufactured by the mind

itself. But ordinarily we cannot see that because we cannot see the source of the mind !

The truth is that in Reality **there is no issue at all**. Because the whole relative world is not true ! It has no foundation whatsoever. It's a myth, just like self is a myth. But it's fabricated by the mind. And that which is beyond the mind's creations is Infinite Love and Not-Suffering only.

Now the suffering maker has been seen and we simply cannot be fooled by that stunt any more. The mind cannot make us suffer any longer.

At this point the mind changes again and transforms irreversibly. **This is true liberation through wisdom !**

*

An amazingly blissful floating feeling of equanimity follows this insight which lasts for two, three days or more, during which the mind automatically catches and rejects all attempts of the 'creating mind' to inflict suffering. Although these attempts are only few. As the mind remains equanimous silent and peaceful by itself throughout the day.

After that the feeling subsides but the knowledge remains, and every time the mind gets a chance to inflict suffering due to fleeting unawareness, we know, and as soon as we know the mind lets go, and that's the end of it.

So this is permanent, the mind cannot go back to what it was like before. In that respect **the mind is not our master any more but its become the mastered !**

A great percentage of our suffering has disappeared and evidently, *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha*, have been considerably weakened.

The mind is transformed, blissful, content and radiant.

Our whole life changes here because everything has changed under this new light, a very enlightening moment indeed. A very important turn on the Path.

How things have changed !

*There is a reality which is subject to change
and a Reality which is not subject to change !*

A reality which is not real and a Reality which is Real.

And nothing, pleasant or unpleasant can change it.

Greed hatred and delusion are not Real. They are only temporary activities of the mind. Just conditions, not inherent in our true nature but rather imposed externally.

If greed hatred and delusion were Real

we could never be freed from their grip because

Reality is not subject to change !

We may say now that things are considerably under control and happy but this is not the end yet. So the practice goes on until the end, until Nibbāna is permanent !

A couple of steps more to go...

*

Something should be said at this point about the conditions surrounding these experiences as they happened. They did not occur as you might imagine while 'trying really hard' or when it was 'very difficult, painful and super-intensive' or while being pushed and

intimidated... In other words 'torture', did not have a part in it at all.

But they arose out of just living mindfully, practising diligently and continuously in a *kuti*, free from tensions and pressure, in the seclusion and peacefulness of the forest.

*Nobody and nothing can give you
what you already have !*



THE DEATHLESS WITHIN

I guess not every question can be answered. But there is one question that we cannot not answer. Who did all that, who is actually responsible for it all, which is that force at work behind it all ?

Is it the monk, the persona, the artificial self, the conditioned *citta*, the combined elements, the conviction, the illusory phenomena, the thinking processes, some bigoted religious beliefs...?

No matter how much we look, how deeply we analyze investigate and explore we find that it can only be attributed to one thing and one thing only...

The Deathless Within!

Without which nothing can exist and nothing is possible.
And with which just nothing is impossible.

*Words, useless and burdensome.
Ideas, beliefs and opinions,
dogmas, egos and convictions,
fears, ideals, knowledge
and all creations of the mind
cannot tell The Truth.
But only divide and harm . And conceal
...our True Home.*

*Nibbāna!
Unconditioned, Undivided, Free !
Non Sectarian.
Not Buddhist.
Not Christian.
Not Hindu.
Not Muslim.
Not anything.
Beyond and above all.*

*That Infinite, Eternal Creating, Unlimited
Love And Intelligence Is
Who You Really Are !*

*May you all practice the Dhamma and
easily attain enlightenment.*

U Khema, a wandering monk

GLOSSARY



- Abhidhamma — The Higher Dhamma
Akusala — Unwholesome
Anāgāmī— Once returner
Ānāpāna — Meditation technique-watching the ‘in’ and ‘out’
of the breath
Anatta — Not self-impersonality
Anupassanā — Contemplation
Arahat — Non-returner
Atta — Self, Ego, Personality
Anicca — Impermanence
Citta — Consciousness
Cittānupassanā — Contemplation of the consciousness
Dukkha — Suffering-Pain
Dhammānupassanā — Contemplation of mental objects
Dosa — Anger
Kanika Samādhi — Momentary concentration
Kayānupassanā — Contemplation of the body
Kilesa — Defilements
Kusala — Wholesome

Lobha — Greed
Mettā — Loving kindness
Moha — Delusion
Nāma — Mind-Mentality
Ñāṇa — Insight Knowledge
Paññā — Wisdom
Parami — Perfection
Paramattha — Ultimate Reality-Truth
Passadhi — Calm, Tranquility
Piti — Rapture
Rūpa — Body, Materiality
Samādhi — Concentration
Sangha — Community of Buddhist monks
Sati — Mindfulness
Satipaṭṭhāna — Foundations of Mindfulness
Sayādaw (Burmese) — Dhamma Teacher
Sīla — Virtue-Morality
Upekkha — Equanimity
Vassa — The three month annual ‘rains retreat’ of Buddhist monks and nuns. Also a way of estimating a monk’s seniority
Vedanānupassanā — Contemplation of the feelings
Vipassanā — Insight, (Insight meditation)
Viriya — Energy, Effort

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



BHIKKHU KHEMAVAMSA is an Australian monk, born in Athens, and has been practising meditation since 1996.

In 2000, he received full ordination in Chanmyay Yeik-ta forest monastery, in Hmawbi (Burma / Myanmar), by the Abbot Sayadaw U Indaka.

He has practiced with Sayadaw U Janaka, Sayadaw U Pandita, Sayadaw U Lakkhana and Shwe Oo Min Sayadaw in the Mahasi Tradition and he is pretty familiar with the styles of S.N. Goenka and the late Thai Master Luangpor Tee-an amongst others.

Bhikkhu Khemavamsa lives in forest monasteries in Burma and Thailand.