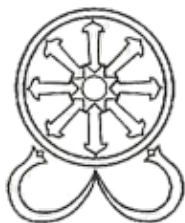


ABHIDHAMMA PAPERS

Edited by
Mark Rowlands

Published by
the Samatha Trust



ABHIDHAMMA PAPERS

Edited by
Mark Rowlands

Published by
the Samatha Trust

First Published 1982

© Samatha Trust

The Samatha Trust,

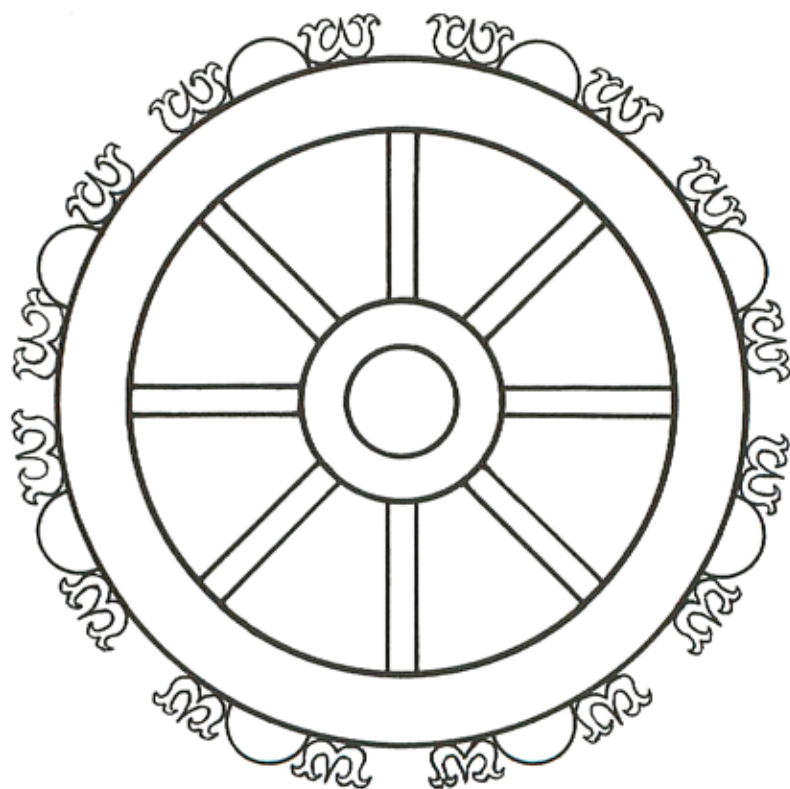
www.samatha.org

The Samatha Centre,
Greenstreete,
Llangunllo (near Knighton),
Powys,
LD7 1SP,
United Kingdom

Contents

- Introduction to the book 8
- 1 **Introduction to abhidhamma** 10
 - Abhidhamma 10
 - Abhidhamma and four kinds of realities 12
 - Basic principles of abhidhamma 17
- 2 **Mental factors and roots** 23
 - Unskilful and skilful mental factors 23
 - Roots 29
 - Attachment 34
- 3 **The thought process** 41
 - The value of studying abhidhamma 41
 - The sense door thought process 48
- 4 **Categories of mental factors** 56
 - Rupa, sense impression, the jhana factors and the hindrances 56
 - The five faculties 64

5	Relationships 70
	Critical points in the thought process 71
	Cause and effect 77
	The relation between the sense pentad and the jhananga 80
	Levels and the structure of the Abhidhammattha-sangaha 89
6	Afterward 96
7	Appendix I: An abhidhamma story 98
8	Appendix II: Pali terms 101
	Index 106



Introduction

This book has been compiled in the hope that a group of people studying abhidhamma in the West may be able usefully to share something of the experience with others. Although the work of translating the abhidhamma texts into English began more than seventy years ago, they remain comparatively little known in the West and a group studying abhidhamma is still something of a rarity. Yet the Abhidhamma-pitaka and the Sutta-pitaka, the two divisions of the Pali Buddhist scriptures of special importance to lay people, are complementary: the teachings contained in the suttas, which are far better known, are extended and deepened by the detailed, analytical teachings of the abhidhamma. To those wishing to investigate these teachings, the views and comments of others may be of interest.

Our 'Abhidhamma Group' was formed of people who had practised samatha meditation for some years, and approached abhidhamma as a means to a deeper understanding of both meditation practice and everyday experience. The basis of our study was the Abhidhammattha-sangaha, the book traditionally used in many Buddhist countries. We found that although at first sight the text could appear rather dry and abstract, containing as it does the central

technical terms and structures in very compact form, careful reading and re-reading revealed subtleties of meaning and clarity of analysis which were full of interest and amply rewarded the effort needed for the work.

The major part of this book consists of essays written by members of the group. After studying the text of the *Abhidhammatthasangaha* over an extended period we held a series of meetings at which each member in turn presented a short essay on an aspect of the *abhidhamma* which he or she found especially interesting. It will be seen that each person's own experience and understanding has in one way or another been used to help interpret the *abhidhamma* material. The reading of each essay was followed by group discussion: notes were taken, and these have been included after the essays.

The essays are reproduced here with only minor alterations from the form in which they were first presented. No attempt was made at overall consistency of approach, some people choosing a fairly literal and orthodox treatment, others a more imaginative and experimental one. Both methods seem valid in their different ways, and we have not tried to impose uniformity. There is also, inevitably, some repetition - which may not be a bad thing. The editors have tried to indicate some overall structure by arranging the essays in order and adding a brief introduction to each section. They have also added a glossary of Pali terms, for whilst some contributors preferred to avoid Pali for technical terms and seek English equivalents, others chose to use the traditional Pali words. The translations in the glossary are not offered as the ideal or only ones.

Our group found the work that led to this collection illuminating and enjoyable. We hope that others may find the results stimulating and helpful in their own studies.

Grevel

1 Introduction to Abhidhamma

The following three essays have been grouped together at the beginning of the book because they all deal in a fairly general way with some basic ideas used in abhidhamma. They provide some background to the canonical books of abhidhamma and introduce the way in which abhidhamma analyses experience in terms of four 'basic realities', namely consciousness (citta), the mental factors which arise with consciousness (cetasika), matter (rupa) and nibbana.

Essay: Abhidhamma

The Pali Canon (canonical writings of Theravada Buddhism) is in three parts: Vinaya-pitaka, or rules for monastic life; Sutta-pitaka, or discourses of the Buddha; and Abhidhamma-pitaka.

Traditionally the Abhidhamma pitaka has been ascribed to the Buddha, although scholars maintain that it dates from later periods. It consists of seven books, and its basis can also be found in the suttas. Other schools, notably the Sarvastivadins, have slightly different versions of abhidhamma, although all versions agree on essentials.

The Abhidhammattha-sangaha is a digest of the Abhidhamma

pitaka, composed probably about eight or nine centuries ago, and is the most used textbook for abhidhamma studies. It gives a full list of the cittas (mental states) and cetasikas (ingredients of citta) which are found in the thought process by which all sensation, thinking and action occurs.

It is meant for practical use in following the Eightfold Path, rather than for abstract theorizing. Its analysis of phenomena and the thought process demonstrates anicca (impermanence) and anatta (no permanent self), and so promotes right understanding. By describing citta and cetasika it helps in developing right concentration and also the four foundations of mindfulness. It thus aids the awareness conducive to sila and to right thought and right effort.

Bill

Discussion: Abhidhamma

According to tradition the Buddha, on the night of his enlightenment, ascended to a heaven world and recited the whole of the abhidhamma to his mother, in order to make to her the greatest act of generosity, the gift of dhamma. This mythical account contrasts with the scholarly approach to the texts, which tries to pin down the Buddha's life and his teachings to specifics. Perhaps it is necessary to balance the two approaches: the latter has the effect of narrowing down, while the former opens and expands possibilities. The term cetasika (paragraph three) was also discussed, and one major difficulty proved to be finding a suitable translation - as for many terms in abhidhamma. The word comes from the same root as citta, 'cit', which means 'think'. '-ika' means 'belonging to'. Cetasika is that which supports citta. English has no adequate translation for the word. 'Property' of mind has too many connotations of possession to be accurate. In this book we have used the translation 'mental factor'; if rather meaningless, it is at least neutral. But other words can also be used to give the feel of the term, such as the

12 Abhidhamma Papers

translation ‘ingredients’ used in the present essay.

In the last paragraph, the point is made that knowledge of anicca and anatta are closely connected, and thus right understanding is promoted. The question was raised as to how they were connected. Since there is no phenomenon or thought process which is permanent, there is nothing which can be identified as a permanent self: realisation of this therefore promotes right understanding. A similar example of the usefulness of abhidhamma is the way in which it helps develop right concentration, by the reading, for example, of its description of jhana factors or the different attributes of certain states of mind. Such knowledge makes it easier to return to a level of concentration which has been experienced.



Essay: Abhidhamma and four kinds of realities

The word ‘abhidhamma’ may be translated as ‘further teaching’. The texts embodying the abhidhamma form one of the three collections into which the earliest body of Buddhist scriptures is divided. The other two collections are the collection of discourses, containing the talks and sermons given by the Buddha; and the collection of the discipline, comprising the rules which govern the way of life of Buddhist monks and nuns.

The abhidhamma is a ‘further teaching’ in several senses. Its teachings go further than the discourses in being more analytical, and are best understood once some feeling for the suttas has been established. Moreover, the abhidhamma deals with truths which, although they do not contradict our everyday experience, cannot be fully expressed in terms of everyday language. Accordingly, certain new concepts and habits of thought and observation are needed,

to attain a degree of precision and clarity that goes beyond anything required for the ordinary purposes of our habitual speaking and thinking.

The purpose of abhidhamma is to enable us to reach a deeper understanding and a clearer awareness of ourselves and the world. Rightly approached, in other words, it is conducive to mindfulness and wisdom, which are in turn the means by which we and others may reach the end of suffering.

For this purpose abhidhamma offers an analytical method through which all our experience may be examined and understood. It follows that the study of abhidhamma cannot be fruitful unless it is combined with observation of our own immediate experience, whatever that may be. Just as abhidhamma will enable us to understand experience, so experience will help us to understand abhidhamma, and the two kinds of learning should develop together.

The subject matter of abhidhamma consists of four kinds of realities. These are:

1. Consciousness
2. Mental factors
3. Matter
4. Nibbana

Each of these terms requires some comment, and the first three need some re-definition, for the English words must take on slightly new senses if they are to be useful in the context of abhidhamma.

1. Consciousness is that in all our experience which watches, which knows. It might also be called 'mind', if mind is taken to mean not a permanent entity, or a faculty of the individual, but the quality of living awareness in whose field all that we know takes place.

Consciousness is impermanent: no form of consciousness lasts very long (even casual observation shows, for example, that our 'states of mind' change frequently, that we cannot concentrate on one thing indefinitely, that wakefulness tends to alternate with sleep, and so on) and closer analysis reveals that consciousness arises and ceases and arises again a very large number of times each second.

14 Abhidhamma Papers

At each such arising, the consciousness which comes into being has certain qualities, and is directed to some object. Accordingly many different kinds of consciousness may be distinguished. The description of the kinds of consciousness occupies an important place in the abhidhamma.

2. Mental factors apply a consciousness to its object. They are not the same as consciousness, but every consciousness is accompanied by some of them and they arise and cease with it. For this reason mental factors are also sometimes called ‘concomitants of consciousness’.

The mental factors are the basis of our commonsense understanding that different kinds of consciousness ‘feel’ different. When we recognize in ourselves pleasant or unpleasant states of mind, dull or alert ones, generous or malicious ones, we are noticing some of the mental factors that are present.

The abhidhamma lists and describes the range of mental factors we may experience and explains which kinds of consciousness they accompany.

3. Matter is that which has form, that which, through the senses, becomes an object of consciousness. Without consciousness matter cannot be experienced; without matter consciousness cannot be experienced. When they exist, they exist together. The abhidhamma gives an analysis of the nature of matter and its relationship to our senses, of how it comes into being and how it ceases.

4. Nibbana is the end of suffering. Beyond all worlds, beyond existence and non-existence, it cannot be described. The Buddha, however, has called it the supreme happiness and it is the goal towards which all Buddhist teaching and practice strives. It is the only one of the four basic realities which is not subject to impermanence.

The abhidhamma teaches that these four fundamental realities, consciousness, mental factors, matter and nibbana, comprise all that can be, all that we can conceive or possibly could conceive. This may seem an extravagant claim, and indeed it should be tested and tested again more closely as the study of abhidhamma progresses.

The full meaning of these technical terms can only become fully clear as more of the abhidhamma's theory is examined and given meaning by relating it to life.

Grevel

Discussion: Abhidhamma and four kinds of realities

This essay attempted to examine some of the most basic concepts of abhidhamma, seeking to define them without using Pali terms, with the exceptions of the words nibbana and abhidhamma. Areas of difficulty soon emerged. Rupa, for instance, posed particular problems. The disadvantage of translating it as 'matter' is that this term has, in the tradition of Western thought, certain connotations of naive materialism, in which everything apart from matter is seen as some kind of by-product. This is not true of rupa.

'Form' seemed in some ways closer to rupa as it implies some kind of relationship with a perceiver. In other respects, though, this is unsatisfactory as a translation as, firstly, it tends to be associated in popular usage with 'shape', and, secondly, it is usually a visual term, not applicable to objects of the other senses of hearing, smell, taste and touch.

There was also discussion about whether 'further teaching' is a suitable translation for abhidhamma (paragraph one, line one). Abhi, in Pali, means 'higher' or 'further' and abhidhamma is sometimes called 'deep dhamma', as it penetrates right into the nature of things. There are various translations for dhamma, including 'truth' and 'teaching'. The latter is not really meant in this context so much as the former. In fact, it is arguable if dhamma ever means 'teaching' in the sense of imparting knowledge; it is rather a living expression of truth in words or experience. The earliest occurrence of the term abhidhamma is in the suttas, when a distinction is drawn between abhivinaya, 'further training', and

16 *Abhidhamma Papers*

abhidhamma, 'further teaching'. It is usually supposed, however, that the term here has not yet acquired its technical sense.

There was considerable discussion about matter or rupa, perhaps indicating that it was a topic of abhidhamma about which most people felt hazy. The point was taken that 'without consciousness, matter cannot be experienced', but what does this mean in practice? For many kinds of beings, the converse is also true, that 'without matter, consciousness cannot be experienced'. Abhidhamma also states that there is a world in which consciousness exists without any matter at all (the arupa loka), so the relationship between consciousness and matter is not a simple one.

The texts also state that there are three defining characteristics of matter:

1. that which changes,
2. that which suffers disintegration,
3. that which suffers impact.

The first of these raises the question of the way in which the changeability of matter is different from that of consciousness. Perhaps the difference is that matter has a longer life-span than consciousness, and so it undergoes a more obviously definable process of change during that life-span.

With regard to the third characteristic, it is said that one state of consciousness cannot make impact with another, while one unit of matter can make impact with another. No doubt this is because mind is not spatial in nature whereas matter is. In fact space is a label for the arrangement of units of matter.

In the essay, it is stated that nibbana is not suffering and neither is it subject to impermanence. The question arises from this, does the third mark of existence, no-self, apply to nibbana? There has been much controversy about this in Buddhist tradition. In one view nibbana is not the same as the five aggregates, it is not part of the / aggregates, they are not part of it and it is not in the relationship of owner to the aggregates; it is therefore considered not self. In another view, nibbana transcends the categories of self and no self.



Essay: Basic principles of abhidhamma

In trying to write on any subject in abhidhamma, I kept on coming across the same problem. Abhidhamma as a system undercuts nearly all fixed structures and assumptions through which we perceive the world and acquire experience; so even, or perhaps especially in the most basic principles of abhidhamma certain basic ways of looking at the world have to be put aside, at least on an intellectual level.

The most important principles of abhidhamma could be summarised in the three marks of existence: impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no self. In abhidhamma there is no permanent 'I' experiencing the world, and no permanence in the world that is experienced. There are only four realities: consciousness, the mental factors that characterize consciousness, matter and nibbana. The first three are conditioned, and each unit of consciousness, each mental factor and each unit of matter last for an infinitesimally short period of time. Millions of thought-moments are said to occur in the twinkling of an eye. Matter is slightly more durable and course than consciousness. With certain exceptions seventeen thought-moments elapse in the life-time of one unit of matter. So what we call the self is simply a rapid succession of single thought-moments, occurring one at a time, each having its own object.

Despite the countless number of thought-moments which occur in the lifespan of a human being, there are altogether only one hundred and twenty-one different states of consciousness, each accompanied by its own specific attributes and functions. Some of these are active, in that they produce a result either skilful or unskilful; some are passive, or resultant, in that they are states of mind which are the

18 Abhidhamma Papers

product of earlier active mental tendencies, but which do not in themselves create further states of mind. So, if there has been an unskilful thought-moment rooted in aversion there will almost certainly be an unpleasant state of mind as a result of this some time in the future - this state of mind, however, will not in itself create further states of mind, though its occurrence may make it likely that active thought-moments rooted in aversion may arise in response to its unpleasantness. The other kinds of consciousness are functional, in that they operate outside the sphere of skilful and unskilful cause and-effect. In everyday life, for instance, they are the thought moments concerned with directing attention to the five senses or to mental states. While they are technically outside the world of cause and-effect, they are extremely important in the tendencies of moment by moment consciousness, as it is these which direct the mind either inwards or outwards.

Each thought-moment is coloured or characterised by different mental factors, in various combinations. These could be termed the attributes of each perceiving moment of consciousness. There are fifty-two of them, and in different groupings there are varying numbers of them accompanying each thought-moment. They include phenomena such as pleasant feeling, unpleasant feeling, joy, aversion and wisdom. So a purely functional moment of consciousness, such as one directing attention to the senses, contains only ten mental factors. These include the seven factors common to all moments of consciousness, which provide a basic framework keeping all thought-moments in working order. A thought-moment with skilful roots, however, accompanied by knowledge and pleasant feeling, will have the nineteen mental factors present in all skilful consciousness, the seven universal factors, and other attributes such as joy and effort.

The non-perceiving world of matter has a lack of solidity comparable to the world of mind. What we regard as solid objects are merely rapidly changing conglomerations of units of matter. The shape of an object is merely the mental construct we impose on a

constantly fluctuating series of sense impressions impinging on our consciousness.

As thought-moments can have only one object at a time, and as only one sensory thought-moment can be operative at anyone time, the experience of looking at an object is not simply one activity but a rapid oscillation between different sense impressions, the organisation of these impressions to conform to the mental framework by which we order our world, and the various feelings arising from this constant stream of sensory information. The effect could be compared to a multi-dimensional television transmission, with three rapidly-moving dots that make up the picture - matter, consciousness and mental factors - working on the senses of smell, taste, hearing and touch as well as sight and mind.

It soon emerges from even the most cursory study of abhidhamma, then, that the view it gives of the world is entirely different from the one that we are used to. While it may appear that we are all experiencing highly individual states of emotion and that the world we see is composed of an enormous variety of sights, smells and textures, according to abhidhamma all these impressions may be reduced to a series of processes composed of certain specific attributes and functions.

The complexity in the world we see and in our emotional make-up is the result of different arrangements and fluid patterns of thought, moments, mental factors and units of matter. At various points in the succession of thought-moments intervention is possible. The processes are not simply automatic but may be redirected, so that more skilful mental tendencies may develop.

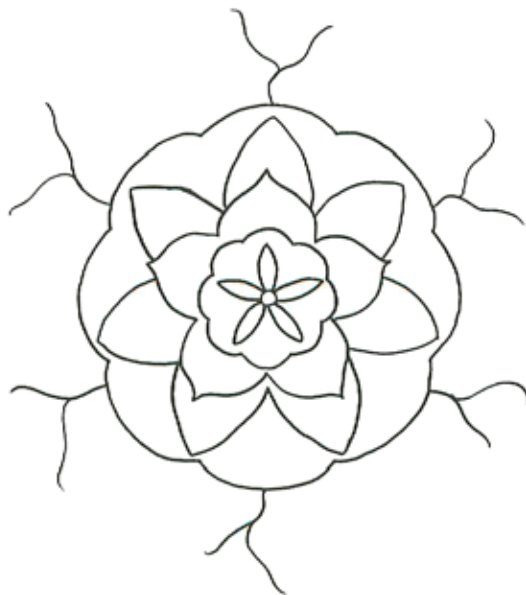
These categories in abhidhamma may be reduced even further, all the conditioned realities exhibiting the marks of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no self. Only nibbana, the fourth reality, is not subject to the laws of cause-and-effect, impermanence and unsatisfactoriness.

Sarah

Discussion: Basic principles of abhidhamma

There was much discussion about the statement in the second paragraph: 'There are four realities: consciousness, the mental factors which experience consciousness, matter and nibbana'. In what sense are these 'realities'? Consciousness, mental factors and rupa are transitory phenomena and so it is tempting to say that they are less 'real' than the laws inherent in the world and our experience of it; these, at least, hold for all times and places. But laws cannot normally be seen. Consciousness, mental factors, matter and nibbana, however, can be 'pointed out' and perhaps in this sense they are said to be 'realities'.

We also noted that the first three of the group are conditioned while nibbana is not. Another suggestion as to why the first three are termed 'realities' is that it is possible to work with them in order to develop understanding. This might be in line with the metaphor of



the television in the sixth paragraph: there are three different kinds of dots producing a picture. In this sense, the dots are 'real' while the picture is not.

Another problem concerned with the three conditioned realities is that of the relationships between them. While one difference between consciousness and matter is that consciousness perceives and matter does not (paragraph five), it might also be possible to see matter as the basic, most gross reality and mental factors and consciousness as progressively more subtle forms of the same reality. This suggests that they are intimately connected with one another and separate only for the purpose of analysis. So while it might be said that at any given level they are separate, the level is not fixed. If the level changes, so there is a corresponding change in the constituents of consciousness, mental factors and matter. This might be connected with another statement in abhidhamma that 'seventeen thought moments elapse in the lifetime of one unit of matter' (paragraph two). This is perhaps an exact statement of the relationship between the levels of consciousness and of matter. Between these two, and linking them, are mental factors, which then may be seen as the way in which consciousness is applied to matter. These thus constitute a third level. Applying these principles, matter is by definition the lowest level for any given analysis. It will also be noted that the three levels are thus differentiated not only by degrees of grossness but also by their function.

An interesting problem arises in connection with this. As one of the four realities, rupa is usually translated as 'matter', which is suggestive of the solid world of objects around us. The first four meditations, or jhanas, however, are called rupa-jhanas (as opposed to the other four arupa-jhanas, or jhanas without rupa). Yet in the rupa-jhanas there is no perception of the realm which we are accustomed to call 'matter', which we know through our bodily senses. Why, then, are they termed rupa-jhanas? One suggested answer to this again involved the question of different levels which was raised in the last paragraph. The three realities are not fixed

22 *Abhidhamma Papers*

levels, but simply levels in relation to one another. Their 'actual' level may change according to what is being investigated. Thus attainment of jhana may involve a change in levels: what performs the role of consciousness in the lower realms is taken as the rupa of the jhana consciousness. According to this interpretation, the arupa-jhanas are so-called because there is no lowest level, i.e. they have no limit.

There was also some discussion about the statement in the third paragraph that there are 'one hundred and twenty-one states of consciousness'. Certainly in some versions of abhidhamma, there is a list of one hundred and twenty-one *cittas*, but perhaps this does not have to be taken too literally. An essential aspect of consciousness is that it is unitary and thus in this sense it cannot be divided up into different kinds. Also, different schools of abhidhamma give different numbers of *cittas*. It may be that each list is giving a useful way of understanding consciousness for a given purpose, rather than an inflexible definition.

2 Mental factors and roots

The essays in this section discuss in more detail terms which were introduced in Section 1. The way in which consciousness arises with certain mental factors (cetasikas) has already been described; the first essay in this section discusses those mental factors which arise only with unskilful and skilful consciousness respectively. Abhidhamma also analyses consciousness according to those factors which condition it. Roots, or root factors (hetu), are important conditions of this kind and are discussed in the second essay. The third essay examines more closely one of the three roots, namely attachment (lobha).

Essay: Unskilful and skilful mental factors

In each moment there arises consciousness through contact with an object. Each conscious moment is accompanied by a variety of mental factors, each of which carries an activating force that determines the quality of the arisen consciousness. The concern here

24 *Abhidhamma Papers*

is with two of the three groups of mental factors identified in abhidhamma; those which increase the condition of wrong knowing and those which work towards a reduction of the wrong knowing and its eventual destruction.

All unskilful mental factors are expressions of the three roots of attachment, aversion and wrong knowing. Four of these mental factors, all expressions of wrong knowing, arise in any consciousness that is unprofitable. These are cloudiness, agitation, lack of concern for, and disregard of, consequences arising from present actions.

If the root of attachment is present, one at least of the following mental factors will operate: attachment to, false views about, or conceit regarding an object. When rejection of the object of consciousness is present, as opposed to a craving for the object, the mental factor of aversion will operate alone or with one of its particular flowerings; that is, jealousy, miserliness or guilt. Sometimes the four common factors are accompanied by doubt and also, on some occasions, by stiffness and sluggishness as well.

All the above mental factors in operation result in the mind being unable to see clearly the object of the mind. Thus it cannot understand the true nature of the object as being characterized by the three marks of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and voidness of self. In addition to a lack of understanding there is present an identification with the object, the consciousness and the various unskilful mental factors.

Release from the suffering conditioned by this inability to know the nature of the object of consciousness as it is, is achieved through the development of wisdom. Wisdom is fully operative when the eightfold path is fully developed.

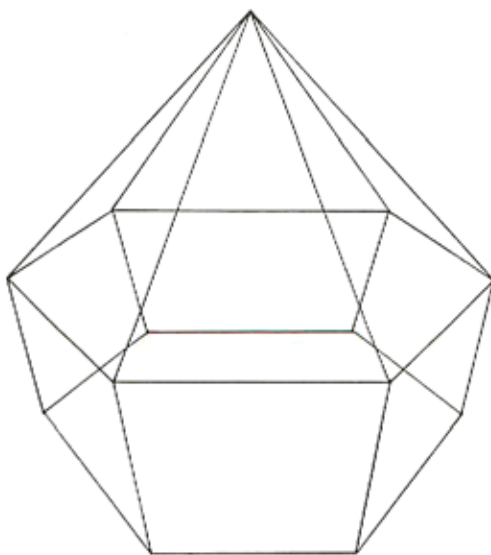
It is stressed in many suttas that mindfulness is the key to development. When studying the profitable group of mental factors in abhidhamma it is possible to realize the importance of mindfulness in this process.

The initial step in development is to 'set the wheel in motion'. This means to break out of the cycle of recurring wrong knowing which

operates through the power of the unskilful mental factors.

There are nineteen skilful or ‘beautiful’ mental factors that arise together if conditions allow. However, it is possible to view the first one mentioned as that which sets the wheel in motion. This mental factor is confidence or faith. This faith arises because of an acceptance that the teachings of the Buddha are valuable and to be treasured. It is not a grasping of the teachings, saying: ‘This is truth’, but rather a type of understanding of an intuitive nature. It is like the type of feeling that arises as: ‘Yes! There is a way!’, when wishing to solve a problem.

When this confidence has made the first point of contact, mindfulness arises. Mindfulness is a noticing of what object is in the mind. It is typified by a lack of unknowing involvement with the object. A wider vision is created, including a knowledge of accompanying mental factors. Mindfulness can be seen as that which allows the wheel to turn, creating a skilful cycle that tends towards development.



26 *Abhidhamma Papers*

Faith initiates and mindfulness establishes. Simultaneously will arise other profitable mental factors. As a result of the aspect of memory in mindfulness, there arises a wish not to be involved with unskilfulness, accompanied by a fear of the consequences of such an involvement. Attachment is replaced by generosity; that is, rather than holding on to an object there is an acceptance of the presence of the object, no more. Ill will is replaced by a warmth towards the object. Being freed from the clouded fixing onto an object found when unskilful mental factors operate, the mind is able to maintain an even balance.

There is also a group of factors which arise and which affect both the mind and mental objects. These factors are tranquillity, lightness, pliancy, fitness, skilfulness and correctness. All these enable the mind to work skilfully.

When these mental factors occur more frequently it is possible to develop additional factors that benefit the development of the path, which include compassion and sympathetic joy, both of which use positively energies previously invested in illwill and grasping. The most important of the remaining mental factors is understanding, or wisdom. When mindfulness and the other skilful mental factors arising together are sufficiently established, understanding will develop, gradually removing the hold that wrong knowing has over the mind.

The last three skilful mental factors, all necessary for the development of freedom from craving, are the qualities of right speech, right action and right livelihood, which will arise depending upon circumstances.

Paul

Discussion: Unskilful and skilful mental factors

The groups of unskilful and skilful factors, together with the Pali terms, are given below as two lists. In this form they appear rather dry, and the point was raised about the way in which the image of the wheel (paragraph seven) is used to contrast the two groups and convey a feeling for the operation of each of them as a cycle.

Mental Factors of Unskilful Consciousness

moha	cloudiness
ahirika	lack of concern for consequences
annotappa	disregard for consequences
uddhacca	agitation
lobha	attachment
ditthi	false views
mana	conceit
dosa	aversion
issa	jealousy
macchariya	miserliness
kukkucca	guilt
thina	stiffness
middha	sluggishness
vicikiccha	doubt

Mental Factors of Skilful Consciousness

saddha	confidence or faith
sati	mindfulness
hiri	a wish not to be involved with unskilfulness
ottappa	fear of the consequences of unskilfulness
alobha	generosity
adosa	warmth (towards the object)
tatramajjhata	even balance

28 *Abhidhamma Papers*

kayapassaddhi	tranquillity (of body and mind)
cittapassaddhi	
kayalahuta	lightness (of body and mind)
cittalahuta	
kayamuduta	pliancy (of body and mind)
cittamuduta	
kayakammannata	fitness (of body and mind)
cittakammannata	
kayapagunnata	skilfulness (of body and mind)
cittapagunnata	
kayujjukata	correctness (of body and mind)
cittujjukata	
karuna	compassion
mudita	sympathetic joy
panna	wisdom
sammavaca	right speech
sammakammanta	right action
samma-ajiva	right livelihood

The difference between mindfulness and wisdom was also discussed. How much wisdom is there in mindfulness? With mindfulness, there seems to be knowledge of what is present, without necessarily a knowledge of the nature of what is present. The distinction is illustrated in a situation where one feels something to be so, but cannot explain why it is so.



Abhidhamma analyses experience according to its different aspects. Some states of consciousness are causative, that is to say, they will produce an effect which will manifest at some time in the future. Other states of consciousness are the results of prior causes, the so-called resultant consciousnesses. Finally, some states of consciousness do not produce any effect at all but operate in a different sphere to that of cause-and-effect.

Buddhism deals essentially with the problem of suffering: why do we perform acts which lead to suffering? A look at the states of consciousness which create effects should elucidate this for us. The states of consciousness are broken down into two kinds, which we can call skilful and unskilful.

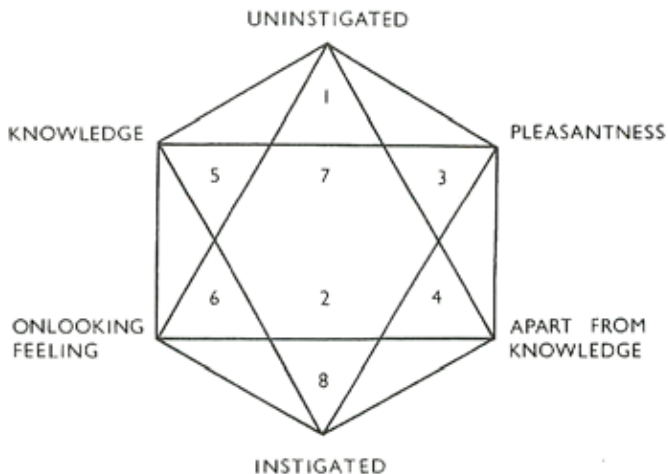
Let's take a closer look at the unskilful states of consciousness, since it is in these that the majority of the grosser kinds of suffering must be produced. There are twelve of these, eight of which we can call 'attachment consciousnesses', for reasons which will become apparent. Abhidhamma states that if we look closely at one single state of consciousness we find that it arises with many associated mental factors. For instance, the first kind of attachment consciousness arises together with mental factors such as dullness, lack of fear of consequences of the act, distraction, and attachment. (An example of this particular kind of consciousness is often given as that of a person who sees an apple on a greengrocer's barrow, and then promptly and joyfully takes it, without any idea that he is doing wrong.) Although many contributory and associated factors arise in this one type of consciousness, it is known as an attachment consciousness because the mental factor of attachment is the main cause of the unskilful act. For instance, in our example, it is the instant arising of attachment for the apple which conditions the unskilful act of stealing.

The same applies for the remaining four unskilful consciousnesses, the two 'aversion consciousnesses' and the two 'deludedness consciousnesses'. Anyone of the two states of aversion consciousness

30 *Abhidhamma Papers*

will arise together with many mental factors such as jealousy, envy, guilt, distraction, aversion, and so on; but aversion is the main causative agent in this type of consciousness, hence it can be called 'aversion consciousness'. Similarly in the two deludedness consciousnesses, deludedness is the main causative factor, and is accompanied by such factors as distraction or doubt.

Thus we can say that in all unskilful states of mind, there are three main causative factors, attachment, aversion and deludedness. In abhidhamma, these three factors are called the unskilful 'roots'. (Often the analogy is drawn between an unskilful state of consciousness and a tree, and here attachment, aversion and deludedness form the roots which sustain and give life support to the rest of the tree, which together with the roots forms the unskilful state of mind.) It is interesting to note that all unskilful consciousnesses have the root of deludedness, and in fact the deludedness consciousnesses only have this single root. Attachment consciousnesses arise with roots of both attachment and deludedness, and aversion consciousnesses arise with the roots of aversion and deludedness, thus these consciousnesses can be called 'two-rooted'.



We were originally looking at the states of consciousness which produce effects. Besides the unskilful consciousnesses, there are some kinds of skilful consciousnesses which produce effects. An example of a skilful consciousness is that of a person who joyfully gives food to a beggar, even though he doesn't understand why it is a good act. Here again, such a state of consciousness will be associated with many mental factors such as faith, composure, discretion, mental buoyancy, generosity and goodwill. In this example, the two factors of generosity (or non-attachment) and goodwill (or non-aversion) are regarded as being the main causes of the act of generosity. Hence non-attachment and non-aversion are known as skilful roots, and they always co-exist in all states of skilful consciousness. All states of skilful consciousness will then be at least two-rooted. Another example of a skilful state of consciousness is that of a person who gives food to a beggar with a joyful feeling and with understanding. Here, because of the understanding present, there is the factor of wisdom, in addition to other factors such as non-attachment, non-aversion, faith, discretion, etc. Wisdom, or non-deludedness, is regarded as the third skilful root, and may or may not be present in skilful states of consciousness, depending on whether there is understanding there or not. Thus skilful states of consciousness are always two-rooted, and may be three-rooted. In total, then, there are six roots, the three unskilful roots of attachment, aversion and deludedness, and the three skilful roots of non-attachment, non-aversion and non-deludedness. The three skilful roots can also be described in their more positive aspects as generosity, loving-kindness and wisdom.

How does a person develop the roots? Since a root is a cause, one could say that it has a causal relation to the arisen state of consciousness. Abhidhamma states that other relations or conditions occur, such as the 'repetition condition', where the repetition of a particular act will naturally tend to strengthen the habit, and 'kamma condition', where actions of the present will condition actions in the future. If the mind is deluded we will soon become entangled in the

32 *Abhidhamma Papers*

world of the passions, hating this, wanting that and strengthening our conditioning by each repeated act of craving or aversion. The roots of attachment, aversion and deludedness will be developed and become completely automatic, dominating our lives. Conversely, if we try to perform acts of generosity and loving-kindness we may gradually reach the stage where the giving and goodwill is spontaneous, and we may truly be said to have the two skilful roots. A man needs the third skilful root, wisdom, before he can enter the states of higher consciousness, or have the possibility of achieving that end of all root-making, nibbana; so he should make efforts to cultivate insight so that, if not in this life, perhaps in the next he may establish the wisdom-root.

Steve

Discussion: Roots

There seemed to be a particular trap in the way in which roots are often regarded as some kind of permanent subconscious entities. This sort of view only strengthens the idea of a permanent ego. Abhidhamma does not treat them like this. Roots exist only in the present and while they will tend to operate in the pattern which has been established in the past, a root can be changed at any time.

Roots seem to be very active phenomena. As the name suggests, they are a prime cause. (Thus in abhidhamma, wrong knowing is the first link in dependent origination and with the other roots also the first of the twenty-four conditions.)

Abhidhamma also includes attachment, aversion and wrong knowing as latent tendencies (*anusaya*), which are said to lie dormant in oneself until an opportune moment arises for them to come to the surface. The question was thus raised as to the difference between roots and latent tendencies, since they appear similar in many respects. The main difference seems to be that latent tendencies are always present as a kind of seed or potential, so that a latent tendency

towards unskilfulness is present in skilful consciousness, even if only in a dormant state. Only the path consciousnesses can eradicate latent tendencies. Roots, on the other hand, are far more active; they power states of mind in an energetic way. Because of their active nature, it is impossible for unskilful roots to co-exist with skilful ones. Each can cancel out the other. Seeds of the other three may be present as latent tendencies, but, to extend the analogy of growth, they need soil and nourishment before they can grow as roots.

There was some discussion as to the extent to which roots can be seen. Usually it seems that we only see the effects or manifestations of roots, so presumably a fuller seeing of the mind is necessary to know the roots themselves.

As the essay points out, roots can either be kusala (skilful) or akusala (unskilful), and there was a lot of discussion about the appropriate translations for these two terms. They are sometimes translated as ‘moral’ and ‘immoral’; similarly, sila is sometimes translated as ‘morality’. The word ‘moral’ comes from the Latin ‘mores’, meaning customs or habits. In other words, it is a term indicating behaviour which receives cultural approval. In our culture, it has acquired connotations of divine approval as well. This sense of some kind of external agency judging or approving others does not seem to be applied in abhidhamma; there is no sense of moral approval attached to the pursuit of the path. It seems simply that certain states of mind are more useful for the development of the conditions in which the goal is likely to arise. ‘Skilful’ and ‘unskilful’ would then be more appropriate translations for kusala and akusala, than words like ‘moral’ and ‘immoral’ or ‘wholesome’ and ‘unwholesome’. To regard these states of mind as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ in terms of moral judgement is in a sense an evasion of responsibility - an action is done not for itself but for praise or blame.

The essay also points out how sila can be seen as an aspect of developing skilful roots, and in this respect it can be translated as ‘right character’ or ‘keeping the right discipline’. In practice, it can be seen as an act of restraint helpful for arousing skilful consciousness.

34 *Abhidhamma Papers*

This may be seen, for instance, when an occasion for saying something hurtful arises, but restraint occurs. The lift in energy experienced at that moment is an indication that skilful consciousness is present. This example can also be used to illustrate the difference between a two-rooted and a three-rooted consciousness. The former would be an instinctive avoidance of saying the hurtful comment and at that moment of decision, faith (*saddha*) would be the dominant motivation. A more developed wisdom, however, would be present if, at the moment of decision, all the implications involved in the action were known. If an understanding of the precise reason for rejecting the comment was present, then the knowledge would be the knowledge of wisdom rather than of faith.

In summary, there seems to be a complete difference in quality between skilful and unskilful roots. The latter seem to depend on a wrong way of looking at things based on misconceptions. Skilful roots, on the other hand, seem to be natural functions, working freely if the mind is in its proper pure state. The natural energy flows of skilful roots are, however, blocked and distorted at different stages if skilful roots are replaced by unskilful ones.



Essay: Attachment

Eight types of citta rooted in attachment (*lobha*):

1. Accompanied by pleasant feeling, with wrong view, unprompted
2. Accompanied by pleasant feeling, with wrong view, prompted
3. Accompanied by pleasant feeling, without wrong view, unprompted
4. Accompanied by pleasant feeling, without wrong view, prompted

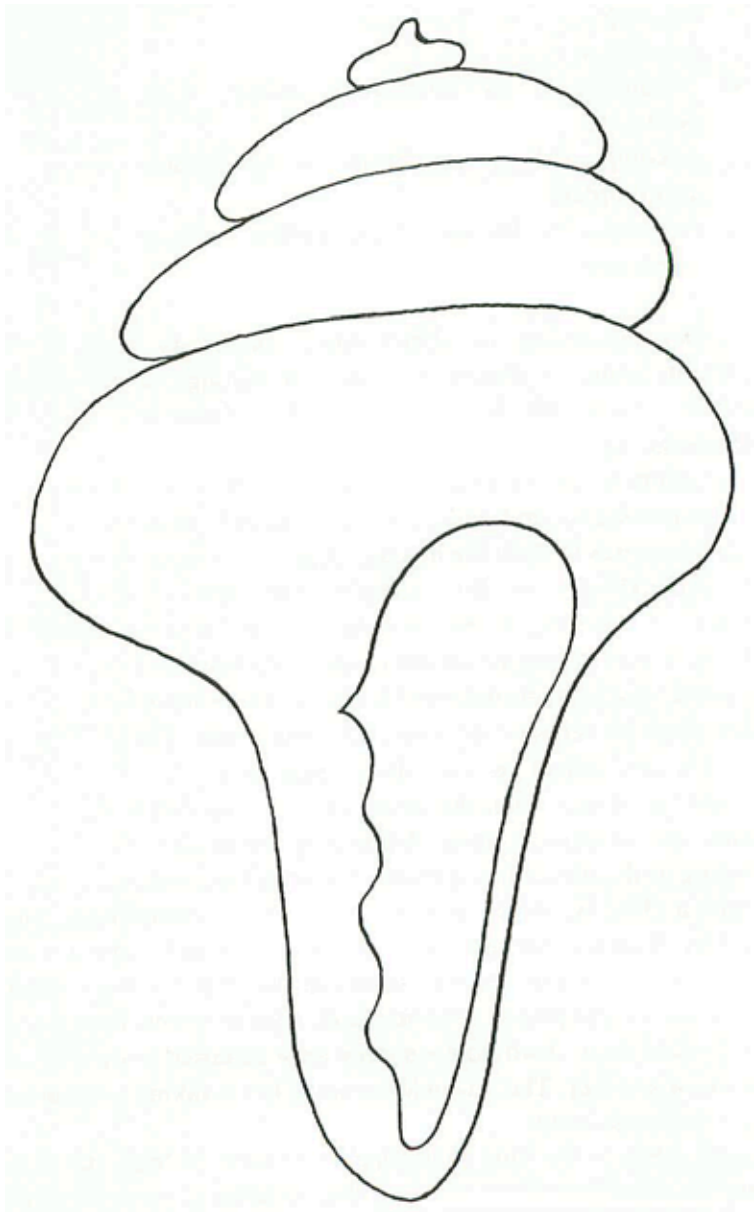
5. Accompanied by indifferent feeling, with wrong view, unprompted
6. Accompanied by indifferent feeling, with wrong View, prompted
7. Accompanied by indifferent feeling, without wrong view, unprompted
8. Accompanied by indifferent feeling, without wrong view, prompted

Lobha, according to abhidhamma, manifests itself in eight different forms as illustrated above. It belongs to the group of unskilful cittas, which also include dosa (aversion) and moha (deludedness).

Attachment, greed, craving, clinging; all these words express the meaning of lobha, and lobha always has dukkha as its end result.

Lobha arises in daily life in many degrees. Imagine that you own a beautiful Ming vase, for example. The sight of this treasured possession tottering on the mantelpiece may cause the unprompted arising of very strong attachment - the body may even react with the characteristic grasping nature of lobha. To be aware of lobha in such a gross form presents no difficulty after the event. The problem is to see this attachment as something apart from the object of consciousness. If and when the object comes to its end in the form for which the attachment arose, lobha may yet persist. There is still a clinging to the object but in reality the object has vanished and there is just a clinging, which is to say, a clinging to emptiness. This is dukkha. Dukkha arises not merely because of lobha but also as a result of not understanding the true nature of the object as rupa (matter) which arises and passes away moment after moment. Had the vase not broken then, it would eventually have returned to dust by some means or another. The misunderstanding lies in taking as permanent what is impermanent.

This lobha is the kind that attaches to form or 'material shape'. Another kind of lobha is the one that attaches to view. Seeing the



body as self is a view based on lobha. As can be seen from the list, four of the eight types of lobha are connected with view and may arise with or without pleasure, prompted or unprompted. Views are the first type of lobha that have to be erased if progress is to be made. For instance, if one persists in ego-personality belief, then it will be hard to develop generosity or goodwill to any great degree because of the excessive importance placed on self which is a characteristic of this view.

Lobha, unconnected with view, may arise with pleasant or unpleasant feeling. It is with these forms of lobha that awareness of their arising becomes more difficult (and more uncomfortable if one considers the degree of subtlety and apparent innocence of much that is classified as unskillful).

Pleasant talk, friendship, going to the cinema are all activities which may involve the arising of lobha cittas accompanied by pleasant feeling. The lobha cittas arising with indifferent feeling may occur when one simply stands, when one corrects the length of the breath during a meditation practice, or when one watches a nimitta. According to abhidhamma, all will lead to dukkha arising from the attachment to impermanent objects in an impermanent world.

Since lobha is so extraordinarily deep-rooted, to the extent that conceit is only completely eradicated in an arahat, then it may be worth considering its advantages. When considering the more subtle forms it is obvious that most of us will never succeed in eradicating much lobha for many lifetimes, yet it provides pleasure and amusement and these may be used to promote joy and happiness, providing the necessary morale for a continuing and consistent practice. Since it is obvious that there will be attachment to the practice, one might consider whether it is not a good thing to be attached to something that may lead to unattachment.

Also we do not have a clear knowledge of the states of consciousness that become less and less fettered as they get higher and so any progress in eradicating just a small amount of lobha will bring a greater freedom and well-being to our lives. This is so simply

38 Abhidhamma Papers

because there is an improvement, leading to a state that was previously unknown to us. Lobha may be weakened by contemplating the three marks of existence. An understanding or gradual acceptance of anicca, dukkha and anatta will allow progress to be made. It is when progress has been made and we look back that we may realize anicca, dukkha and anatta are present in our lives.

Guy

Discussion: Attachment

The first point taken up was the example of the vase being broken. While the vase is breaking, clinging may clearly be the main sensation. On the other hand, this does not exclude the possibility that other sensations may also arise momentarily - for example, unpleasant feeling (with aversion as the root). This example was chosen, however, to try to bring out the deep-rooted and positive nature of attachment.

The essay then points out that attachment may be focussed, not just on material objects, but also on 'view' (ditthi) - in fact, four of the eight types of consciousness rooted in attachment are associated with wrong view. The translation of the term as 'view' may be misleading, implying as it does an idea, or the way one anticipates the future. But its meaning seems deeper than this; perhaps 'world view' or 'the way one perceives the world' is closer. It is also usually associated with the wrong views of eternalism and annihilationism. The former is usually illustrated by the desire to be immortal, but an example nearer to home might be practising meditation with the idea that it will result in pleasant states of mind. The latter view of annihilationism is also usually illustrated by the belief that nothing survives after one's death. Another example would be the desire to go to sleep in order to get away from it all.

The essay also points out possible difficulties in distinguishing between skilful and unskilful consciousness. While pleasant talk and

friendship sometimes arouse attachment, if the discussion is about dhamma, skilful consciousness may be aroused instead. Whereas frivolous talk tends to disperse energy, talk about dhamma tends to raise energy. On the other hand, it does not seem that the distinction between skilfulness and unskilfulness is simply a matter of the amount of energy raised. For example, when one loses one's temper, a great deal of energy may be raised, but an unskilful consciousness is present. The problem, however, is that when energy is raised, one may feel more 'awake' and then think that this is skilfulness. But it may only be strong energisation (*piti*) in a cilia with attachment and pleasant feeling. While it may not be so easy to distinguish the two at the time, it seems to be easy afterwards: one's state of mind and energy level after the event will make it quite clear whether the consciousness was skilful or unskilful. The latter restricts and narrows, while the former opens up the mind.

Another problem in distinguishing skilfulness from unskilfulness was discussed in the context of doing meditation practice. While attachment to the practice is very much a possibility, it also seems possible that there comes a point in the practice where a sense of a kind of urgency arises. Perhaps this is not a form of unskilful attachment; it seems more like a strong desire to do whatever is necessary, and it seems to build up a momentum in the practice. In *abhidhamma*, there is also the term *dhamma-chanda* - the will to do what is right, which is not based on self or others. In the *suttas* the Buddha is asked how it is possible that one can come to end all craving by craving. The Buddha compares it to a man who has a desire to go to the park; when he has got to the park, he no longer has that desire. In one's own practice, then, it may be profitable to distinguish between attachment to the practice and a real desire to do it.

Finally, the problem of eradicating *lobha* was also discussed. There seem to be two sides to this. On the one hand, there is gradual work and development, so that mindfulness and concentration may accumulate. On the other, there may be points when an opportunity

may be taken and a change can take place. The former seems to have a gradual step-by-step nature, while the latter seems to be more a matter of not getting in the way and allowing skilfulness to arise. The strength of skilful consciousness may be great and may also be a powerful antidote to attachment and other forms of unskilfulness. There may be many opportunities throughout the day for skilfulness to arise and because of this the texts place a great deal of emphasis on the good fortune of being born as a human.

In terms of specific meditation practices, the traditional cures for strong attachment are the cemetery meditations, and the meditation on the thirty-two parts of the body. These are not, however, recommended if there is any tendency towards aversion, as they may give rise to a form of morbid excitement. Anicca practice is also considered an antidote, particularly for the desire to acquire material goods and for cutting off pride.

3 The thought process

An earlier essay, Basic principles of abhidhamma, introduced the abhidhamma analysis of consciousness as a constant arising and falling away, rather than as a continuous entity. The two essays in this section discuss the way in which thought-moments, or states of consciousness, are organised into series called thought processes (vithi).

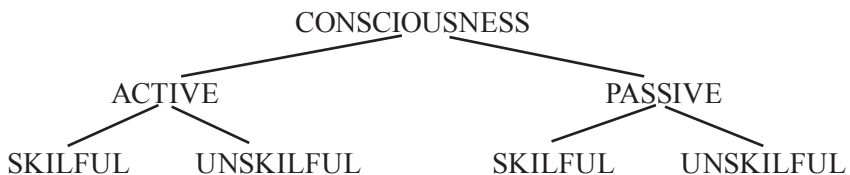
Essay: The value of studying abhidhamma

Abhidhamma provides a framework for the understanding of our everyday experience, and this understanding will act as a condition for the arising of insight. It provides us with a classification of all possible states of consciousness and their interrelation. We can apply this to our lives as we are not interested in grand theories but rather specific experiences.

A day may pass and looking back over it we may remember that we were upset by a friend's thoughtless comment just before lunch, had a riotous laughing session just after, and the rest of the time seemed to be an indifferent blur.

In abhidhamma terms, what has actually happened is that many thousands of states of consciousness have arisen and fallen away in one continuous stream. Abhidhamma is about recognizing these states in the present moment so that we may penetrate more deeply into that present.

We can classify each moment of consciousness into active or passive and then further subdivide active and passive into skilful and unskilful.



Passive states of consciousness present objects to our senses or mind, and active states do something about what has been presented. Each state of consciousness is accompanied by a number of mental factors which colour consciousness. These are different for active and passive states. Root mental factors which supply the underlying motivation in active states are absent in passive states. For consciousness concerned with the objects of the senses, the active states are also richer in accompanying mental factors. We can see the active and passive sides of the consciousness process in the following examples.

Passively viewing the wares on display in a bookshop, we suddenly reach out for a book which has aroused our interest. Or, standing in front of the fire, passively aware of the pleasant bodily feeling, we suddenly leap back as our trousers begin to burn.

The latter example is perhaps a skilful action, but in abhidhamma it is not necessarily a skilful state of consciousness. The terms 'skilful' and 'unskilful' are purely relative. To develop the conditions for the arising of insight or the first meditation, skilful states are essential. Basically, they are states of consciousness which bring about the

lessening of disturbances in the mind, making the mind clearer and lighter. Unskilful states, on the other hand, tend to disturb the mind, exciting it, depressing it or dulling it, and quite often they are accompanied by unpleasant mental feeling. Certainly if active unpleasant feeling is experienced then there is an unskilful state of consciousness present, whereas pleasant or neutral feeling can indicate either skilful or unskilful consciousness is present.

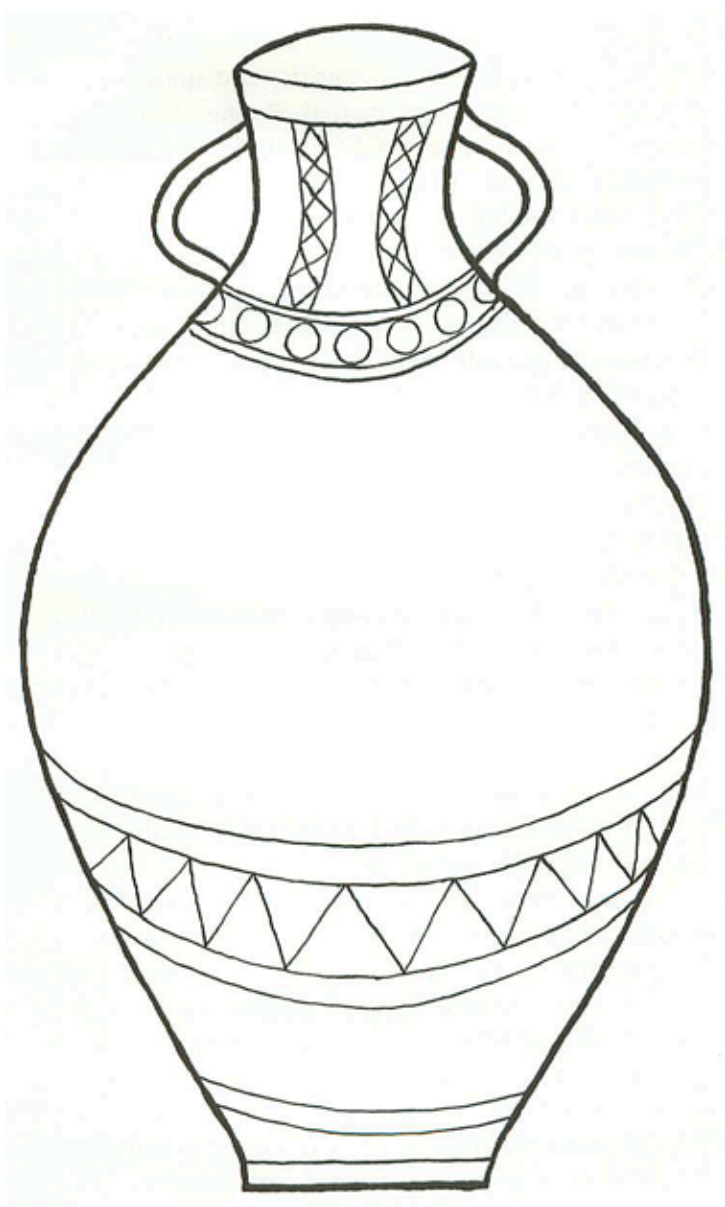
However, in the skilful state certain mental factors are prevalent which make the experience quite different; there is a lightness and clarity of mind which does not occur in unskilful states.

Objects are perpetually being presented to us and we act, or rather react, to them. The way we react is conditioned by the numerous previous times we have reacted to the same stimuli. Our habits are self-perpetuating and are manifest as the mental factors which accompany each state of consciousness.

If we watch carefully then we can see these habits, and analyse them into their active and passive sides. So the next time someone insults us, and we know we are going to react violently, then we have a chance to do something different - a slim chance, but a chance nonetheless. At the moment before we react we have an element of choice and we can break the cycle there. The passive stimulation need not lead to its usual conclusion.

This is of course assuming that our actions are unskilful and we really want to break the cycle. Unfortunately for the most part our actions are unskilful, as we are constantly seeking stimulation, embracing some things, rejecting others. Our lives can be dominated by unskilful states of consciousness. This is most obvious to us after some distressing emotional experience; we feel depressed perhaps for several hours, several days, or longer. This is a gross manifestation of what in actual fact is happening most of the time. The feeling may be less intense, but our normal consciousness flows on from one unskilful state to the next.

To break these unskilful cycles is not an easy matter, and as we observe them the slim chance we have of breaking them may seem to



become even slimmer. This is not a cause for despair but must necessarily be the case until our observation becomes clear enough to occasionally stop the process.

So far we have analysed the consciousness process into two parts, active and passive, with a point of decision somewhere in the middle. But if we observe very carefully the passive side of the process then we will see that the matter is not so simple as an object suddenly presenting itself to one of our senses and our reacting to it. Our initial reaction is very important; the actual way we perceive an object will be influential in our later determining what action to take towards it. As soon as we see something we attach to it a vast complex of associations. Can we see 'w' without mentally saying 'double you'? Basically we perceive only colours, sounds, tastes, smells and touch, but to make this mass of stimuli intelligible we have developed concepts through which the mind knows the world. Concepts are necessary to function in the world, but we should know that they are constructs, and as such not 'real'. They are a complex of associations and feelings learnt over the years. The way we have constructed these concepts is the way we react to the world. Our choices have already been made in the way in which we built up our concepts. It's too late to refuse when we see a 'delicious desirable gâteau'; the yearning for that object is already present in our initial perception of it,

The memory of these concepts is stored in the mental factor 'recognition' which arises in every state of consciousness. But the crucial mental factor from a practical standpoint is 'attention'.

A possible analogy would be the situation where we are in a strange room in the dark. The room is new to us and there is just enough moonlight to see vague shapes. A burglar will interpret the shapes one way; we, as privileged guests, will interpret them in a different way. The fundamental set of attitudes is dissimilar and this underlies the different perceptions. On a more momentary scale, we have a parallel in the functioning of attention as the moulder of perception.

Attention directs the mind towards the object. If it does so skilfully then a skilful state of consciousness will follow. If it does so

unskilfully an unskilful stale will follow. The skilfulness in this case is marked by a degree of non-involvement. The burglar in our example was very involved; his attention wanted to see jewellery and silver, and he did not want to see people, especially police. His perception of objects in the room would have been correspondingly distorted. A less involved observer would see the objects more clearly for what they were. To develop an uninvolved attention is to refrain from immediately grasping objects as desirable or undesirable. The practice of ‘bare attention’ is often referred to in Buddhist teachings and here we can see a little of the abhidhamma rationale behind it.

Sometimes in a crowd we may think we recognize an old acquaintance but as the figure comes closer we realise we were mistaken. If we had not wanted to meet this person then we would have tightened up and then breathed a sigh of relief in a split second. The attention was unskilful.

Perhaps in a similar fashion we mistake the ‘reality’ of the world about us, reacting unnecessarily to ‘realities’ which are not much more than figments of our imagination.

Abhidhamma can give some pointers, provide a skeleton which we must flesh out with our own experiences. We should pay close attention to the objects of our senses and our reactions to them for this constitutes our view of the world, and it is the attachment to this view which prevents our changing. The attachment arises out of ignorance or murkiness, and it is our attention that is murky. It is so murky that it causes us to do things again and again which bring ourselves and others suffering. Abhidhamma may help clear that murkiness.

Rod

Discussion: The value of studying abhidhamma

The first point discussed concerned active and passive moments of consciousness, (paragraph four). While the terms ‘active’ and

‘passive’ convey something of the difference between types of consciousness, this need not mean that the mind is flooded out passively when receiving sense-impressions. There is also some activity needed in ‘passive’ moments of consciousness: the activity needed to ‘present objects to our senses or mind’.

There was also much discussion about the role of the mental factor ‘recognition’ (sanna) in our perception of objects. Paragraph twelve outlines according to abhidhamma the process of perception through the senses, which involves only colours, sounds, tastes, smells and touch. Thus in the case of a visual impression, we do not perceive ‘cup’ but only a particular colour and form. The ‘cup’ is not a visual impression but a concept (pannatti) experienced by way of the mind rather than the eyes. Sanna is said to be of crucial importance in this progression from visual impression to experience of a concept. Sanna is said to ‘label’ visual impressions so that they can be recognised later on. In other words, when we ‘see’ a cup, memory is also involved; our mind searches through past visual impressions which have been labelled by sanna. Presumably it is in childhood that we learn to establish links between particular visual impressions and concepts, and so create our world. But if each time we perceive a cup an association is made between sense-impressions and concepts, is there then some kind of store of memories and concepts on which the mind draws? Could sanna be the ‘store’ as well as the agent which identifies and recognizes? Perhaps part of the difficulty in this arises from the way we usually think of the mind - as something ‘private’, ‘inside’ us, with a kind of door, the senses, opening to the outside world. But perhaps we can also think of there being a door which opens inwards as well, to a mental world in which there are many kinds of memory and concept. If it is seen in this light then it is not necessary to regard memories and concepts as being ‘stored’ when we are not using (hem - just as we do not think of visual impressions as waiting to be used while our eyes are closed).

From this it is possible to see the general importance of sanna in abhidhamma. Abhidhamma is concerned with things as they really

are. The obvious implication is that usually we do not see things as they really are. So it is necessary to examine the role of sanna in the creation of our ‘unreal’ perceptions. We have all been educated to create the world using a generally agreed jigsaw of concepts. This is obviously necessary for any kind of participation in life, but it also seems that we forget that it is a jigsaw we have created, and this distorts our perceptions and the actions based on them.

The relation between attention and skilful or unskilful consciousness (paragraph fifteen) was also discussed. The term used in the texts for skilful attention is *yoniso manasikara*, which may also be translated as ‘appropriate attention’. This involves a subtle change of emphasis, as the importance then lies not only in the manner of attention, but also in its object. If attention is paid to unskilful matters, then unskilful consciousness is more likely to arise; if to skilful objects, then skilful consciousness will be more likely. This key word, attention, then underlines an important aspect of the use of the terms *kusala* and *akusala* in *abhidhamma*, as it indicates that they are neutral in nature, without the moralistic overtones sometimes given them by Westerners.



Essay: The sense door thought process

Each time we perceive an object through the senses, a series of thought-moments occurs which constitute a process. These thought-moments, or *cittas*, are according to *abhidhamma*, different ‘minds’ or states of mind. One follows another in rapid succession (usually too quickly to be perceived individually) and in a certain order. Normally for the perception of an object through one of the senses, seventeen thought-moments occur. These are:

1. Past bhavanga (Resultant)
2. Vibrating bhavanga (Resultant)
3. Cutting off stream of bhavanga (Resultant)
4. Turning to sense-door (Kiriya)
5. Sense consciousness (Resultant)
6. Receiving (Resultant)
7. Investigating (Resultant)
8. Determining (Kiriya)
- 9-15. Javana (Kamma)
- 16-17. Retention (Resultant)

Each thought-moment serves a different function.

1. Bhavanga: Bhavanga or stream of being or subconscious state of mind is that which is below the threshold of consciousness. It may be compared to a state of deep, dreamless sleep. The nature of this 'mind' or 'cilia' will depend on the individual and his past kamma, but in the case of human beings this will be skilful, since without a skilful state existing at the moment of re-linking of a past life with a present life, there would be no conditions for a human birth.

2. Vibrating bhavanga: Before an object can impinge on any of the senses, it first enters the stream of bhavanga causing it to vibrate slightly, in the same way as a sound might cause one to turn in one's sleep without waking up.

3. Cutting off the stream of bhavanga: The third thought-moment is the point at which the stream of bhavanga is interrupted or cut off, and may be compared to being woken up from sleep. The object (here, sound) is in no way known at this stage.

4. Turning to sense door: There is now a turning to the sense door concerned. That is to say, concerning an audible object there will be a turning to the ear door without there yet being any hearing.

5. Five-fold sense consciousness: Now there is, in the case of audible object, hearing; in the case of visible object, sight; odorous object, smell; sapid object, taste; and tangible object, touch.

6. Receiving: Here the object is passively received and may be distinguished as being agreeable or disagreeable, although as yet

50 *Abhidhamma Papers*

there is no reaction to this discernment. The feeling is neutral in either case. For example, if the sound is a harsh voice, it is not yet known as such so no judgement or dislike may yet arise. It is simply received passively.

7. Investigating: The object or sound is now examined and investigated, but decision as to the nature of the object has still not been made.

8. Determining: It is at the determining stage that discrimination is applied and the object is recognized. Thus the sound will be known as a harsh voice and consequent upon this determining will be the nature of the next and crucial stage of

9-15. Javana: This, in contrast to all the preceding states, is an active state, capable of creating further results or kamma. It is the dynamic reaction to what has been perceived. It is at this stage that a skilful or unskilful cilia will occur. Thus after hearing harsh speech, a state of anger, dislike or rejection may arise. The citta that occurs here normally lasts for seven thought-moments.

16-17. Retention: These two final thought-moments do not always occur at the end of a thought process, but depend for their arising on the strength of the preceding javanas. Retention is performed by the investigating cittas, and its function is essentially to register what has been perceived in the 'memory'.

Having described a thought process in its complete form, it is now necessary to explain that not all processes reach the retention stage.

There are four different courses that may occur.

1. The complete course which ends with retention before subsiding into bhavanga.
 2. The course that ends with javana without retention.
 3. The course ending with determining, not reaching the javana stage.
 4. Called the futile course, where there is merely a vibration of bhavanga but no thought process arising from this.
- These last two courses cannot create kamma.

The *cittas* occurring in the above processes are of three main types:

1. Kamma or creating further results (active)
2. Vipaka or resultant (passive)
3. Kiriya or functional (other)

The kamma *cittas* are those that occur at the javana stage. They are active in the sense that they create further results, the nature of which will depend on whether javana was skilful or unskilful. That is to say that the nature of the result depends on whether there was attachment, aversion and wrong knowing present, or non-attachment (generosity), non-aversion (goodwill or lovingkindness), and non-wrong knowing (wisdom).

The resultant *cittas* (see list of thought-moments in process) are passive in the sense that they occur automatically as a result of past action. They cannot create further javanas as they have no volition. Their weakness is reflected in the small number of associated mental factors. (They do, however, grow in strength further up the process, the receiving and investigating *cittas* containing the three additional mental factors of applying the mind to the object, examining and commitment to the object.)

Kiriya *cittas* serve a rather special function. They seem to be neither active nor passive. It is this apartness or otherness that seems to give them their unusual quality. There are two kiriya *cittas* that occur in the thought process. The first is the turning to the sense door consciousness, and the second is the turning to the mind door consciousness, which acts as the determining *citta*. It is at this crucial point in the thought process that the nature of the next stage of javana is determined. The consciousness that performs this function is strengthened by the additional mental factor of effort, and so if mindfulness or appropriate attention can be exerted at this point, intervention can occur, and a chain of mechanical reactions may be broken. Thus it is possible to turn a potentially unskilful javana, rooted in aversion experienced in response to an undesirable object, such as a harsh voice, to a skilful one rooted in wisdom.

52 *Abhidhamma Papers*

The difficulty is being able to locate and become aware of these points within a thought process. If we begin to try and conceive of the number of thought processes which occur in a given space of time, it very soon becomes obvious that they are innumerable. Consider that the process described above is a grossly simplified description and that hundreds of actual thought processes may be required before full perception, cognition and action are reached. That is to say that any one apparent thought process is in fact made up of many thought processes.

Let us take an eye door process as an example - seeing flowers in a shop window. After the initial eye door process, culminating in retention, the stream subsides into bhavanga, followed by a mind door process which perceives the flower mentally. This consists of a further 'turning to mind door consciousness', then seven further moments of javana. Again the stream subsides into bhavanga, and two more thought processes of this type occur before the object is actually known. Then consider the possible thoughts stemming from this perception: contemplation and subsequent greed for the attractive colour, shape and smell of each individual flower; possibilities of adorning one's house with them; cost of buying them; consideration of making someone a present of them; the raising of oneself in the estimation of that person; how many to buy; what colour; and so on. All these thoughts seem to flash through the mind in a few seconds. Further consider all the other objects impinging on all the other senses apparently at the same time: the sound of traffic; the smell of fumes; seeing people move through the streets; the aftertaste of lunch lingering on in the mouth; the feel of the wind blowing against the face. Some of these are possibly involving thought processes culminating in javana, others are being seen and heard but not discriminated, and certainly not remembered. All these things seem to be happening in the same moment as the seeing of the flowers. Yet according to abhidhamma, only one consciousness can be present at anyone moment, and each of these thought-moments in each process is separate from, although conditioned by, the previous one.

The speed with which one citta succeeds another is so great that it appears to us that our minds are made up of one continuous stream from which often apparently random thoughts come to the fore, and over which we have no control. If we can slow down these thought processes and observe, either through the practice of meditation, or by developing and increasing mindfulness during the day, we have a better chance of catching those fleeting moments, of applying appropriate attention and of developing skilful consciousness.

Isy

Discussion: The sense door thought process

The essay mainly concerns the thought process of the sense door rather than of the mind door. While, in abhidhamma, mind is in many respects regarded as comparable to the other senses, there are obviously certain ways in which it differs from these, and this is reflected in the distinction between citta which adverts to the sense door and that which adverts to the mind door. The difference could be seen as the division between an 'external' world and an 'internal' world.

The term javana also stimulated discussion, as it is very difficult to find an English word which conveys the meaning of the word. The usual translation of 'impulsion' does not do justice to the literal meaning of 'running' as opposed to 'walking'. This indicates something of the strength of javana in relation to the other functions, as it is only in this consciousness that kammic results are produced.

The essay describes some of the different qualities of each stage of the thought process. It is also possible to relate five of these stages to the 'pentad of sense experience', a group of five mental factors concerned with basic processes of perception.

In the five-fold sense consciousness, the mental factor of phassa (contact) is strong.

54 *Abhidhamma Papers*

In the receiving consciousness, vedana (feeling) is strong.

In the investigating consciousness, sanna (recognition) is strong.

In the determining consciousness, cetana (will-to-do) is strong.

In the javana consciousness, cilia is strong.

The different stages thus emphasise different aspects of the process of perception. Sanna, for example, recognizes and differentiates the object but no more than that. It is different in quality from the stage of determining, when cetana initiates some kind of decision or response to the object. There is more discussion of the pentad of sense experience in essay nine (where it is referred to as the five factors of experiencing objects) and essay thirteen.

The essay also points out that the thought process may not last for the full seventeen thought-moments but may subside before that. Thus, besides the full-length thought process, there are also three other types of thought process of shorter duration. One of these, for example, only reaches the determining consciousness, and there are no javana or retention consciousnesses. Normally, it is very difficult to notice the distinction between this and the full thought process, and one is usually only fully conscious of those thought processes which repeatedly reach the javana stage on perceiving an object. If, however, the mind is stilled in meditation practice, it may be possible to be aware of a difference in quality between the mind which goes to javana and one which does not. When the mind is stilled, there may be fewer sense door thought processes which reach the javana stage, and this is experienced as less scattering of the mind. If, for example, a sound is heard, it is registered and recognized, but the mind is not disturbed.

The essay is also concerned with the way in which abhidhamma describes our ordinary experience as an extremely rapid succession of thought processes. One may not be aware either of the rapidity of this succession or of many of the thought processes themselves. Thus, according to abhidhamma, one can be aware only by means of one sense at a time. If, for example, music is playing while we are drinking coffee, awareness may be either of the music, or of the taste of the

coffee, or of the touch of the cup against the lips. One thinks that tastes, sounds, sights, etc., are experienced simultaneously, but abhidhamma states that our awareness is really building up a composite picture from rapidly-changing thought processes.

There is also in abhidhamma no concept of the unconscious. We may think that we perceive things unconsciously, like background noises quickly forgotten, but these are first of all consciously registered. The difference lies in the clarity of the awareness. Some objects are perceived so dimly that we hardly know that we are conscious of them.

This sort of analysis is obviously very different from the way we normally consider our ordinary experience. It seems difficult to be aware of the vast number of different thought processes which take place in one moment. There are many other points, too, in which abhidhamma does not tally with our everyday thinking. We felt, however, that it would be misleading to suggest that abhidhamma tells us what things are 'really like', beyond our own understanding. Abhidhamma seems to be concerned with principles which apply at quite gross levels as well as very subtle levels. Its purpose would then be to stimulate finer and finer degrees of attention in order to see how these principles actually do work in our own experience.

4 Categories of mental factors

Consciousness arises and falls away accompanied by groups of mental factors which vary, depending on the nature and function of the consciousness in which they arise. Abhidhamma, however, is not concerned just with analysing and listing these mental factors. These can themselves be grouped in different ways to aid understanding of other functions and processes. The first essay discusses three such groupings: the 'five factors of experiencing objects' (called the sense pentad in essay thirteen); the jhana factors or the 'five intensifying factors'; and the five hindrances. The second essay discusses another grouping of mental factors, the five faculties (indriya).

Essay: Rupa, sense-impression, the jhana factors and the hindrances

A first reading of the Abhidhammattha-sangaha gives the impression that abhidhamma consists of learning a long series of complicated lists which present the 'basic facts' about the way the

mind works. This impression is very misleading. A particular group of factors is not a list of separate items, like a shopping list, but the individual factors are related to one another. The different lists also relate to one another, and both these types of relationship are important in order to understand abhidhamma method. These aspects are illustrated in the following discussion of four groups of factors.

Rupa

The first group is that of the five elements of rupa. Rupa is usually translated as ‘matter’, but in its most general sense it is also useful to translate it as ‘the world’ - the principle that our experience is ‘of or ‘in’ a world. The existence of the world is the functioning of four basic principles, the so-called primary elements, whose symbolic names are earth, water, fire and air (or breath). The world, as it exists, is extension (earth), cohesion (water), heat (fire) and motion (air).

These four elements exist in a primary sense; the fifth, space, does not. It is the field of action of the four elements, dependent for its existence on them but not existing in the same way as them.

In terms of a diagram, the five elements can be drawn as a pyramid. The basis is formed by the four primary elements, which define and limit. Space can be the point either above or below, depending on how it is viewed. In other words, it underpins the other four, or goes beyond them.

The five factors of experiencing objects

Rupa in its widest meaning is the principle that the world exists in some sense independently of our experience. But when particular experiences are examined, there is an awareness of particular aspects of rupa. Something is selected as the centre of our attention - the so-called object - while the rest becomes background to it. Abhidhamma describes this process in terms of a second group of five factors:

1. Contact - the fact that our experience is of a particular object.
2. Feeling - described as the ‘taste’ of the object, which conveys

58 *Abhidhamma Papers*

the immediacy of this factor. It is not feeling 'about' the object.

3. Marking the object - so that it can be recognized again.

4. Drive - the active, instinctive response of the organism to the presence of the object.

5. Consciousness (cilia).

Even though we have now moved from rupa to the activity of the mind, the same principles of the functions of the elements apply. Contact establishes the foundation for mental experience (earth). Feeling intensifies the experience, so that the mind identifies with it and is held to the object (water). Marking is the process by which the object becomes incorporated into the mind, so that the experience of it can mature and the object can be recognized later on (fire). Drive is the fact that the mind is not just a passive recipient of impressions but that contact is a food for mental movement (air).

Consciousness is the field in which the object and associated mental processes take place (space), and this correspondence emphasises the fact that abhidhamma analyses experience in terms of three basics: consciousness, mental factors and rupa. Consciousness is the central point of organisation of the processes described above and is thus the active force. Rupa, as the object of consciousness, is the passive force, while the mental factors are the mediating force.

The five intensifying factors

By itself, the sort of mental functioning described above is very much dependent on the nature of the surroundings in which the person finds himself. But the mind is also capable of functioning to a greater degree of inner strength and purpose, so that it is less at the mercy of its surroundings. This mode of functioning is, in abhidhamma, also described in terms of a group of five.

1. Directing the mind to the object (vitakka)
2. Examining the object (vicara)
3. Energisation (piti)
4. Harmonizing (sukha)
5. Unifying of the mind (ekaggata)

Like many abhidhamma lists, the different factors can be understood in one way as forming stages of a process:

1. Vitakka - the initial movement of the mind to a new object.
2. Vicara - the mind, now firm in its direction, can examine the object in more detail.
3. Piti - continued contact with the object draws together energies which were previously scattered.
4. Sukha - the energisation settles down and pervades the mind in a harmonious type of happiness.
5. Ekaggata - the mind, now in harmony, can be unified and stilled at a point of focus.

Similarly the first four can also be understood as corresponding to the stages of practice of breathing mindfulness. Counting fosters vitakka by the continual directing of the mind to the numbers. Following fosters vicara by encouraging the mind to 'stay with' the breath. Touching fosters piti by drawing together the resources of the mind to a single place, and the settling fosters sukha by encouraging the mind to be at ease. The fifth factor, ekaggata, both underpins the practice and is the outcome of it.

This sort of description should not be interpreted narrowly as meaning that one factor occurs, then the next and so on. At anyone time, all may be present to some degree. However, the description is appropriate in that it conveys something of the dynamic relationships between the factors, as opposed to the 'shopping list' approach.

The factors can also be understood in terms of the five elements. Vitakka is the way in which the mind is extended to objects (earth). Vicara is the cohesion between the mind and the object (water). Piti energises the mind, raising its 'temperature' (fire). Sukha is the harmonious vibration of the mind (air), while ekaggata, in limiting the mind to a particular focus, creates a new field in which it can act (space).

The five hindrances

In abhidhamma, the intensifying factors are not described as being

skilful of themselves. They may be aspects of the functioning of the mind in both skilful and unskilful states. Perhaps because it is their nature to intensify experience, it is possible that they may become out of balance and misused, thus forming the basis for those aspects of malfunctioning of the mind called the five hindrances. These can therefore be seen as the result of 'too much' or 'too little' of the five intensifying factors, which is brought out by placing the two groups side by side:

Vitakka	Dullness and drowsiness
Vicara	Wavering of the mind
Piti	Dislike
Sukha	Restlessness and anxiety
Ekaggata	Motivation based on attachment

Thus dullness and drowsiness are opposed by and dispelled by the application and extension of the mind in vitakka which gives it a skilful purpose. But if there is too much vitakka, the mind has a strong impulse to action without being able to do anything, causing bewilderment and fear or 'wavering'. Wavering is thus opposed by harnessing the mind to the object. However, as with the proverbial horse, you may be able to bring it to the water and even push its nose in the water, but you may not be able to make it drink. In effect, too much vitakka and vicara force the mind to do something that it does not really want to do. Dislike of the whole process, the next hindrance, is the inevitable result. Dislike is opposed by pin, which creates an enthusiastic interest in the object, but if there is too much energy, the mind does not know what to do with it. The energy vibrates in an unskilful way and the mind becomes restless and anxious. These states are opposed by sukha, which harmonizes the energy. If the mind then finds this harmony too enjoyable, its action becomes transmuted into action based on attachment. This is characterized by anything from over-exuberance to a subtle form of excitement, which is remedied by stilling the mind at a point and focussing its energies. The drawback of this process is that it may overreach itself, focussing

the mind down too much, so that it becomes dull and drowsy once more.

Like the intensifying factors, the hindrances can also be seen in terms of the five elements, although this time the correspondence is based on the malfunctioning of the five elements. In dullness and drowsiness, the mind is shut down and closed in; in other words, the awareness is not sufficiently extended (earth). With such a poor foundation, it is not surprising that the mind can do so little in such a state. In wavering, there is the characteristic feeling that the mind does not flow. It continually stops and starts and there is no cohesion between the mind and the object (water). The energy is scattered and no intensifying of the experience is possible. In dislike, the mind is 'heated up' but in a negative sort of way - the characteristic fieriness of anger and irritation (fire). In restlessness and also in anxiety, the movement of the mind is of a negative kind, moving endlessly but never resting anywhere (air). Finally, when the mind acts through desire, the whole field of its action is distorted (space).

As mentioned before, the five intensifying factors are not in themselves skilful, and cannot alone form the basis for skilful action. Their use, balancing and proper development depends on further aspects of mental functioning which are described in further lists in abhidhamma.

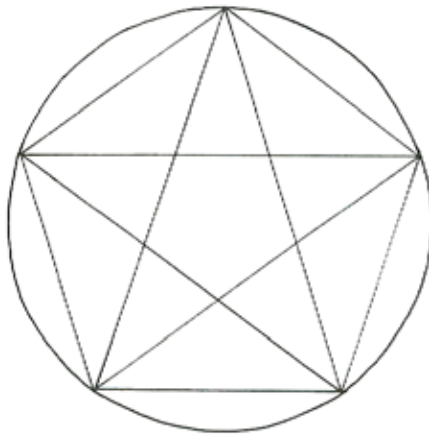
Mark

Discussion: Rupa, sense-impression, the jhana factors and the hindrances

The concept of rupa aroused a great deal of interest, and the discussion following essay three, on basic principles of abhidhamma, was continued. In the present essay, the translation of rupa as the 'world' posed some difficulties. What is the rupa of a thought, or a memory or a dream? When the mind is turned to the imagination or to a dream, a mental world is conjured up or entered that is as

complex and highly-coloured as the world outside. In technical terms, this involves the consciousness process at the mind door rather than at the sense door (see essay six on the thought process). If this elaborately-constructed mental landscape involves rupa then the term ‘world’, with its connotations of materiality in the scientific sense, is not quite applicable.

So what is the rupa of the imagination or the mind door? In the discussion after essay three, it was emphasised that the terms citta, cetasika and rupa do not require fixed designations: the rupa jhanas, for instance, are so called because they involve a shift to a more subtle level of matter than the rupa of the physical world. Perhaps there is a comparable contrast between the world of the senses and that of the mind, that occurs throughout our ordinary experience and which also involves a shift of level. In abhidhamma a distinction is made between three major realms: that of arupa (formless being), of rupa (as in the rupa-jhanas) and of sense objects (kama). Ordinarily one tends to think of the arupa and rupa realms in



terms of the rupa- and arupa-jhanas. Yet, as with so many principles in abhidhamma, it is intended that these distinctions apply not just on a vast, ultimate scale but also on smaller scales as well. Thus there is something in our usual experience which inherently concerns a distinction between three realms. Perhaps, then, arupa corresponds to consciousness, which is also characterized by a kind of boundlessness; rupa may then be seen as mental factors, or the subtle matter of mentality, while sense objects can be regarded as the usual objects to which the mind is applied.

The fifth element, space, also stimulated much discussion, mainly as a result of our difficulties in understanding it. It is sometimes called 'the kind of matter which cannot be pointed to or defined'. The question was then raised as to why space does 'not exist in a primary sense' (paragraph three). The purpose of space, it seems, is to delimit the other elements, and traditionally it is a name for the relationship between the other four. The analogy between space and ekaggata (concentration, or, in this essay, unification) helps to illuminate this relationship. In terms of meditation practice, this mental factor is the means by which the mind can discard the hindrances and enter another world, and it thus acts as a limiting factor for the mind in the same way as space delimits the other elements. When the mind is concentrated it becomes a body to enter another world which it could not experience when scattered and confused by the hindrances. In this respect, ekaggata should not be confused with vitakka. Whereas ekaggata may be seen as a point of temporary equilibrium in which the mind is poised between two modes of functioning, it is vitakka which takes the step from one mode to another. The 'fiveness' of the jhana factors was also discussed, and it was recalled that the factors are referred to as the jhana limbs. In Buddhist tradition, the number five is particularly associated with man, with the head, arms and legs forming a five-pointed star.

Finally there was some discussion about whether there can be 'too much' of a jhana factor. While strictly speaking impossible - all in theory occur together, in varying degrees - in practice there may be

an imbalance, which can lead to the arising of a hindrance. The jhana factors were also presented as stages in a process. So, while the presence of one factor tends to arouse the others, the idea of a progress from one factor to another does in practice seem to have meaning. One could then think of one factor naturally culminating in the next providing one allows the process of development to occur. The point was made in this context that the transition from vicara to piti in meditation practice often seems to present difficulty; it is relatively easy to block the process at this point. The mental factor of commitment (adhimokkha) is now important, as by releasing the mind on to the object there is a letting go and the transition is allowed to take place.



Essay: The five faculties

The aim of samatha meditation is to calm the mind and to cultivate the meditations (jhana). As concentration develops and absorption approaches, there is a balancing of the five faculties of confidence (saddha), effort (viriya), mindfulness (sati), concentration (samadhi) and wisdom (panna). In abhidhamma these five are classified as mental factors (cetasikas) which can occur in states of consciousness arising at any level from the sense plane to the supramundane.

Concentration is in fact the mental factor one-pointedness (ekaggata) and occurs in every consciousness. Effort occurs in all thoughts except for sixteen which do not have the roots of attachment, aversion and wrong knowing or their opposites, but are mostly mechanical results of past thoughts. Confidence, mindfulness and wisdom are skilful (kusala) mental factors, the first two being present in every skilful consciousness and the last one in every skilful consciousness which is rooted in knowledge.

In our daily lives we may experience skilful states when we practice

meditation, discipline and giving (bhavana, sila, dana) or when we study the dhamma with correct attention. When these states occur it is possible to experience and investigate something of the nature of these accompanying five mental factors.

In unskilful (akusala) states, concentration seems to fix the mind on one object after another. The mind is easily distracted. Sometimes it becomes too strongly fixed on its object and is aware of nothing else. Although it is the same mental factor, one-pointedness, which appears in skilful states, there is the feeling that right concentration keeps consciousness on its object correctly and does not readily allow distraction. Similarly, there seems to be a 'rightness' or 'correctness' about the quality of effort which occurs with skilful thought. This effort seems to fill the mind and body with energy and thus allows further skilful states to occur, apparently more easily. When skilful states are maintained for any length of time, effort is being properly employed. This is not the case when one is operating without real effort or with incorrect effort and it is said that then 'the work obtains mastery over the person'. No concrete results will appear and unskilfulness will quickly reappear.

Confidence in the teacher and the truth of the teaching, mindfulness and wisdom can never occur when there is unskilfulness present. For then there is agitation (uddhacca), wrong knowing (aviJia) and sometimes doubt (vicikiccha). Confidence as spoken of in abhidhamma must be experienced to be understood. It is not blind faith, nor can it be intellectualized. When we are experiencing a skilful state we are often aware of pleasant feelings. When this is so, confidence is easier to identify. Even the physical body becomes straight and firm and lighter.

We can never experience skilful states of mind unless we have mindfulness. The clarity which is present at this time and which aids our correct experience of the state, is mindfulness. It is mindfulness which then points to the best way of maintaining the state. When it occurs together with wisdom we see clearly the nature of the state, and out of this may arise insight into the three marks of existence.



Not every skilful state is accompanied by wisdom, and so effort should be particularly aimed at those which do have wisdom as a root, as this is the way out of suffering. Whenever wisdom is present in our thoughts we are weakening ignorance at least at the level of sila. That is to say, it may still be present as a latent tendency but will not occur to mar our thoughts or actions while the skilful state remains. How can we know if our skilful thoughts have wisdom? We can know wisdom as a calmness and certainty about what we have experienced. If we show signs of fixed opinions or are uncertain about the state, then it is extremely unlikely that wisdom has been present.

This, then, is how these five mental factors occur in skilful states before the jhanas are developed. As they acquire a greater strength and intensity in our thoughts, they are referred to as the five faculties. When this happens they can be directed towards and balanced for jhana. At this level these faculties are able to control their opposites, i.e.

- confidence controls doubt
- effort controls laziness
- mindfulness controls heedlessness
- concentration controls agitation
- wisdom controls wrong knowing

It is also said that the jhana factors further intensify the faculties. So faith becomes strong when the mind and body are energized (with piti) and pervaded by happiness (sukha). Wisdom needs application of the mind to the object (vitakka) and examination of that object (vicara) to comprehend its object fully, when jhana is first being developed. For effort, mindfulness and concentration to become intensified the energisation of piti is required.

The culmination of the development of these five faculties comes when they operate as powers which can completely destroy their opposites. They become fully operative as powers along with the thirty-two other factors of enlightenment when enlightenment itself occurs.

Sheila

Discussion: The five faculties

We tried to think of an appropriate translation for the mental factor *virīya*. While it is usually translated as ‘effort’, the term should not be confused with ‘trying’ to do something. When one is trying, the effort is not skilful. Occasionally, in a situation where it is necessary for the mind to be alert and a specific need has presented itself, it is possible for a great deal of effort to be applied quickly and skilfully. It is also possible, once a skilful state is firmly established, for effort to be put in without any strain whatsoever. Indeed in this context it is perhaps better translated as ‘strength’.

This led to discussion of confidence, which arises when there is no preference for any particular course of action. The self then steps aside and there is a free acceptance of whatever might happen. Another mental factor, that of commitment (*adhimokkha*), is another aspect of this - it allows the mind to let go and confidence is allowed to arise. A trust in dhamma is then involved as a willingness to let go and allow natural processes to occur. This may also take the form of a feeling for the course of action which is right for one.

Confidence is often more likely to arise in difficult situations, where a number of demands are placed on one. For example, if someone is in a crisis and asks for help, they are often willing to apply a great deal of effort into following the advice they are given, without any hesitation or wavering. This is an example of confidence, and indeed it is often the confidence that arises at times of crisis and difficulty which is easiest to remember and to recognize in retrospect. Usually, of course, one does not ask: ‘Is this confidence?’ when a particular state arises, and often the doubt involved in the very act of posing the question is enough to make the quality disappear. When the circumstances are difficult, for example, the mind slips back into aversion, which is directly opposed to confidence. If, however, confidence arises when there is also pleasant feeling, the situation is rather different. The act of asking: ‘Is this confidence?’ may still be unskilful, but this time the mind is likely to

revert to attachment to the pleasant feeling rather than to aversion. Attachment is not so directly opposed to confidence as is aversion, and the confidence may have been sufficiently established for it to return afterwards. As pointed out in paragraph five, it may then be easier to identify confidence when it arises in pleasant rather than in difficult conditions.

A final point worth noting is the relationship between the five faculties and the jhanas. In meditation practice, the jhanas are usually seen as a goal, but in fact, unskilful as well as skilful jhanas are possible. Jhana has the function of crystalizing certain tendencies, but this may be two-edged: there are both skilful and unskilful crystallizations. So in meditation practice we are concerned with the development and balancing of the five faculties so that the mind will tend to skilful jhana.

5 Relationships

The four essays in this section have been grouped together because they are concerned with the structure of abhidhamma rather than with analysis of its contents. They may be of particular value in pointing out that abhidhamma is as much concerned with relationships as it is with analysing experience into 'basics'. The section has been placed last as some degree of familiarity with the material presented earlier in the book may be useful to see the relationships described. Familiarity with the details of the thought process (section three) will be useful for the first essay. The second essay is concerned with the operation of cause and-effect, a theme elaborated further in the third essay in a description of the relationships between the sense pentad, the jhana factors and feeling. The final essay of this section tries to give an over view of the chapters of the Abhidhammattha-sangaha, regarding them as a whole and tracing a dynamic structure that engages different levels of understanding.

Essay: Critical points In the thought process

Abhidhamma includes within its scope an analysis of the constituents of human experience, the processes with which they are involved, and the conditions that cause these processes to arise. In a previous essay the thought processes that occur in everyday experience were described. These processes arise from a complexity of conditions and tend to proceed in mechanical fashion. The states of consciousness (citta) of which they are composed are largely the result of processes that have occurred in the past, and they themselves determine the nature of future experience in accordance with the law of kamma. Because experience consists of a constantly-changing flux it is impossible to enjoy complete and lasting satisfaction within it.

Abhidhamma does not deny that it is possible to experience states of great peace and happiness but points to their impermanence. There are, however, a number of critical points that can occur in a person's life which can fundamentally change the quality of his experience. The first of these is death, which for all beings is unavoidable and for most proceeds to rebirth. The second is the attainment of the meditations, which is of special interest to all those who practice samatha meditation. Finally there is attainment of the first of the four stages of sainthood when the nature of nibbana is penetrated for the first time and the end to all dissatisfaction is assured. All these three crucial points are of considerable interest to those who practise the Buddha's teaching, especially when they are contrasted with the mechanical flow of ordinary experience. They are points at which the possibility of fundamental change arises.

It is possible to extract from the text of the Abhidhammattha-sangaha information regarding the crucial points and in particular to look at the thought processes that occur when they arise. This information is not only of academic interest but may be of use to us in our practice, when we eventually face our deaths, or when the opportunities of jhana or sainthood arise.

Whatever plane a being is born in, eventually he will die. This inescapable fact forms part of the first noble truth and an understanding of it will eventually enable us to penetrate that truth. Death, however, is not the end of all existence, as consciousness possesses a momentum (*kamma*) which causes it to arise in a new existence after death has occurred. Only in the case of the arahat is there no further momentum to cause the arising of a new existence; only he is free from the process of continued existence and the dissatisfaction that is inherent in it. When we look at death in terms of the thought process, we notice that it is heralded by one final *cilia* (*cuti*). It is identical to all the *bhavanga citta*s that have occurred in that individual's life. Thus each of these *citta*s has the same object and qualities. If a life is compared to a piece of music, this particular *cilia* could be compared to the note in whose key the music is played. Throughout life, if no objects arise at the five sense doors or at the mind door, it is this *cilia* which is experienced and it is the nature of this *cilia* which originally determined the plane in which the individual's life arose.

The *javanas* immediately preceding the *cuti*, of which there are only five compared to the normal seven, are identical to the *patisandhi*, *bhavanga* and *cuti citta*s of the next existence, and therefore determine its fundamental quality in the same way as the key note of a piece of music. In all there are nineteen resultant *citta*s that can perform this function, and the one that becomes operative depends on the object of the *javanas* of the final thought process in the previous life. This object can be of three kinds, either a past *kamma*, a *kamma nimitta*, or a *gati nimitta*.

A past *kamma* is the *citta* that arose in the mind on the occasion of the performance of an action sometime during the life, usually one of great significance, either skilful or unskilful. A *kamma nimitta* is a symbol of such an action, either a sight, sound, taste, bodily sensation or thought. A *gati nimitta* is a symbol of the next existence the individual's death will lead to. All three types of object can be skilful or unskilful. If unskilful, the individual will be reborn in one of the

existences inferior to that of the human. If it is skilful but belonging to the normal sense plane, then he will be reborn as a human being or in one of six heavens. If it belongs to the plane of rupa, then the next existence will be in the plane of rupa, and finally if it belongs to the plane of the arupa, then in that plane. It can be seen, therefore, that one particular cilia that arises during life is of crucial importance at the time of death, for it can determine the quality of the next existence. For example, if one is fortunate enough to attain to jhana during one's life, that experience can become the object of the javana of the final thought process causing one to be reborn in the plane of rupa. It must be understood, however, that there is no permanent self that transmigrates from one life to the next, although for the sake of easy explanation references have been made to the rebirth of an individual. The process of rebirth is merely the continuation of the ever-changing flux of consciousness in which can be found no permanent identity.

When an individual attains to jhana, there is a similar disruption in the form of the normal thought process as that which occurs at death and in some senses it can be seen as an at least equally significant event. A fundamental change in the level of experience occurs as it can when the transition is made from one mode of existence to another at the moment of death. Jhana arises as a result of making the mind one-pointed upon a suitable object of meditation. When all the hindrances to this development have been suppressed and the five mental factors of vitakka, vicara, piti, sukha and ekaggata are sufficiently strong, then the following thought process occurs: the cilia which turns to the mind door arises, followed by three or four javanas that are limited to the sense sphere which take the meditation object (patibhaga-nimitta) as their object. They are known as preparatory, access, adaptation and membership respectively. The first may not occur depending on the purity of the meditator. It can be seen as a preparation for the experience of a state of mind completely new and superior in quality. It is followed by access cilia which leads on and lies close to that experience. The

adaptation cilia links the access cilia to the membership cilia which finally effects what is described in the texts as a 'change of lineage' from the sense plane to the rupa plane. It is followed by the appana citta whose characteristic is absolute one-pointedness of mind. It belongs to the plane of rupa in contrast to those cittas that immediately preceded which belong to the sense plane. The thought process then subsides into bhavanga once again. The same thought process arises before all jhanas, the appana cilia differing in each case according to the level of jhana experienced.

For the meditator who goes on to develop insight, an even greater opportunity may arise, usually after great effort. He has the chance to attain the first of the four stages of sainthood, that of the stream enterer. At this time nibbana is experienced for the first time and complete enlightenment is ensured. This entails an even greater change, for the individual ceases to be what the texts describe as a worldling and becomes an ariyan, or one who has complete confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, and will never again violate the five precepts.

The same thought process arises as in one who is about to attain jhana, although the object of the javana cittas is one of the three marks of existence - impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self according to inclination. The membership cilia then takes nibbana as its object for the first time in the individual's life although it does not have the power to destroy defilements. This power belongs to the cilia which follows known as the path (magga), which again has nibbana as its object. One magga is followed by two or three cittas known as fruit (phala) which are the direct results of magga and again have nibbana as their object. Two phalas arise if a parikamma is present in the thought process: if not, three are experienced. Each of the four paths is experienced only once in a lifetime, although the fruits can be experienced for a whole day continuously. The last stage of sainthood is the occasion on which arahatship is attained, which leaves the individual free from all future death and rebirth. In both the case of the jhanas and the stages of sainthood, the javanas of the thought process

will be one of the skilful cittas of the sense plane accompanied by knowledge.

The Abhidhammattha-sangaha contains more detailed information about the thought processes that arise at the three crucial points described. It can be seen, however, that death is merely the continuation of an existing process, although it can change the quality of an individual's experience.

The attainment of jhalla means that one has fundamentally changed that quality within a single lifetime, enabling one to know a completely new plane. In order to put an end to the process altogether, it is necessary to develop the four stages of sainthood finally culminating in arahatship.

Ken

Discussion: Critical points in the thought process

The essay examines three points where major change in the quality of an individual's life is possible - death, and attainment of jhalla and sainthood. These points can be understood in the literal sense, but it also seems that at a simpler level there may be analogous points of change. In day-to-day life, for example, a moment of skilfulness may change the quality of the thought process for the rest of the day.

With regard to the first of these points, death, the essay points out the distinction between the first citta of an individual's life (parisa1ldhl), the last (curl) and the bhavallga citta. These three are similar, as the essay points out, in having the same object and qualities. They also differ in certain respects - patisandhi has the nature of reaching out, while cuti has the nature of falling. Bhavanga is stable, a passive continuum. The three may therefore be seen as in some way complementary.

The essay also emphasizes that the thought process of death involves only five javalla cittas compared to the seven of the normal

thought process. The explanation for this could hardly be that the moment of death is a weak or insignificant one. On the contrary, these five javanas determine the basis of the next lifetime. One suggestion was that the series of javanas are still near to their maximum strength at the fifth one, while the sixth and seventh are subsiding. At death, therefore, the javanas are cut off at this maximum strength, and their momentum is thus sufficient to continue to the next lifetime. The 'cutting-off function of cuti, as noted above, is obviously relevant here.

In this context, the possible importance of people's reports of near-death experiences was discussed. These seem to suggest that generally the thought process just prior to actual death is concerned with summing up the most significant aspects of that person's life. This may have some bearing on the suggestion in the commentaries that powerful states of mind, whether positive or negative, tend to recur at this point. It is also said that if some minor element in the person's life arises, then it will not be strong enough to sustain a long existence - that is, the life following that death will not be very long.

Proceeding to the second possible point of change, that of jhana, the nature of the thought process culminating in jhana was discussed. Once initiated with the mind door advertent citta, does this thought process inevitably flow on until the appana citta, which belongs to the plane of jhana? While there does seem to be a sense of an inevitable current, the texts also indicate that the thought process may not have enough momentum actually to reach the appana citta: they are not simply 'preliminary' cittas but have specific functions or characteristics of their own. The anuloma citta, for example (adaptation or conformity), cleanses and purifies the mind, so that it becomes simpler and more natural.

Finally, we found worth noting, in the context of jhana and sainthood, the aptness of the simile of 'changing lineage'. If the world is seen as a vast 'clan', whose life all tends in one direction, the change of lineage is the point of detachment or release from the general flow,

at which a completely different order of existence is experienced. There is now membership of a new 'clan', 'family' or 'lineage'.

Essay: Cause and effect

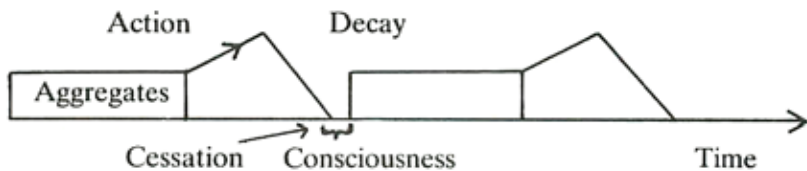
If an event happens for no apparent reason we are most disturbed; if an action does not produce the effects we confidently expect, we are similarly disturbed. Our lives and sanity rely on our actions producing consistent, predictable and reproducible effects.

Cause is active, effect is passive, effects do not necessarily produce causes; this is because they lack impulsion. From a temporal viewpoint the present effects that we call reality have their causes in the past; any future effects have their causes in the present. This point is illustrated below:

PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
Cause	Effect Cause	Effect

Time is not stationary and the present becomes the past and the future becomes the present, thus producing a continuous sequence of cause and effect. Past causes are actions carried out in a state of consciousness containing wrong knowing, and are motivated by that wrong knowing. This not only includes unskilful states of mind but also skilful states where wrong knowing remains dormant. Past causes are linked to present effects by the continuity of consciousness. Present effects are the five aggregates of matter, feeling, perception, mental states and consciousness - what we are and how we perceive the world.

Present causes are, once again, activities motivated by wrong knowing. Once action has occurred afresh, future effects occur to replace those in the present when the latter have come to fruition and eventually ceased. This cycle is shown diagrammatically below:



As the cause/effect cycle is continuous, closer examination must be in terms of one unit. The only one accessible is that in the present; this starts with the effects (the production of the five aggregates) produced by past actions.

The aggregates arise simultaneously with the consciousness which links present effects with past causes. The aggregates are capable of interacting. When mind makes contact through the senses with matter, feeling (either pleasant, neutral or unpleasant) occurs as a result. This is the final resultant of past action. When the feeling thus produced motivates (through wrong knowing in the form of craving and attachment) further action, another causal phase starts. It is between the passive and active phases that the cycle can be broken, but it can only be broken when wrong knowing has been eradicated.

Les

Discussion: Cause and effect

While this essay is concerned with the cycle of dependent origination, it avoids the traditional form. The first seven links, which are discussed in more detail in the next as well as in this essay, are as follows:

Wrong knowing (avijja)
 Sankhara (not translated)
 Regenerative consciousness (vinnana)
 Mentality-materiality (nama-rupa)
 Sense bases (salayatana)
 Contact (phassa)
 Craving (tanha)

At the beginning of the list, what is meant by wrong knowing? In the texts, the knowledge of the three marks of existence (impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, no-self), or insight, is often taken as the absence of wrong knowing. The usual translation of the word is 'ignorance' but in the Pali term avijja the prefix 'a-' is not negative in the same sense as the English 'un-'. Avijja is therefore not simply 'not knowing' but a kind of wrong or misdirected knowing. Another translation which is sometimes used is 'delusion' but in this case, a 'state of deludedness' is probably more accurate. In this book we have used the straightforward 'wrong knowing'.

The essay points out (paragraph three) that dependent origination includes not only unskilful (akusala) but also skilful (kusala) states of consciousness. So, strictly speaking, only those states of con-



sciousness which realize nibbana (the so-called ‘supramundane’ ones) can break up the cycle completely (last paragraph). Despite this, the cycle may be modified or induced to follow a more skilful course. As pointed out, wrong knowing is suppressed in skilful states of consciousness, and these states can thus modify the action of the cycle.

It was also pointed out (paragraph two) that past causes are linked to present effects by the continuity of consciousness. This continuity does not imply that consciousness is continuous. According to abhidhamma, consciousness is a process of arising and falling away, while the falling away of consciousness conditions an arising. We tend, however, to misunderstand the nature of this conditioning. One tends to think of one state of consciousness as separate from others - following on the previous state and preceding the next. But if they are separate in this way, how can it be possible for one state to condition another? Clearly it is necessary to re-think what is meant by the ‘continuity’ of consciousness. It is easy to think of abhidhamma as portraying consciousness as an orderly series of separate states of consciousness, but this does not seem to be the meaning intended.

A similar problem arises with the relationship between the aggregates and action. Are these two aspects separate from one another? It may be more appropriate to say that the aggregates are action.



Essay: The relation between the sense pentad and the jhananga

‘Feeling’ is one of the five basic supports for the continued existence of a being. Through watching various aspects of it, a relationship can be seen between the sense pentad and the jhananga. Through the analysis of this relationship it can be seen how watching ‘feeling’ may lead to development of one’s being and understanding.

The basis of being

Two parallel processes - nama (mentality) and rupa (materiality) support each other continuously in existence. When an active regenerative energy from an action is carried over as vinnana (see below) and contacts a material group ready for support, birth or rebirth occurs. This can be the birth of a being, a deva, a habit, a process, or a conscious experience.

The material process manifests four qualities which interrelate in all forms: solidity or mass which has hardness or softness; cohesion which holds together through flowing; warmth which allows change through maturing; air, which gives support to structure through distending.

Matter under these four aspects is combined with life energy when the matter is related to life processes such as that forming the six sense bases of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. Matter also forms objects for the first five sense bases. The sixth base can have matter as well as derived material qualities (masculinity, femininity, verbal and bodily expression, etc.), and non-material objects such as concepts, mental states and nibbana as its object.

The contact between one of these sense bases and an appropriate object produces a sense consciousness, and leads to the arising of the nama aspect of being. Nama, like rupa, is the coexistence of four qualities. In the case of nama these are vedana, sanna, sankhara and vinnana. These four occur as the first set of factors with all forms of consciousness that arise.

Vedana is feeling, the initial 'taste' or essence of an aspect of the object. All contacts, sensory or cognizable (mental), feed vedana. The quality of the food depends on the degree of agreeableness of the object and on the state of the receptive base at the moment of contact.

Sanna resolves, cognizes and discerns. It perceives the nature of the object without reacting to it. It is an impression of the awareness of an object so that the object may be re-cognized when necessary.

Sankhara is the collection of the coefficients of consciousness

which give consciousness activity. Cetana is one of the sankhara which is like active thought, since it co-ordinates factors that are present at the time. Purpose or intention in relation to the object then arises. It feeds the mind and gives impetus for the wish to have, to know or to think, i.e. the determination to continue being.

Vinnana is that aspect of conscious experience which is actively 'minding'. It watches and categorizes with vitality, thus feeding the dependence on categories already formed. It is that which carries forward 'categorized volition' to condition the subsequent state of being. This should be distinguished from citta, another aspect of conscious experience, which is based on the heart. Here an emotional and intuitive reviewing and understanding of the object occurs. This is the result of an examination of the object which is wider and so intensifies the knowledge of it.

Contacts allow objects to be experienced from these mutually existing four aspects of nama. Together with contact this group is sometimes termed the sense pentad, which occurs in all spheres of life, providing an apparently 'continuous' basis for conscious experiences.

There is, however, another definition of a being which states that it is the coexistence of the five related qualities of rupa, vedana, sanna, sankhara and vinnana. It would seem that these five qualities are continuously strengthened to hold together as a 'being' every time a consciousness process occurs involving the activity of the sense field pentad.

So watching with care anyone of these qualities may lead to a knowledge and understanding of the process of existence, and of 'being'.

Analysis of feeling

Of the five factors, vedana seems the easiest to observe in practice. It becomes manifest as soon as contact occurs, probably because its function is to 'receive' the object and to experience its 'initial taste' before any investigation of it takes place. This taste assumes different qualities, depending on the base and on the agreeableness of the

object, but five degrees of vedana can be observed clearly.

The sensation of touch is always accompanied either by pleasurable feeling (ease) of the body or by a painful feeling, as its nature is to discriminate the intensity of disturbance of the primary qualities on all bodily surfaces. In this way a sharp in-breath, violently disturbing the nasal membrane, will cause a painful contact, while a smooth in-breath will cause an agreeable sensation.

All other objects are tasted through mental feeling which may be pleasant, unpleasant or indifferent. If there is clear mindfulness the initial feeling is 'caught'. In most everyday thought processes, however, the initial taste is intensified because of the repetition of similar consciousness that occurs in relation to that object. So we usually notice this intensified feeling at its peak. When there is a strong wish to turn away from an object, for instance, closer observation shows an unpleasant feeling or taste left as turning away occurs. Unpleasant feeling is easy to identify as it is clearly disagreeable and it occurs only in unskilful states.

Pleasant feeling and neutral feeling occur on the basis of either unskilful or skilful states. Pleasant feeling is easier to recognize as there is joyfulness present due to piti, an energising factor, even though greed, pride, etc., may not be present to give it a 'moral' colour. Since it is associated with energised or energising, active states of mind, it is more noticeable than neutral feeling and is therefore more useful to develop initially for the practice of awareness of vedana.

Neutral feeling is recognised when there is an absence of pleasant feeling and of unpleasant feeling, but it is not the same as an absence of feeling. It is difficult to notice as it may arise with a 'not caring' or 'not noticing' attitude, resulting from dullness or lack of interest. Another form of neutral feeling occurs connected with equanimity in a developed state of mind, when it is easier to recognize.

Feeling in relation to jhananga

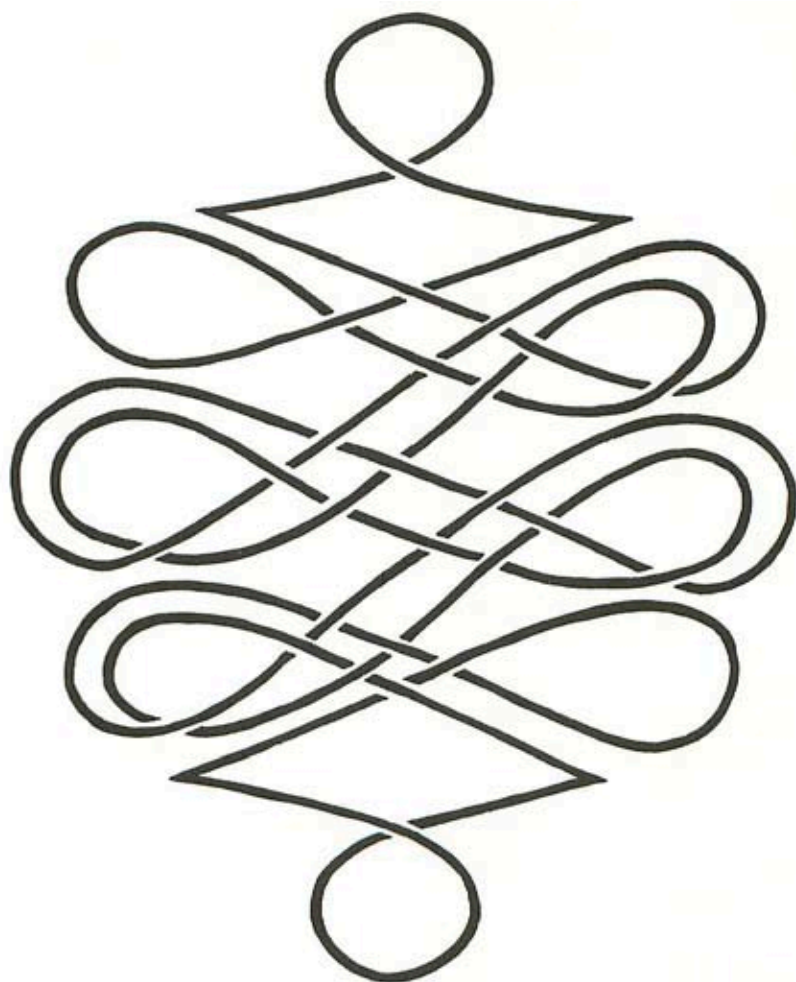
There are five factors which when developed are said to counteract the five degrees of *vedana* (sometimes known as the five faculties of *vedana*).

The first is initial interest (*vitakka*) which directs attention to the object. It tends to fasten the mind to the object. The second is sustained application of mind (*vicara*) which is a kind of discipline which maintains the initial latching on of the mind to the object. Next is *piti* which is the experience of energisation. Fourthly there is *sukha*, the feeling of satisfaction and ease which seems to occur when the energisation of *piti* settles down, allowing a sense of well-being to pervade the entire body. Finally *ekaggata*, or one-pointedness of mind, arises when all factors of consciousness are unified by being directed to just one contact, thus immersing the mind in the object.

These five factors are referred to as *jhananga*: *jhana* constituents or intensifying factors leading to absorption. But sometimes unpleasant feeling and neutral feeling are also listed as factors that condition absorption onto any object. So in a wider sense the intensifying activity of the *jhananga* forms a condition which may occur not only in all meditative states but also in relation to nearly all forms of consciousness whenever there is an interest in the object.

The presence of the five *jhananga* exercises an intensifying influence on the co-existing factors of that conscious experience. Whatever kind of feeling is initially present is also intensified or aroused if the *jhananga* are active. For instance, a high degree of *vitakka* and *vicara* may intensify an initial unpleasant feeling to pain; alternatively, intensification due to *piti* arouses pleasant feeling. *Jhananga* have the capacity to allow the conscious experience to go to 'absorption'. For mental development, when the object is wholesome and the five *jhananga* factors of *vitakka*, *vicara*, *piti*, *sukha* and *ekaggata* are all equally activated, then the consciousness is ready to become absorbed onto the object or be infused with it.

If absorption occurs and is maintained, the mental states experienced progress in a certain way. The five activated *jhana* factors gradually fall away, having completed their function as the experience reaches its fullest intensity. With the systematic falling away of the five factors, the five types of feeling are also said to be counteracted.



At the first stage, when the factors of consciousness, or the jhananga, are fully intensified and come into balance, feeling of discomfort (bodily displeasure) falls away. Next, when the first two factors of vitakka and vicara fall away, there is an inward calming and joy is strong, so that unpleasant feeling falls away completely. When energisation calms down, pleasure (bodily ease) fades, leaving sukha and ekaggata. At the fourth stage pleasant feeling (sukha) goes, as there is no energy from pleasure or pain to feed it. Only a balanced state is left in which there is neutral feeling associated with onepointedness with regard to a wholesome Object. This is equipoise of mind, and the heart is serene, supple, firm and imperturbable. The mental basis has an increased vitality and strength, allowing clear penetration or awareness to arise.

This neutral feeling connected with equipoise ceases after the successive experience of non-materiality in the form of concepts of 'infinite space', 'infinite consciousness', 'no-thingness' and "neither perception nor non-perception", at which point there is said to be the cessation of perception and feeling. Thus the domination of two of the five qualities of 'being', those of perception (sanna) and feeling (vedana), is broken.

Jhananga and the sense field pentad, or the relationship of jhananga to 'being'.

Sometimes the jhananga group is listed after the first group of the sense field pentad in the list of factors of a consciousness. It has been suggested¹ that the fact that the intensifying and 'relatively rational' factors follow the 'relatively primitive and pre-rational' or the basic factors of being in the list may be crucial. It suggests that at any conscious moment movement in two opposite directions is possible. The downward or 'inward' way leads to the sense field pentad, so that one does not develop. The upward or 'outward' way, which arouses awareness, may lead to the cultivation of the potentialities, thus strengthening the jhananga and providing a means for transcending the sense sphere of being.

Even -if the jhananga are not intensified and allowed to go through

the process described above to the fourth state with equipoise, their equal arousing is sufficient to make a pliable mental basis for the development of awareness, when 'inward' and 'outward' seeing are balanced. As the mind is directed to this purpose, if any form of insight occurs, then the jhananga's intensity seems to operate in an 'automatic' cycle, leading to clear seeing of the object or its relations, e.g. if the mind is turned to watch the cause of unpleasant feeling, first noticed as 'aversion' in oneself, then with a receptive and pliable mind the suffering in aversion may be seen. Noticing this new state allows the initial object of aversion to fade away, and confidence arises. From this, joy comes, the mind is concentrated, and if the point of contact is clearly seen, the conditions causing aversion may be understood. Mind lets go of the feeling, having seen its conditioned nature, and becomes free of it.

Thus almost all our daily conscious experiences carry in them possibilities of change and development. All links of the two processes of nama-rupa that constitute the 'being' fall apart when analysed in this way. The relationships between the various factors of being such as the jhananga and the sense pentad show the possibility of this analysis in theory, and observation of 'feeling' is one way of putting this into practice.

Usha

Discussion: The relation between the sense pentad and the jhananga

Once again the subject of matter (rupa) aroused a great deal of speculation. How can the particular qualities of each of the four primary elements be isolated? As none of the four can exist without the others, they seem to act more as mutually dependent properties of matter than as entities in themselves. For instance, strictly speaking the earth element (solidity or mass) cannot be visualized in isolation as hardness or softness because the support of the other

three elements is required to construct the picture of it. Incidentally, instead of the usual description of the air element as ‘causing motion’ this essay has chosen the term ‘distending’, as in abhidhamma terms there is no motion, only a successive arising of matter in different places. The disadvantage of this choice, however, is that it may cause some confusion with properties ascribed to the earth element in terms such as ‘extending’ and ‘spreading’.

There was also discussion about consciousness in its aspects of *vinnana* and *citta*. As pointed out, *vinnana* can be seen as the active side of consciousness which is formed by an action and carries forward. In this sense, then, *vinnana* is the starting-point of the four qualities of *llama*, picking up everything in one state of mind and going on to the next. In this context, the term ‘categorized volition’ refers to this conditioning process, and also to whether the process tends to skilfulness or unskilfulness. The latter is the ‘categorized’ aspect of that which is carried forward.

It was also pointed out that ‘a high degree of *vitakka* and *vicara* may intensify an initial unpleasant feeling to pain’. This is similar to a point made in a previous essay: strictly speaking, one cannot have ‘too much’ *vitakka* and *vicara*, but in practice they may become excessive. If, on the other hand, the practice is approached with a certain degree of warmth, then *vitakka* and *vicara* are more balanced and pain is less likely to arise. In abhidhamma it is also stated that in the second *jhana*, *vitakka* and *vicara*, and consequently unpleasant feeling, fall away. This may also be applied at other levels of practice: in general, if pain is a hindrance in the practice, it may be possible to place less emphasis on developing *vitakka* and *vicara* and allow *piti* and *sukha* to develop on their own. Once these develop to a certain extent they may help to lessen attention to the pain and the practice can be cultivated in a more balanced way.

In the essay, the point is made that ‘at the fourth stage, pleasant feeling (*sukha*) goes as there is no energy from pleasure or pain to feed it’. The question was then raised as to how pain could feed *sukha*. It seems that pleasure and pain are in some senses two sides of

the same coin, one feeding the other. In this sense, painful feeling may give energy to the experience of sukha. Indeed, one may be able to follow this process in the practice.

At this fourth stage also, the jhana may be stable in a way in which the others are not. When, by equipoise, sukha is abandoned, a point of balance is maintained. 'Neutral feeling' in this context should not be understood as a rather dull kind of attachment. The feeling entailed in equipoise is, on the contrary, more like a higher union of pleasant and unpleasant feeling.



Essay: Levels and the structure of the Abhidhammattha-sangaha

It is said that the purpose of studying abhidhamma is to bring about change, to loosen attachment to wrong view and allow understanding to arise. This is clearly different from a mere rearrangement of one's given constructs - though this may happen many times before actual change or taking to heart occurs.

Such change has reverberations throughout the being, perhaps even eventually on the body. Dependent upon wrong knowing, patterns of behaviour emerge. We form habits of thought, speech and action upon a groundwork of misunderstanding whose presence is taken for granted and thus not seen for what it is. Stooping shoulders or a deeply-furrowed brow are physical reflections of a chain of actions rooted in a distorted view of the world. If a particular unpleasant state such as depression or anger occurs repeatedly, the view of the world from that standpoint will gradually crystallize into a view of how the world actually is. This will have an increasing influence on one's thoughts, feelings and posture or physical development. Work on body mindfulness approaches the problem, as it were, from the grossest level upwards, paying attention to and

adjusting posture and thereby bringing about a change in the state of mind. Abhidhamma, on the other hand, works from the highest level downwards by developing understanding. For example, a more skilful attention to these states reveals their arising and passing away as well as their lifespan.

When appropriate, habits of thought and feeling should then be allowed to modify accordingly. Actions will now tend more naturally towards skilfulness, and if the bodily pattern has not become too fixed, a corresponding change will slowly take place on this level also. The body can now develop more naturally rather than in a way which it has been constrained to follow. However, a similar physical imbalance may recur later, prior to letting go once more, to allow a subtler degree of skilfulness to arise.

These different bodily manifestations can be traced back to essentially different roots. The concept of levels may be used to express this difference. If a painter mixes red paint with blue, he will never manage to produce orange. However, it only requires a rearrangement of the materials at his disposal- in this case, coloured paints - for him to find the right answer. He will eventually substitute yellow for blue and produce orange. But if, instead of a new colour, he is trying to produce a completely different material - clay, or plaster of Paris, for instance - the solution lies totally beyond the scope of the materials at his disposal. In this exaggerated example, we may say that for as long as he holds to his misunderstanding, namely, that he may reach his objective via the materials at his disposal, the solution lies in a higher level of understanding of his materials.

The awakening to the existence of levels may result from the study of abhidhamma, and becomes essential as the work continues. In the Abhidhammattha-sangaha, different levels are described both overtly, such as in the lists of consciousnesses pertaining to the worlds of sense-experience, fine-matter (*rupa*) and the formless (*arupa*), and more discreetly in the structure of the work as a whole.

Essential realities are stated to be fourfold: consciousness (*citta*)

and its concomitant details of tone or quality (*cetasika*), matter (*rupa*) and *nibbana*. The first two chapters enumerate the first two realities and state which mental factors may be concomitant with which states of consciousness. The material as it stands at this point, however, is static. We are told what may take place but not how or why it arises and relates to succeeding moments.

Chapter three has an intermediary function, both expanding on some subjects touched on earlier and introducing new material. All the consciousnesses listed in Chapter one are described as associated with feeling of some sort. Most are rooted in certain basic tendencies such as ill-will and dullness or generosity and knowledge. The detailed meaning of 'feeling' and 'root' is not given until now. The list of different functions of consciousness opens the door to a whole new realm of potential, but the possibilities of consciousness in action are not elaborated until Chapter four.

Here at last thought process is explained. This represents a change in level because the static individual consciousnesses are now linked up into series. Strictly speaking we may not talk of movement but only of a series of rapidly-succeeding moments, but for purposes of explanation the progression from a series of static points to a condition of movement may help to suggest the feel of the shift of scale involved. This cannot be achieved within the terms of reference of a point alone: a new dimension must be added.

The description of consciousness and mental activity may be regarded as a spectrum of possibilities for individual beings according to their abilities and limitations. The picture is now widened further to incorporate the different levels of beings and the worlds which they naturally inhabit, each with its own time scale. The scale of reference has now shifted from the processes within an individual lifetime to the different types of individuals and the relationships between their levels. Although the thought processes at the time of death and birth are described, all intervening consciousness is said to be underlaid by the ever-present stream of consciousness which continues to flow from birth to death. A being in this context is simply a complex

consisting of three stages: birth, life, summarised by the stream of consciousness, and death.

Much more attention is given to action (kamma). Particular types of action are shown to be characteristic of, or conducive to existence in, certain worlds, or levels of existence; they are also impossible in other worlds. Skilful action cannot arise directly from wrong understanding. During the course of a single action many consciousnesses will occur, but Chapter four is not concerned with enumerating them. Mental action is sometimes classified according to the consciousnesses involved, such as twelve-fold unskilful action, or five-fold action in meditation according to the five factors of absorption (jhana), but this only assumes a detailed knowledge of the earlier chapters. If this is present, the preceding subject-matter will become integrated in the wider picture which has been opened up.

Instead of progressing to a successively larger scale, the cycle now appears to return to the lowest level of all: matter. Being the grossest of the four realities, matter could also be placed at the head of the list. This sudden reversal of direction suggests a circular or spiralling relationship between the different levels. The end of one cycle may also be the beginning of the next. To complete the chapter there is nibbana, supramundane, not subject to arising nor to passing away.

The four essential realities have now been covered. Perhaps in the process one has accumulated much information, learnt copious lists, drawn beautiful diagrams, or benefited in some other way. But what has been the effect of this? Where before there were only vague notions about the workings of the mind, there may now be a very clear but rigidly-fixed picture of how things are. The initial life and significance of something seen for the first time can be very uplifting, but if when one adverts to it on succeeding occasions it appears to lack vitality, one is trying to hold onto it or fix it in the mind. A more relaxed attention will allow deeper understanding to arise once it has ripened. Chapter seven, 'Abhidhamma Categories', may help in this regard: all the material described so precisely in previous chapters is rearranged according to a new set of categories. This should at least serve to irritate those views that have gone to fixity!

With the exception of nibbana, all things are conditioned. They arise, expend their life, and pass away. The next chapter introduces the laws by which things are created and decay, and depend upon each other for this process. They form a structure within which everything exists. They operate everywhere, throughout all times and conditions; the extension of scale has now reached its fullest extent.

The total condition and environment of all beings have now been described. Given that these are the conditions of existence, what use may be made of life? The final chapter on mental development enumerates the different subjects for meditation and describes the Seven stages of the path of purification, culminating in realization. It describes a way to penetrate all the levels which have been illuminated, to experience them, be free from them and understand their nature. Although as usual no preference is expressed for this course of action over others, perhaps we may understand it to describe the highest or most complete use of existence.

Charles

Discussion: Levels and the structure of the Abhidhammattha-sangaha

While other essays in the book have looked at different parts of abhidhamma, this one takes a step back and looks at the Abhidhammattha-sangaha as a whole. In terms of this whole, the details seem to disappear and the feeling is of a structure involving different levels which expand outwards, the parts interacting in a complex way. No logical diagram could express this interlocking. The story placed at the end of this book is intended to convey something of the flavour of this.

The subject matter of the Abhidhammattha-sangaha is organized in nine chapters, which cover the following:

1. Consciousness
2. Mental factors
3. Miscellaneous section (including feeling, roots and functions)
4. Thought processes
5. Process-freed chapter (including the law of kamma, and death and rebirth)
6. Matter and nibbana
7. Abhidhamma categories
8. Relations: dependent origination, causal relations, concepts
9. Meditation practice

The first two chapters of the book are composed of individual units, a complex of possibilities without progression. The next chapter looks both backwards and forwards while in the fourth chapter a new dimension is involved, that of processes in the mind. The scope is then extended further in the process-freed chapter to include not only the individual chain of consciousness but also the whole world of kamma and its effects. The positioning of rupa and nibbana as the next topics in the book stimulated a great deal of discussion. Since earlier chapters provide descriptions of the world and experience on successively larger scales, it seems anomalous that rupa should come next, and even more odd that this should be followed by nibbana. It may be that this positioning is intended to break up the whole structure which has been established, or at least put them in a new light. Since nibbana is present in the cessation of even the smallest particle, its introduction re-arranges all which has been discussed. Looking back to when we first worked on this chapter, we remembered that, at the time, much of what we said did not seem to fit with what went before. An additional point about the close proximity of rupa and nibbana in the book is that neither is said to have any defilements, while almost everything before may have defilements.

After the chapter on 'Abhidhamma categories', the book proceeds to the Patthana and the largest scale of all. Nothing exists wholly outside the influence of causal relations, so their inclusion

completes the picture of how things are. Also included in this chapter is an account of concepts (pannatti), which again seems anomalous. It might be possible to see concepts as dhamma-made-manifest. The term pannatti is derived from panna, which literally means ‘that which causes wisdom’. So, if wisdom arises from seeing dhamma, ordinary knowledge may arise from seeing some concrete form of dhamma. It is interesting that originally the abhidhamma does not mention concepts: all objects of the mind are dhamma and the description of what would be concepts is ‘that which is not to be classified as matter or mind’. The term pannatti itself is probably a later introduction.

The chapter including the Patthana and pannatti completes the picture of how things are. The last chapter of the book then shows what to do with this reality, describing the highest path that can be followed within the picture that has been built up.

Discussion then turned to rupa and its positioning in the book, since this seemed to be of some importance. We remembered from previous discussions (following essays three and nine) that rupa need not be seen as ‘matter’ in the obvious sense; at any given level, it is gross only in relation to the subtlety of mind. The rupa of one level may be the mind (nama) of the one below. In this context, the whole of the first part of the Abhidhammattha-sangaha until the treatment of rupa may be seen as arousing an understanding which will give the mind a basis, or a new kind of rupa, for the understanding required for the rest of the book. Each section of the book may be likened to a photograph, and the first part of the book thus provides a series of photographs. The second part of the book attempts to stimulate the person into integrating these different photographs. Only if he does this for himself will there be a real change in level.

While the structure of abhidhamma provides a stimulus for this, the change is by no means automatic and the person studying it has to allow the change to happen.

Afterword

Nothing constructed is perfect. This is one formulation of the First Noble Truth. The essays and discussions given here are naturally no exception. They are the creation of a group of people seeking to understand and practise the way of the Buddha. Their experience differs and their contributions reflect their differences. Some were members of the group from the beginning, some joined a little later and some much more recently. There are those with great facility in expressing their thought on paper, others who can do so much more easily in speech or gesture.

Whatever we construct is the product of the proliferating tendency of the mind, driven by craving, views and self importance. This is one formulation of the Second Noble Truth. Not surprisingly the understanding of abhidhamma is impeded by these very things. We do not like to see things to which we are attached given a place of no importance. We reject ideas and teachings which require us to let go of previous views and understandings. We act, speak and write in ways that reinforce our own self involvement. Inevitably the essays in this book are affected by these tendencies: errors and oversimplifications, evasions of difficulties and glossings over of uncomfortable points.

The proliferating tendency of the mind can be stilled in a transcending happiness and peace. The imperfect can be relinquished. The white paper underlies the black print. Behind these essays and the work of the group lies an aspiration and a pointing towards this dhamma.

The way to that realization is known and can be put into practice. Such is the Fourth Noble Truth: the bringing into being of calm and insight - samatha and vipassana. The growth of understanding must rest upon a willingness to make errors and learn from them, to understand partially and accept correction as well as upon the ability to still the mind and free it from conceptual knowledge. If the understanding of abhidhamma is still incomplete in the West, then our incomplete knowledge expressed here may serve to indicate to the abhidhamma masters of the East what it is that we need to know and what precisely are our problems. Let us hope they may respond.

Conversely we may also be glad to have been able to do so much. If some problems remain for future endeavour, others have been solved. From the resolving of many doubts and difficulties may come the ability to aid the doubts and difficulties of others. So these essays and discussions are published also in the hope that they may be useful to others who seek to understand dhamma.

Lastly I would like to say that I feel great happiness at having been able to take part in this work. These deeper aspects of dhamma are profound and work on them is both profound and worthwhile for its own sake. Perhaps one could compare it to the building over many generations of the great mediaeval cathedrals of the West and the great monuments and temples of Asia. Even to take part in the clearing of the site might appropriately give rise to gladness and awe.

Lance

Appendix I: An abhidhamma story

This last story is rather different in approach from the others and has therefore been placed as an appendix. It is intended to be read aloud. Unlike the other essays there is no discussion after it.

An abhidhamma story

Long, long ago, when the Tribe was still generally acknowledged, there were eight families and houses in the community. To each one lay a function which, by its nature, could be fulfilled by that family or house and by no other, but a complex network of relationships made the fruit of each task available to all who needed it - nay, more than that, for in some respect they were all dependent upon each other.

Even the Unmentioned, sacred to all the families, found a single limitation in this: for were it not so, there could be no knowing. The first to be encountered worked closely together. As a pair, they held all responses and reactions, the one defining the response, . the other adding details of quality. They could show wisdom or the dullest stupidity, acting in the general interest or leading towards the community's downfall. Amongst them were to be found the highest

merits, yet neither family could dictate a course of action, and for this their rank was low in council. They did not know the rules of creation, but simply provided the material. Together they formed the house of Fondril, the pulse of the community.

At that time, a house weighed evenly with a family of the house next in order. It might also have a function in that house, as if it were one of its families. So Fondril served as a family for the house of Lavandra, responsible for movement. Its countless responses had to be translated into actions, each following a specific sequence. The families of Lavandra contained, firstly, the academicians - thinkers from all disciplines whose purpose was to conceive the plan of action in all its stages. Depending on the quantity and quality of information received, their proposals varied in effectiveness, but this was beyond their control. They could only work with the material at their disposal.

The second family constructed the finished product. If their instructions were clear, the builders would be sure to carry them out in their entirety. Similarly, a weak or hesitant command could only lead to vague and indecisive action, and sometimes to no action at all. But just as the families of Fondril were incapable of performing the actions they desired, so also the families of Lavandra could not adjust or interfere with the demand for action. If the response to a stranger was as to an enemy, all subsequent action would act on that assumption, even if it were wrong, until such time as fresh information was received.

Thus actions were completed. Like a single huge mind, these combined operations worked within a structure in which each individual was recognized and, for better or for worse, was provided with the mechanisms for exercising his particular skill. But once activated, these skills could not exist in a world of their own, isolated both from external stimuli and outgoing reverberations. There had to be effect, not only on a scale visible to the immediate protagonists, but sometimes carrying long-lasting echoes far beyond the original intention. Understanding of these consequences lay with another

family, few in number but well-heeded in council. They overlooked the entire realm of process, adding, as it were, a fourth dimension to all activities from the most casual to the most deliberate. The irony of their role was that at the time of action few could share their understanding, yet without this dimension no deed was complete. They dwelt in the castle, Turorn, to be feared.

The last factor extended the framework one step further, adding a final twist to take the spiral back to its source. All were dependent on substance for their physical base. The earth was respected as a family by all who worked on it. It was particularly close to Fondril, combining to provide material for all possibilities. And finally, uniquely earthbound, it formed a lonely house, Naluk. To those who appreciated its threefold stance, the full number of families and houses was ten.

This was the complete structure of the community; but how had it come into being, and what were the laws by which it changed? To remain static for more than an instant was impossible, but change was never random. It only seemed so to the unperceptive observer (of whom a few, even in those days, were emerging). In fact, each situation could do no other than follow laws defining both creation and decay and the dependent relationships between all things. These were not the laws of the land, but Law, created long before even the distant ancestors of the community.

Within this large and complex network, what was each man to make of his conditions? Out of the mass of individual parts emerged a larger entity, the Path, far wider than the sum of all the parts, and leading to the Unmentioned. The condition for its growth was that all the contributory factors, the families and houses working within Law, should play their part to the full. In return, the Path became available in its entirety to each and every individual. But no-one had to follow it; such was their choice. For those who elected to set out, each step unfolded for as long as they were prepared to follow, even to the freedom of the Unmentioned. But where they were to be found at their journey's end, and whether they were still of the community, only they could tell.

Appendix II: Pali terms

The following is a collection of the terms in abhidhamma which were most frequently discussed in the book. Many Pali terms appear in the text and it will be obvious how they are translated; however, in other cases, the Pali words themselves do not appear. Some translations are the same as those used in many other books concerning abhidhamma. Others were chosen after discussion of what we thought would be the most appropriate word to use. In both such cases we have standardized the translations throughout the text. However, we did not want to follow this rigidly since people often wanted to use different translations to convey more of the flavour and usage of a particular term. A variety of translations has therefore been left. In the list below, where several English words are given for a Pali term, the first is the one used most frequently.

akusala - unskillful
 adosa - non-aversion, loving-kindness
 adhimokkha - commitment
 anatta - no self
 anicca - impermanence

102 *Abhidhamma Papers*

anuloma - adaptation (of the vilhi leading to jhana)
anusaya - latent tendency
annotappa - disregard of consequences (of unskilfulness)
appana - absorption
ariya - sainthood
arupa - formless
alobha - non-attachment, generosity
avijja - wrong knowing
asankharika - unprompted, spontaneous
akasa - space
apo - water
arammana - object (of the senses or the mind)
ahirika -lack of concern/fear of consequences (of unskilfulness)
indriya -faculty
issa - jealousy
ujukata - correctness
uddhacca - agitation, restlessness, anxiety
upacara - access (of the vithi leading to jhana)
upekkha - neutral feeling
ekaggata - concentration, one pointedness, unifying
ottappa - fear of the consequences (of unskilfulness)
kamma - active or causative (aspect of consciousness)
kammannata - fitness
karuna - compassion
kicca - function
kiriya - functional (consciousness)
kukkucca - anxiety, guilt
kusala - skilful
khanda - aggregate
gotrabhu - change of lineage, membership
citta - consciousness
cittuppada - state of consciousness or mind, thought-moment
cuti; - shifting out of existence
cetasika - mental factor, concomitant or ingredient of
consciousness

cetana - will to do, volition, drive
 javana - not translated (lit. 'running')
 jhana - (state of) meditation (particular sense)
 jhananga - jhana factor, intensifying factor
 tadalamhana - retention
 tanha - craving
 tejo - fire
 tatramajjhata - even balance
 thina - stiffness
 dana - giving
 ditthi - views, false views
 dukkha - unsatisfactoriness
 domanassa - unpleasant (mental) feeling
 dosa - aversion, ill-will, dislike
 dvara - door
 nama - mind, mentality
 nama-rupa - mentality-materiality
 nibbana - not translated (lit. 'blowing-out' - of the fires of attachment, aversion and wrong knowing)
 nimitta - not translated (lit. 'portent')
 nivarana - hindrance
 pancodvara - sense door
 pancadvaravajjana - turning to the sense door
 pancavinnana - five-fold sense consciousness
 panna - wisdom, understanding
 pannatti - concepts
 paticca-samuppada - dependent origination
 palhavi - earth, solidity
 paramattha-dhamma - reality, basic reality
 parikamma - preparatory (of the vihi leading to jhana)
 passaddhi - tranquillity
 piti - energisation, joy
 phala - fruit
 phassa - contact

104 *Abhidhamma Papers*

bhavanga - not translated
bhavana - practice of meditation (lit. 'bringing into being')
bhumi - plane, level
magga-path
maccariya - miserliness
mana - conceit
manasikara - attention
manodvara - mind door
manodvaravajjana - turning to the mind door
mahabhuta - element, primary element
middha - sluggishness
mudita - sympathetic joy
muduta - pliancy
moha (cetasika) - cloudiness
(hetu) - deludedness
rupa - matter
lakkhana - mark of existence
lahuta - lightness
lokuttara - supramundane
lobha - attachment
vayo - air
vicara - examining the object, sustained application
vicikiccha - doubt, wavering
vinnana - regenerative consciousness
vitakka - applying or directing the mind to the object, initial interest
vipassana • insight
vipaka - resultant or passive (consciousness)
viriya - effort (lit. 'strength' or 'heroism')
vithi - thought process
vedana - feeling
votthapana - determining
sankhara - not translated (lit. 'forming well' or 'accumulating')
sankharika - prompted

sanna - recognition, perception, marking the object
sati - mindfulness
saddha - confidence, faith
santirana - investigating
samatha - calm
sampaticchana - receiving
salayatana - sense bases
sila - discipline
sukha - pleasant feeling, harmonizing
somanassa - pleasant (mental) feeling
hiri - a wish not to be involved with unskillfulness
hetu - root (lit. 'cause')

Index

When an entry in the index is a main subject of an essay, the number of that essay has been indicated; for example, 5.4 means the fourth essay in the fifth section of the book.

<i>abhidhamma</i>	11,12,15-16	
<i>Abhidhamma-pitaka</i>	10	
<i>Abhidhammatthasangaha</i>	8,10,56,5.4	
<i>abhivinaya</i>	15	
<i>access (consciousness)</i>	73-4	
<i>active (consciousness)</i>	17,42,46,51	<i>see also kamma</i>
<i>adaptation (consciousness)</i>	73-4	
<i>adhimokkha</i>	64, 68	<i>see also commitment</i>
<i>aggregates</i>	77-8,80	
<i>agitation</i>	24,27,65,67	<i>see also distraction, restlessness. uddhacca</i>
<i>ahirika</i>	27	<i>see also 'lack of concern/fear of consequences'</i>
<i>air (element of)</i>	57-61,81,88	
<i>akusala</i>	33,48,65	<i>see also unskilful</i>
<i>alobha</i>	27	<i>see also generosity, non-attachment</i>
<i>anatta</i>	11,13,38	<i>see also no-self</i>
<i>anicca</i>	11,12,38,40	<i>see also impermanence</i>
<i>anottappa</i>	27	
<i>anuloma</i>	76	
<i>anusaya</i>	32	<i>see also latent tendencies</i>
<i>appana citta</i>	74,76	
<i>applying the mind to the object</i>	51	<i>see also vitakka, directing the mind to the object. initial interest</i>
<i>ariyan</i>	74	<i>see also sainthood</i>
<i>arupa jhana</i>	21-22.,62	
<i>arupa loka</i>	16,62,73.90	
<i>attachment</i>	24,26.27.29-32, 3.3,51,64,69,78	<i>see also lobha</i>
<i>attention</i>	45,48, 53	

<i>aversion</i>	18,24,26-7,29-30, 35,68-9,87	<i>see also</i> dislike, ill-will, dosa
<i>avijja</i>	65,79	<i>see also</i> wrong knowing
<i>bare attention</i>	46	
<i>bhavana</i>	65	<i>see also</i> meditation practice
<i>bhavanga</i>	49-50,52,72,74-5	causative consciousness 29 <i>see also</i> active Consciousness, kamma
<i>cause-and-effect</i>	18,19,29,5.2	
<i>cetasika</i>	10-12,62,64,91	<i>see also</i> mental factors
<i>cetana</i>	54,81-2	<i>see also</i> drive, volition, will-to-do
<i>change of lineage</i>	74,76-7	
<i>citta,</i>	10-11,53-4,58,62, 72-3,82,88,90	<i>see also</i> consciousness state of mind, thought-moment
<i>cloudiness</i>	24,27	<i>see also</i> moha
<i>cohesion</i>	81	<i>see also</i> water
<i>commitment</i>	51,64,68	<i>see also</i> adhimokkha
<i>compassion</i>	28	
<i>conceit</i>	27	<i>see also</i> mana
<i>consciousness</i>	10,13-4,17,20-1, 58,77-8,80-1,88, 90,94	<i>see also</i> citta
<i>concomitants of consciousness</i>	14	<i>see also</i> mental factors, cetasika
<i>confidence</i>	25,27,64-8,87	<i>see also</i> faith, saddha
<i>concentration</i>	64-7	<i>see also</i> one-pointedness, ekaggata, samadhi
<i>concepts</i>	47,81,94-5	<i>see also</i> pannatti
<i>contact</i>	53,57-8,79,781	<i>see also</i> phassa
<i>correctness</i>	26,28	
<i>craving</i>	78-9	<i>see also</i> tanha
<i>cuti</i>	72,75-6	
<i>dana</i>	65	
<i>death</i>	71-2,75	
<i>decidedness</i>	29-30,32	<i>see also</i> moha
<i>dependent origination</i>	32,78-9,94	
<i>determining consciousness</i>	49-50,54	<i>see also</i> turning to the mind door

108 *Abhidhamma Papers*

<i>dhamma</i>	15,39,65,68,95	
<i>dhamma-chanda</i>	39	
<i>directing the mind to the object</i>	58	<i>see also initial interest, vitakka, applying the mind</i>
<i>discipline</i>	65	<i>see also sila</i>
<i>distending (element of rupa)</i>	81,88	<i>see also air</i>
<i>dislike</i>	60-1	<i>see also aversion, Ill-will, dosa</i>
<i>disregard of consequences</i>	27	<i>see also ahirika</i>
 <i>distraction</i>	 29-30	 <i>see also agitation, restlessness, uddhacca</i>
 <i>ditthi</i>	 27,38	 <i>see also views, false views</i>
<i>dosa</i>	27,35	<i>see also aversion, dislike, ill-will</i>
 <i>doubt</i>	 24,75,65,67	 <i>see also wavering, vicikiccha</i>
<i>drive</i>	58	<i>see also will-to-do, volition, cetana</i>
 <i>dukkha</i>	 35,37-8	 <i>see also unsatisfactoriness</i>
<i>earth (element of rupa)</i>	57,59,61,87-8	<i>see also solidity</i>
<i>effort</i>	64-5,67-8	<i>see also viriya</i>
<i>ekaggata</i>	59-60,63-4,73, 84,86	<i>see also concentration, onepointedness, unifying the mind</i>
 <i>elements (of rupa)</i>	 57,87-8	
<i>energisation</i>	39,58	<i>see also piti</i>
<i>equipoise</i>	86,89	
<i>envy</i>	30	
<i>examining the object</i>	51,58	<i>see also vicara, sustained application</i>
 <i>faculties</i>	 53,4.2	
<i>faith</i>	25-7,31,34,67	<i>see also confidence, saddha</i>
<i>feeling</i>	54,57-8,77-8, 80-84,86,91,94	<i>see also vedana</i>

<i>pleasant</i>	83-6,88-9	
<i>unpleasant</i>	83-6,88-9	
<i>neutral</i>	83-6,89	
<i>fire (element of rupa)</i>	57,59,61	<i>see also warmth</i>
<i>functional (consciousness)</i>	18	<i>see also kiriya</i>
<i>gati nimitta</i>	72	
<i>generosity</i>	26-7,31-2,51	<i>see also non-attachment, alobha</i>
<i>giving</i>	65	
<i>goodwill</i>	31,51	<i>see also lovingkindness, non-aversion</i>
<i>guilt</i>	24,27,30	
<i>harmonizing</i>	58	<i>see also sukha</i>
<i>heedlessness</i>	67	
<i>hetu</i>	23	<i>see also root</i>
<i>hindrance</i>	4,1,73	
<i>hiri</i>	27	
<i>impermanence</i>	17,19,24,74	<i>see also anicca</i>
<i>indriya</i>	56	<i>see also faculties</i>
<i>ingredients of citta</i>	11	<i>see also mental factors, cetasika</i>
<i>initial interest</i>	84	<i>see also directing the mind to the object, applying the mind, vicara</i>
<i>intensifying factors</i>	56,4,1,84	<i>see also jhana factors, jhananga</i>
<i>issa</i>	27	<i>see also jealousy</i>
<i>javana</i>	49-54,72-6	
<i>jealousy</i>	24,27,30	
<i>jhana</i>	21-2,64,67,69 71,73-6,88-9,92	<i>see also meditations</i>
<i>jhana factors</i>	12,4,1,67,70	<i>see also intensifying factors jhananga</i>
<i>jhananga</i>	5.3	<i>see also intensifying factors, jhana factors</i>
<i>kamma</i>	49-51,72,92	<i>see also active / causative consciousness</i>
<i>kamma, law of</i>	71,94	
<i>kamma condition</i>	31	

110 *Abhidhamma Papers*

<i>kamma nimitta</i>	72	
<i>kammanata</i>	28	
<i>karuna</i>	28	
<i>kiriya</i>	49,51	<i>see also functional consciousness</i>
<i>kukkucca</i>	27	<i>see also guilt</i>
<i>kusala</i>	33,48,64,79	<i>a see also skilful</i>
<i>lack of fear/concern for consequences</i>	24,27,29	
<i>lahuta</i>	28	
<i>latent tendencies</i>	32,33,67	<i>see also anusaya</i>
<i>lightness</i>	26,28	
<i>lobha</i>	27,2.3	<i>see also attachment</i>
<i>loving-kindness</i>	31,51	<i>see also non-aversion</i>
<i>macchhariya</i>	27	<i>see also miserliness</i>
<i>mana</i>	27	<i>see also conceit</i>
<i>marking the object</i>	58	<i>see also perception, recognition. sanna</i>
<i>marks of existence</i>	65,74	
<i>matter</i>	10,12-21,35,77-8, 81,87,91-2, 94-5	<i>see also rupa</i>
<i>meditations</i>	64,71	<i>see also jhana</i>
<i>meditation practice</i>	65,69,94	<i>see also bhavana</i>
<i>membership</i>	73-4	<i>see also change of lineage</i>
<i>memory</i>	45,50	
<i>mental factors</i>	10,13,17-21,23, 2.1,29,42,64-5, 94	<i>see also ingredients of citta, cetasika</i>
<i>mentality-materiality</i>	79,81	<i>see also nama-rupa</i>
<i>middha</i>	28	
<i>mind door</i>	53,62	
<i>mindfulness</i>	24-8,53,64-5, 67,83	<i>see also sati</i>
<i>miserliness</i>	24,27	<i>see also macchhariya</i>
<i>muduta</i>	28	
<i>mudita</i>	28	
<i>moha (as mental factor)</i>	27	<i>see also deludedness</i>
<i>(as root)</i>	35	
<i>nama</i>	81-2,88,95	
<i>nama-rupa</i>	79,87	<i>see also mentality-materiality</i>

<i>nibbana</i>	10,13-4,16-7, 18-20,32,71,74, 80-1,91.93-4	
<i>Noble Truths</i>	96-7	
<i>no-self</i>	17,19,24,74	<i>see also anatta</i>
<i>non-attachment</i>	31,51	<i>see also generosity, alobha</i>
<i>non-aversion</i>	31,51	
<i>non-deludedness</i>	31	
<i>non-wrong knowing</i>	51	
<i>one-pointedness</i>	84,86	<i>see also concentration, uni- fying the mind, ekaggata</i>
<i>ottappa</i>	27	
<i>pagunnata</i>	28	
<i>Pali canon</i>	10	
<i>panna</i>	28,64,95	<i>see also wisdom</i>
<i>pannatti</i>	47,95	<i>see also concepts</i>
<i>passive (consciousness)</i>	17,42,45,47,51	<i>see also resultant</i>
<i>passadhi</i>	28	
<i>patibhaga-nimitta</i>	73	
<i>patisandhi</i>	72,75	
<i>Patthana</i>	94	
<i>perception</i>	77,86	<i>see also marking the object, recognition, sanna</i>
<i>phassa</i>	53,79	<i>see also contact</i>
<i>piti</i>	39,58-60,64,67, 73,83-4,88	<i>see also energisation</i>
<i>pliancy</i>	26,28	
<i>preparatory (consciousness)</i>	73	
<i>reality, basic</i>	10,13-4,20-1,92	
<i>receiving consciousness</i>	49,51,54	
<i>recognition</i>	45,47	<i>see also marking the object. perception, sanna</i>
<i>regenerative consciousness</i>	79	<i>see also vinnana</i>
<i>restlessness</i>	60-1	<i>see also uddhacca, agitation, distraction</i>

112 *Abhidhamma Papers*

<i>resultant consciousness</i>	17,29,49,51	<i>see also passive consciousness</i> <i>vipaka</i>
<i>retention</i>	49-50	
<i>root</i>	23-4,2.2,42,91, 94	<i>see also hetu</i>
<i>rupa</i>	10,15-6,20-2, 35,4.1,82,87, 90-1,94-5	<i>see also matter</i>
<i>rupa-jhana</i>	21,62-3	
<i>rupa, plane of</i>	73-4	
<i>saddha</i>	27,34	<i>see also confidence, faith</i>
<i>sainthood</i>	71,74-5	<i>see also ariyan</i>
<i>salayatana</i>	79	<i>see also sense bases</i>
<i>samadhi</i>	64	<i>see also concentration, unifying the</i> <i>mind, ekaggata</i>
<i>samatha</i>	64.71	
<i>sankhara</i>	79,81-2	
<i>sanna</i>	47-8.54,81-2, 86	<i>see also perception, marking the</i> <i>object, recognition</i>
<i>sati</i>	27,64	<i>see also mindfulness</i>
<i>sense bases</i>	79.81	<i>see also salayatana</i>
<i>sense consciousness</i>	49.53.81	
<i>sense door</i>	53,62	
<i>sense pentad</i>	53-4,56,70,5.3	
<i>sila</i>	10,33,65,67	<i>see also discipline</i>
<i>skilful/skilfulness</i>	2.1,29,33-4, 39-40,42- 3.45,48, 50-1,53,64-5,67, 69,79-80,83,88, 90,92	<i>see also kusala</i>
<i>solidity</i>	81,87	<i>see also earth</i>
<i>sluggishness</i>	24,27	<i>see also middha</i>
<i>space</i>	57-8.61,63	
<i>sustained application</i>	84	<i>see also examining the object.</i> <i>vicara</i>
<i>state of mind / conscious-</i> <i>ness</i>	17-8,22,41-42, 48,71	<i>see also thought-moment, citta.</i> <i>consciousness</i>

<i>stiffness</i>	24,27	<i>see also thina</i>
<i>sukha</i>	58-60,73,84,86, 88-9	<i>see also harmonizing</i>
<i>sympathetic joy</i>	28	
<i>tanha</i>	79	<i>see also craving</i>
<i>tatramajjhata</i>	27	
<i>thina</i>	27	
<i>thought-moment</i>	17-9,48	<i>see also state of mind/consciousness, consciousness, citta</i>
<i>thought process</i>	11,41,70,3.2,5.1, 91	
<i>tranquillity</i>	26,28	
<i>turning to the sense door</i>	49	
<i>turning to the mind door</i>	52,73,76	<i>see also determining</i>
<i>uddhacca</i>	27,65	<i>see also agitation restlessness, distraction</i>
<i>ujjukata</i>	27	
<i>unconscious</i>	55	
<i>unskillful/unskillfulness</i>	2.1,29,33-5,39, 42-3,46,48,50-1, 65,69,79,83,88	<i>see also akusala</i>
<i>unifying the mind</i>	58	<i>see also concentration, onepoint- edness, ekaggata</i>
<i>unsatisfactoriness</i>	17,19,24,74	<i>see also dukkha</i>
<i>vedana</i>	54,81-3,86	<i>see also feeling</i>
<i>vibrating bhavanga</i>	49	
<i>vicara</i>	58-60,64,67,73, 84,86,88	<i>see also examining the object, sustained application</i>
<i>vicikiccha</i>	27, 65	<i>see also doubt, wavering</i>
<i>view</i>	35,37,38,96	<i>see also ditthi</i>
<i>vinnana</i>	79,81-2,88	<i>see also regenerative conscious- ness</i>
<i>vipaka</i>	51	<i>see also passive/ resultant con- sciousness</i>
<i>viriya</i>	64,68	<i>see also effort</i>
<i>vitakka</i>	58-60,63,67,73, 84,88	<i>see also applying the mind, directing the mind to the object, initial interest</i>

114 *Abhidhamma Papers*

<i>vithi</i>	41	<i>see also</i> thought process
<i>volition</i>	51	<i>see also</i> drive, will-to-do, <i>cetana</i>
<i>warmth</i> (mental factor)	27	<i>see also</i> fire
(element of <i>rupa</i>)	81	
<i>Water</i>	57,59,61	<i>see also</i> cohesion
<i>wavering</i>	60-1	<i>see also</i> doubt, <i>vicikiccha</i>
<i>will-to-do</i>	54	<i>see also</i> drive, <i>cetana</i>
<i>wisdom</i>	24,28,31,34,51, 64-5,67,95	<i>see also</i> <i>panna</i>
<i>wrong knowing</i>	24-5,32,51,64-5, 67,77-8,89	<i>see also</i> <i>avijja</i>
<i>yoniso manasikara</i>	48	

The Samatha Trust

www.samatha.org

The Samatha Trust was founded in 1973 by pupils of Nai Boonman, a meditation teacher from Thailand. Samatha breathing mindfulness is a traditional form of Buddhist meditation.

The aim of the Trust is to promote the study and practice of Samatha and in particular to establish a meditation centre in the country able to accommodate residential courses in meditation practice and related activities. The Trust is presently looking for suitable premises.

Local groups meet currently in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Manchester, Salford and Sunderland.

For further details, please contact

The Secretary,

The Samatha Centre,

Greenstreete,

Llangunllo (near Knighton),

Powys,

LD7 1SP,

United Kingdom



This book has been published for free distribution (though booksellers may make a small charge to cover their costs). Should anyone wish to make a donation, contributions to The Samatha Trust would be gratefully received.

