VIPASSANA THE BASICS



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CONTENTS

DEDICATION	4
FOREWORD	7
PREFACE	9
INTRODUCTION	12

DEDICATION



The Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita

The late Mahasi Sayadaw is one of the most eminent masters of our time. Under his guidance thousands round the world have been successfully trained at The Sasana Yeiktha Meditation Centre, Yangon, Myanmar.

May the merits of our Dhammaduta be share by all beings. Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

Acknowledgement

This Dhamma literature is a compilation of the writings of the Mahasi Sayadaw, who taught and wrote copiously on the practise of Vipassana Meditation as pristinely taught by the Blessed One. Mahasi Sayadaw has by his teaching and practise been successful in clearing the mist of myth surrounding the practise of Vipassana. He has left behind many followers worthy to carry on his work.

This literature acknowledges the gratitude his exemplary way of life as a true follower of the Blessed One's Path have changed the life of many seeking the True Path. He has shown the Way.

May he attain Nibbana in this life time. Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

INTRODUCTION

Human beings in their ignorance engineer their own sufferings while seeking happiness, believing that the acquisition of material wealth and their own physical well-being are all that they need to achieve their goals. Every moment of their lives they seek to gratify the demands of their physical and mental senses, not realising that true happiness is conditioned by attitudes of mind. "Mind leads the way...mind is the leader..." in everything that they do. Only a very few give thought to mental development, fewer still practise mind training in earnest.

Time is spent in the endless pursuits of food, clothing and shelter. In everywhere and everything, humans have made great improvements to better their lives, materially.

All these efforts are, in the main, concerned with the care and nourishment of the body, and though these are the necessities of life, it must be realised that these efforts and achievements cannot and have not brought about the alleviation or eradication of suffering associated with old age, diseases, domestic infelicities and economic problems.

All such marvellous improvements have not assuaged the sufferings humans bring on themselves. They have not realised that their search for happiness can only come from the mind. Not just any mind, but a trained and developed mind, bent on Nibbana through the Noble Path. Then, it becomes clear that the correct method must be sought for training, stabilising and purifying the mind.

Fortunately for us, over 2500 years ago, the Buddha expounded the **Maha Satipatthana Sutta**, which is **the only way** for us to develop our minds. He declared;

This is the Only Way For the Purification of Beings, the Overcoming of Sorrow and Lamentation, the Destroying of Pain And Grief, Reaching the Right Path, the Realisation of Nibbana; Namely; the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

The Buddha said; dwell practising: body, feeling, mind and mindobjects contemplation. In his book, Mahasi Sayadaw says: "When a yogi has fully developed Insights into Impermanence, Suffering and Absence of a Self, he will realise Nibbana. From time immemorial Buddhas, Arahants and Holy Ones realised Nibbana by this means of Vipassana. It is the Highway leading to Nibbana.

As a matter of fact, Vipassana comprising the Four Applications of Mindfulness (Satipatthana) is the sole and only Highway to Nibbana. Yogis taking up the training in contemplation, should bear in mind that they too are on this Highway taken by Buddhas, Arahants and Holy Ones throughout aeons in time. This opportunity is afforded them due to the results of their wholesome deeds of previous existences maturing now.

They should rejoice at this unique opportunity. Walking with unwavering confidence on this same Highway, they too will gain the highly developed Concentration and Knowledge as had been attained by Buddhas, Arahants and Holy Ones. They will develop such a pure state of Concentration as has never been known before in the course of their lives.

They will also realise the practical **Knowledge** of **Impermanence**, **Suffering** and the **Absence** of a **Self** by having direct personal experience of the actual fact and then realise the Path to Nibbana on the full development of this knowledge. It will not take long to achieve the object, possibly in a month, or twenty days, or fifteen days, or on rare occasions even in seven days for a selected few endowed with Extraordinary Perfections.

Yogis should therefore, proceed with the Practice of Contemplation in great earnest and with full confidence that it will surely lead to freedom from the wrong view of a self; the development of Spiritual Knowledge of the Path and its Fruition and to the realisation of Nibbana. They will then be no longer subjected to the rounds of re-births in the miserable existences of hell, animals and hungry ghosts.

Initially, with the availability of many written texts and the guidance of a good teacher anyone will be able to practise these contemplations in a systematic manner and make progress towards development of the mind.

Such a statement "guidance of a good teacher" is easy to make; however as mentioned by the Sayadaw in the Section on "Incessant Work" the teachers of today may be a person who teaches from what little he himself has learnt; also he may not be able to know the disposition of his pupils as did the Buddha.

Meditation teachers of today who themselves have attained the Path is rare and few in between. Thus, for those meditators who seriously see the need to practise so as to rid their minds of defilement, have largely to depend on the written word of the Buddha and there is no better manual for practise than the MahaSatipatthana Sutta, expounded by the Buddha and expertly detailed by the Mahasi Saydaw, so that those who have already begun practising and found the need for guidance difficult to come by, will find his (Mahasi Sayadaw's) instructions a great aid towards gauging the correctness of the practice, when they are on their own.

In these times of the Sasana, where the quality of instructions for the attaining of progress in Vipassana Meditation is wanting, a serious meditator truly needs to take refuge in himself guided by a proven teacher, even though the teacher's instructions may only be in books left behind.

Alternatively the discerning yogi should seek to train in all earnestness with a teacher of his/her own choice, whom he /she has affinity with; and having found such a teacher; to exercise great patience (without undue expectations) and imbibe all that the teacher can disseminate. A caution here should be taken heed of; that one should not be in a great hurry to go "chasing" teacher after teacher, bearing in mind that teachers too teach in each their own particular ways.

Thus, a discerning yogi, seriously seeking to learn must then apply wisdom to the search and having found a teacher filling all the criteria according to his needs, must then apply determined patience and earnestness in t training.

Thus it is that Bhante Suvanno, a truly compassionate teacher of our time has constantly and repeatedly exhorted that we practise the method of meditation as taught by the Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw, noting the rising and falling of the abdomen as the object of meditation. He himself is an ardent student of

the Sayadaw and earnestly practises as taught by the Sayadaw. When foreign teachers are here and their students announced that such and such a teacher have a "short cut" to the attainments, Bhante Suvanno has firmly advised us that we should stick to the proven method as expounded by the Mahassi Sayadaw.

Attainment of insight, says Bhante Suvanno has no "short cuts", the only sure way is by hard and earnest practise and the results will surely come commensurate with the work we have put in and of course dependent on the paramis we ourselves have accumulated from previous existences. These are the necessary conditions for attainment of insights, nothing else will do. Thus the method as set out here are the practice as taught by Bhante Suvanno and as he often quotes; "Ekayano ayam bhikkhave, maggo saturnam visuddhiya; this is the only way....."

It is the aspiration of the compiler that the instructions in Vipassana Meditation by the Mahasi Saydaw be the guiding light for those who find the need for self-practise under the circumstances mentioned. With the Mahasi Sayadaw's confident assurance that one will find success in one's practice should one follow the instructions, one should then strive with complete confidence to attain the progressive stages of Vipassana Insight Knowledge. May you achieve progress in your practice...

Sadhu!...Sadhu!...Sadhu!

Jinavamsa Bhikkhu

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa



CHAPTER I GENERAL OUTLINE OF VIPASSANA

Satipatthana, the Practice of Mindfulness Meditation, is designed to bring about the attainment of **Nibbana**. The method, described in this book, extracted from the Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw's copious writings and discourses, can be practised by all, regardless of religious believes, as its aim is simply to expand the practitioner's consciousness and bring him face to face with his mind.

People generally IDENTIFY Thoughts, Feelings, Impulses, Emotions Or Sensations that they experience as BELONGING TO THEM; as their personal properties; that such phenomena are associated with an entity, a person.

Each mental phenomenon takes them on a mental trip. "I" am happy, "I" am angry, This is "mine ", "My" wealth and so forth. By practising mindfulness, they learn to observe:

the rise and fall,
the appearance and disappearance of
these various thoughts and feelings;
the cause and origin of
these thoughts and feelings
and thus understanding their nature,
gradually develop
a sense of distance and detachment from them.

They will then, no longer become caught up by their hang-ups, associated with "self". This will assuredly enable them to develop inner calmness. Through further practise, they will develop insight and wisdom that will enable them to see the intrinsic realities that were once clouded by illusion and ignorance. Thus, they will realise that the mind is in reality an impersonal process composed of large numbers of elementary psychic events called dhammas.

THE PRACTICE

A meditator should spend 16 hours daily in the practice of **Vipassana** meditation, alternating between 1 hour of sitting and 1 hour of walking, continuously without any break in between.

From the very beginning of the practice, early in the morning; keen awareness of the moment to moment arising and falling away of mind and body processes should be noted without a break. The practice, thus is:

to Look into the Mind and the Body Noting Impartially each aspect of Mind and Body Phenomenon as it Arises to Consciousness.

In other words, to be fully mindful of each mental or physical activity incessantly going on;

Without involving the concept of "I" or "Self";

and in the complete awareness of these mental and physical activities and directly experiencing these mind and body phenomena as they arise.

Mahasi Sayadaw advises observing the rising and falling of the abdomen as the primary object of meditation. Presently, his disciples have allowed the noting of the in-and-out breathing felt at the tip of the nose as the primary object of meditation.

It is not of great import which object is observed, but essential to note with clear, detached awareness and see things as they truly are. One must note carefully to distinguish and recognise:

<u>Ultimate Reality*</u> from <u>Conventional Concept*.</u>

There are two kinds of Realities; (1) the Conventional Realities or Concepts and (2) the Ultimate Realities.

(1) Conventional Realities are the references of ordinary conceptual thoughts and conventional modes of expression. They include such entities as living beings, persons, men,

women, animals and the apparently stable persisting objects that constitute our unanalysed picture of the world. These concepts or notions do not possess ultimate validity, for the objects which they signify do not exist in their own right as irreducible realities. Their mode of being is conceptual, not actual. They are products of mental construction not realities existing by reason of their own nature.

(2) Ultimate realities, in contrast, are things that exist by reason of their own intrinsic nature. These are the dhammas: the final, irreducible components of existence, the ultimate realities which result from a correctly performed analysis of experience. Such existents admit of no further reduction, but are themselves the final terms of analysis, the true constituents of the complex manifold of experience. Hence the word paramattha is applied to them, which is derived from parama; meaning ultimate, highest, final; and attha; meaning reality, thing. (Bhikkhu Bodhi; Manual of Abhidhamma))

With the deepening of awareness, stages of Insight Knowledge will be progressively experienced.

From The Very Beginning The Meditator Should Know That No Two Individuals Will Have Exactly The Same Experience in The Practice.

Thus it is not advisable that the meditator has preconceived expectations in the progress of his or her meditation. The meditator should be clearly mindful of what is actually experienced moment to moment.

When The Practice has Matured, and All the Mental Faculties are Balanced; A Natural Unfolding of Insight Knowledge and Wisdom Will Arise.

Through mindful observation, one comes to realise that there is no permanent abiding entity, self or ego within the physical frame of the human body and that what constitutes within that frame are:

The Five Aggregates of human existence known as khandhas.

The result of this realisation is detachment from the sensations: feelings, thoughts, ideas, impulses, etcetera, which are continuously arising in the mind.

The insight into this and full realisation of it, is the onset of wisdom. If one sincerely desires to attain **Insight Knowledge** here and now, one must renounce worldly thoughts and actions during **Vipassana** meditation and concentrate on the essential preliminary step towards gaining Insight Knowledge; which is to purify our conduct by undertaking moral restrains. The initial mode of Purification of Conduct is to undertake at the minimum, the restrain of the Five Precepts or the Eight Precepts.

SOME GUIDELINES FOR MEDITATORS

First, where-ever possible, the meditator should begin his practice with an experienced and competent teacher, who has practical meditation experiences and a broad knowledge of the Dhamma.

Second, the meditator must stick to the instructions of the teacher very carefully and listen to the Dhamma talks attentively. If the meditator pays careful attention to the teacher he will progress well and develop faith in the practice.

In any training there is theory and practice; reading alone cannot lead to true understanding, but theory and practice together will give a profound understanding of the Dhamma.

Third, the meditator must be honest and straight forward in reporting to the teacher. In the course of his practice, the meditator will encounter good and bad experiences. In reporting these to the teacher, he has to do so factually. Meditators in some cases report what they consider the good side and fail to report plainly and frankly on other experiences. Though the meditator may think that his sitting is not good, it may not be so in the view of the teacher and only by knowing the true situation, can the teacher be able to give correct and beneficial guidance.

There are bound to be difficulties initially, as there are in anything new. Only after some practice can results be forthcoming. Throughout the practice there will be varying experiences, which can have various effects on the meditator, and become fruitful only if the practice progresses correctly.

When the meditator encounters difficult stages, the teacher expects that the meditator will report these and seek his support and encouragement. Then only is there any opportunity to give correct advice for the development and progress of the practice. Hence it is very important that the meditator reports his experiences to the teacher very plainly, frankly and factually.

Fourth, the meditator must be industrious and diligent in his practice. He must always be alert and ready to note with continuous effort as soon as he is awake. It is the main and primary duty of the meditator to note whatever feelings and sensations arising in his body and mind. Even minor physical movements such as moving of the hands, changing of clothes, etc. have to be noted with keen awareness.

A meditator may, in a hurry, try to do two things at a time. This is to be discouraged as details in these actions and movements will be missed. In eating, in using toilet facilities too, the meditator must do so with full awareness. He must note all movements with awareness without missing anything whatsoever. There is nothing which should not be noted. Every physical and mental occurrence has to be noted mindfully.

Fifth, the meditator must refrain from talking, eating and sleeping excessively. Talking is a major obstacle in the practice of meditation. Avoid talking while practising intensive meditation. Should there be a necessity to talk, the meditator must note the intention to talk and limit the duration of such talks.

The meditator should not over-eat. In eating the Buddha has advised that meditators must never eat to a full stomach, but should leave at

least about four or five morsels less, and fill the stomach with water, soup, or fluid of any kind.

Sleep should be reduced to a minimum. During intensive practice, four hours of sleep will not cause problem to meditators, and they should not have any anxiety about having four hours of sleep in their daily schedule.

In intensive practice, the meditator must try very hard and have unshakeable resolution that says, "I will persevere in my practice and even if my blood should dry up and my flesh, skin, bones and sinews alone remain in my body, I will carry on." This kind of steadfast resolution has to be made to practise Vipassana Bhavana successfully; the attachment to the body must be disregarded. If the meditator has too much affection of or attachment to his body, the progress of insight knowledge will be very slow.

Sixth, the meditator should practise mindfulness at all times. If a meditator is not mindful, for example, of the sound he hears, he may develop either attachment or aversion to the sound. Therefore the meditator should always note sound as such, so that the sound will pass away as merely sound, without any accompanying attachment or aversion.

Seventh, the meditator must act as if he is a sick person and not move quickly in whatever he does. He should walk very slowly, eat very slowly, and even talk very slowly. In so doing, he can note all the mental and physical sensations and will soon develop the habit of mindfulness.

Eighth, the meditator should make persistent and continuous effort to note without let up. He must note from the moment of waking up in the morning until going to sleep at night, not only in sitting and walking sessions, but also in the daily activities. When the moment to moment concentration is sustained, the meditator will be able to develop progressive insight knowledge successfully within a reasonable time.

An additional discipline is not to speak with contempt, in jest, or with malice to or about any of the Noble Ones who have attained states of sanctity.[*]

During Vipassana Meditation training, it is advisable to take refuge in the Triple Gem. It is also important to begin the training with contemplation on the 'Four Protections'. It is helpful to reflect on them.

The subject of the Four Protective Contemplations are:

The Blessed One, Loving-kindness, Loathsomeness of the Body, Death.

Firstly, pay devotion to the Buddha by sincerely appreciating his nine chief qualities in this way: Truly the Buddha is holy, Fully self-enlightened, Perfect in knowledge and conduct, A well-farer, Knower of the worlds, The incomparable leader of men to be tamed, Teacher of gods and men, The awakened one, The exalted one.

Secondly, reflect upon all sentient beings as the receivers of one's loving-kindness and identify oneself with all sentient beings without distinction, thus:

"May I be free from enmity, disease, grief. As I am free, so also may my parents, preceptors, teachers, all beings be free from suffering."

Thirdly, reflect upon the repulsiveness of the body thereby minimising the unwholesome attachment that people have for the body. Dwell on some of its impurities, such as stomach and its undigested contents, intestines, phlegm, pus, blood. Ponder on these impurities so that the fondness for the body may be eliminated.

The **Fourth** Protection is to reflect on the phenomenon of everapproaching death.

Life is uncertain; Death is certain; Life is precarious and Death is sure. Life has death as its goal. There is Birth, Disease, Suffering, Old Age and Death.

These are all aspects of the process of existence.

The Buddha-Dhamma exhorts one to cultivate the virtues Morality; Concentration and Wisdom.

Chief among the many faceted paths to Morality) for the laity is the observance of the **Five Precepts** and **the Eight Precepts**.

Morality can only be developed with accompanying virtues and the practice of concentration, a fixed or tranquil state of mind. The ordinary or undisciplined mind has the habit of wandering hither and thither, darting here and there incessantly, following any idea, thought or imagination and hence difficult to control. In order to prevent its wandering, the

mind must be made to attend fixedly to a selected object of meditation. On gaining practice, the mind gradually looses its wandering traits and remains fixed on the object to which it is directed. This is Concentration.

Any one who is well-disciplined in Morality will find rebirth in the happy existence of human beings or devas at death. But this form of ordinary morality would not be a safeguard against rebirth into the lower states of miserable existence, such as hell, animal or peta planes of existence, where the span of life lasts for many hundreds, thousands or even millions of years. The life span of beings in the Brahma realm is very long and may last for one world cycle or two, four, eight up to a maximum of eighty-four thousand world-cycles.

At the end of his life-span, conditioned by his remaining kammic forces, a Brahma will also pass away and may find rebirth in the human or Deva realm.

If he had led a virtuous life, while in the Brahmanic state, he may then find rebirth in a happy life in his next existence. However, as he has not freed himself from all his defilement (kilesas) as yet, he may commit demeritorious deeds, in which case he will find rebirth in hell or other lower states of miserable existence.

There is thus no security in the practice of concentration meditation (samatha bhavana). It is desirable to cultivate morality, the higher form of supramundane morality (Vipassana Bhavana), which when one has fully acquired, one is saved from rebirth into the lower states, and one will always lead a happy life, being able to find rebirth as an intelligent human being or deva.

Everyone should, therefore, make it a point to cultivate **Supramundane Morality** (Vipassana Bhavana).

There is every hope of success for those who practise sincerely and in real earnest. It would indeed be a pity if one fails to take advantage of this unique opportunity of attaining higher spiritual qualities, as one is liable to reap the results of one's past unwholesome **kamma** at a moment one knows not when; (especially more is the pity, in the case of one, who though at the present existence is enjoying great fruits of good kamma accrued from previous existence, and who because of ignorance of kamma and its fruits, fails to take advantage and squanders away a unique opportunity difficult to come by).

To find rebirth as a human being during a Buddha sasana is a very rare opportunity indeed. Thus one should seize this rare opportunity with the greatest of urgency and strive diligently; for the realisation of supramundane wisdom, which leads to freedom from suffering.

To develop this wisdom it is essential to practise **Vipassana Bhavana** (Insight Knowledge). When the virtue of wisdom is duly developed, the necessary qualities of **morality and concentration** are also acquired.

UNDERSTANDING BODY AND MIND

(nama and rupa)

In the Abhidhamma, the elements of mentality (nama) and materiality (rupa) are classified as "states with object" and "states without object", respectively.

The element of mentality:

has an object, holds an object, knows an object,

While:

That of materiality:

does not have an object, does not hold an object, and does not know an object.

It will thus be seen that materiality has no faculty of knowing an object. A meditator also perceives in like manner that "materiality has no faculty of knowing." Thus the yogi developing Vipassana Bhavana observes matter and mind, the two groups making up the body, with a view to realising their true nature. By continuous and constant practice, the necessary concentration is gained and when it is sufficiently sharp, the ceaseless course of arising and passing away of matter and mind will be vividly perceived.

MATTER (rupa)

The body consists solely of two distinct groups: matter and mind. Together with earth, water, fire, air, there are altogether twenty-eight kinds of elements that make up the matter group. Body matter, or rupa, is like a doll made of clay or wheat and has no faculty of knowing, though most people tend to have the mistaken concept that material elements of a living body cognises.

In reality rupa changes form under physical conditions of heat and cold, and does not possess any faculty of knowing an object.

Like logs, pillars, bricks, stones and lumps of earth; they are a mass of inert matter and do not possess any faculty of knowing. It is the same with material elements in a living or dead body. They do not have the faculty of knowing.

MIND (nama) - TENDENCIES OF THE MIND

"Mind" as we know it is not a single, universal entity that exist on its own volition within us, as some may believe, but arises one after another in succession depending on conditions.

New units of mind (thought forms) are incessantly arising at every moment, and though appearing to arise simultaneously, are in reality appearing successively.

One arises, ceases and another arises, continuously following one another. In reality a single unit of mind arises at every moment

This reality of the mind can be perceived after considerable practice in meditation.

Mind, "imagining" or "planning", is clearly perceived and disappears as soon as a note is made, "imagining...imagining," or "planning...planning".

Minds arising, noting and disappearing appear like a string of beads.

The preceding Mind is not the following Mind. Each is separate. These facts are realised only through Vipassana meditation.

Mind has no substance or form; it is not easy to recognise as it is with Matter, which having form of body, head, hands legs is easily discernible.

Matter can be handled and shown, whilst Mind has no substance or form.

It is essential to contemplate the mind at each and every moment of its arising to realise and gain insight into its real nature. When meditation practice and contemplation is fairly advanced, the mind's approach to an object is clearly comprehended. It appears as if the mind is making a leap towards the object. In order to know the true manner of mind, Insight/Vipassana Meditation is thus prescribed.

With a mind restrained, the meditator will be freed from the bondage of the fear of Death. Thus it is important to note every phenomenon arising from the mind.

As soon as it is noted, mind disappears.

For instance, by noting once or twice "intending...intending" it is found that intention disappears at once.

As an example, during the practice: one may feel the need to swallow. This feeling should be noted;

"wanting...wanting" or "intention...intention", and on preparing to swallow, "preparing...preparing", and when swallowing, "swallowing...swallowing".

The reason for this is that there may be a persisting personal view that "wanting to swallow" is "I"; "swallowing" is also "I"; thus forming the deluded view that there is an "entity" that is swallowing.

In actual fact, "wanting to swallow" is a <u>mind state</u>, a <u>mental process</u> and <u>NOT "I"</u>, and the process of swallowing is accomplished by matter,

<u>a physical process</u> and NOT "I".

There exists only Mind and Matter at the time of swallowing.

By means of meditation, one will understand clearly the process of reality. So also in the case of:

a desire to spit, should be noted;

"wanting"

"bending", on bending the neck
(which should be done slowly),

"looking, seeing", on looking and "spitting" on spitting. Nama (Mind), comes into being depending on the arising of rupa (matter).

Nama inclines towards an object, and is wrongly viewed to be "thought" or "consciousness".

Nama arises depending on rupa as will be described following this.

Thus, depending on:

Eye (Object);

>>> Eye-Consciousness (Seeing) Arises;

Ear (Object);

>>> Ear-Consciousness (Hearing) Arises;

Nose (Object);

>>> Nose-Consciousness (Smelling) Arises;

Tongue (Object);

>>> Tongue-Consciousness (Taste) Arises;

Body (Object);

>>> Body-Consciousness (Tactile) Arises.

While sense of touch has a wide field of sensitivity throughout the entire body, inside and outside; the sense of sight, hearing, smell, or taste can on the other hand only come into being respectively in its own particular sphere. The eye, ear, nose and tongue, occupy a very small and limited space in the body.

These five senses are elements of mind.

In addition, there arises the mind-consciousness of thoughts, ideas, imaginations, and so forth depending on the mind-base. All of these six senses are elements of mind.

MIND KNOWS AN OBJECT

WHILE MATTER DOES NOT!

Vipassana (Development of Insight Knowledge) gets rid of the view that seeing belongs to or is "self", or "ego", or "a living entity", or "a person." Those who do not practise Vipassana hold the view that;

seeing is "I"

or

"I" am seeing

or

"I" know,
the delusion that there is a self.

In reality, as in the case of seeing, there are TWO separate things of eye and seeing: Neither is eye seeing, nor is seeing the eye, yet there cannot be an act of seeing without the eye. In fact seeing comes into being depending on eye.

Thus in "seeing" three distinctive groups of elements are involved:

THE VISUAL OBJECT

(the external matter to be seen)

EYE

(matter)

MIND

(realisation of seeing)

at every moment of seeing.

Hence, in seeing, three elements come together:

THE VISUAL OBJECT

which is external to the body,

THE EYE,

and the act of

'SEEING'.

Eye and visual objects are material elements and do not possess any ability of knowing, only "seeing", a mental element, knows the visual object and what it looks like.

Now it is clear that what we know as "seeing" is only the arising of this pair of separate elements.

Thus it is that, at the **moment of seeing**, the things that are in actual existence are the **eyes**, the **visual object**, both of which belong to the material group, and the "**seeing**" **consciousness**, which belongs to the mental group.

AS LONG AS ONE IS NOT FREE FROM THE DELUDED VIEW THAT THERE IS A SELF, ONE CANNOT EXPECT TO ESCAPE FROM THE RISK OF FALLING INTO THE MISERABLE EXISTENCE OF HELL, ANIMAL, OR Peta.

Though leading a happy life in the human or deva world by virtue of one's accumulated merits, one is liable to fall back into the state of miserable existence at a time when conditions cause one's demerits to arise.

For this reason the Buddha pointed out that it is essential to work for the total removal of the deluded concept of a self because: though it is the wish of everyone to be rid of old age, disease and death, yet one must inevitably submit to them.

Rebirth follows death, which in any state of existence does not depend on one's wish. Whatever one sows, one reaps the fruits thereof, may or may not be in this life-time, but surely in some existence when conditions ripen.

Life does not exist by itself, but in a complex of compounded phenomena. It depends upon conditions for its existence. It is not possible to avoid rebirth in the realms of hell, animal, or peta by the mere act of wishing. Rebirth takes place in any state of existence as the circumstances of one's own past and present deeds provide and so far as one does not understand the law of kamma, and work towards wholesome kamma, one has no choice as to one's future existence.

For these reasons, samsara (the rounds of rebirth) is very dreadful. Every effort should therefore be made to acquaint oneself with the miserable conditions of samsara and then to strive for an escape from this incessant cycle through the attainment of Nibbana.

If an escape from samsara is not possible for the present, an attempt should be made for an escape at least from rebirth in the realms of hell, animal or peta; in this case it is necessary to strive energetically for the total removal of the deluded view that there is a self, a view which is the root-cause of rebirth in those miserable states.

This deluded view can only be eradicated completely by the practice of constantly noting or observing every phenomenon arising from the Six Sense Doors, which in effect is the practice of **Vipassana** meditation. The deluded concept of a self will then be totally removed and security against the danger of rebirth in the realm of hell, or animal, or peta will be gained.

ARISING OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL PHENOMENA

To reiterate, the practice is to note mental and physical phenomena at the moment of their arising at the Six Sense Doors. For example, a note* should be made "seeing...seeing," on every act of seeing.

When an object is visually seen or consciousness of seeing is apparent, a note must be made of seeing it, "seeing... seeing". If not, basing on this act of seeing, or any consciousness of knowing through any of the Six Sense Doors, there will arise the deluded view of an 'entity' "seeing" or "hearing". This will be deludedly viewed that the phenomenon "seeing" or "hearing" was by a person or belonging to a person or that there is a permanent entity that sees or hears, giving rise to a conceptual sense of permanence, happiness and a self, which will arouse attachment and craving, a defiling state of mind.

This defiling state of mind will in turn prompt deeds, and the deeds will cause rebirth to a new existence. Thus the process of Dependent Origination operates and the whole vicious cycle of **samsara** revolves incessantly. To abort this process, it is necessary to note phenomena arising from the Six Sense Doors.

Similarly, in the case of hearing, there are only the two distinct groups of matter and mind. The sense of hearing arises depending on ear. While ear and sound are two elements of matter, "hearing" consciousness is an element of mind. To perceive the reality of this pair of matter and mind, a note should be made, "hearing...hearing" on every occasion of hearing. So also it should be noted "smelling...smelling" on every occasion of smelling, and "knowing...knowing" on every occasion of knowing a taste.

Similarly, in the sensation of touch on any part of the body; there are the material nerve tissues, which receive the impressions of touch. Every kind of touch, either agreeable or disagreeable, usually comes in contact with these nerve tissues causing to arise a touch consciousness which feels or knows the touch on each occasion. Thus,

IT WILL BE SEEN THAT AT
EVERY INSTANT OF TOUCHING
THERE ARE
TWO ELEMENTS
OF MATTER,

SENSE-ORGAN AND IMPRESSION OF TOUCH,

AND ONE ELEMENT OF MIND. KNOWING OF TOUCH.

In order to know these things in its reality, at every time of touching,

"touching...touching" has to be noted.

This merely refers to the common form of sensation of touch. There are other forms which accompany painful or disagreeable sensations, such as, to feel stiff or tired in the body or limbs, to feel hot, to feel pain, to feel numb, to feel ache, and other body feelings. Because feeling predominates in these cases, it should be noted as;

"feeling hot" "feeling tired" "painful"

or

others as they arise.

It may also be mentioned that there are constantly arising various sensations of touch in the hands and legs, and other tactile sensations on each occasion of bending, stretching, or moving. Due to mind wanting to move, stretch or bend, the material activity of moving, stretching or bending, and so on, arises consecutively.

It may not be possible to notice each and everyone of these incidents for the present, especially so in the case of a new meditator. They can only be noticed after some time, on improvement of practice.

ALL ACTIVITIES IN MOVEMENTS AND IN CHANGING, ARE DONE BY THE MIND.

When the mind originates an intention to bend; there arises a series of inward movements of hand or leg; when the mind intends to stretch or move; there arises a series of outward movements or movements to and from respectively.

They disappear or are lost soon after they arise and at the very moment of arising. (One will notice these incidents later on.)

In every kind of activity, such as bending or stretching, there arises foremost in the mind, A SERIES OF INTENDING MINDS, on account of which there will occur in the hands and legs; A SERIES OF MATERIAL ACTIVITIES, such as stiffening, hardening, bending, stretching, moving to and fro.

These activities conjoin with other material elements, such as nerve tissues, and on every occasion of contact between material activities and sensitive qualities, there arises touch consciousness, which feels or knows the sensation of touch. It is, therefore, clear that material activities are the predominating factors in these cases.

IT IS NECESSARY TO BE AWARE OF AND TO NOTE THESE PREDOMINATING FACTORS AS ARISING ON ITS OWN, DEPENDENT ON CONDITIONS.

If not, there will arise the wrong view that there is this:

"I"
who originates such activities,
or that
"I"
am bending,
"I"
am stretching, or
"My"
hands,
"My"
legs.

THIS PRACTICE OF NOTING:
"BENDING", "STRETCHING", "MOVING",
IS FOR THE PURPOSE
OF
REMOVING SUCH WRONG VIEWS.

As regards "thoughts", "imaginations", etc., it may be mentioned that depending on mind-base, there arise a series of mental activities or phenomena, such as thinking, imagining, etc., or to speak in a general sense, a series of mental activities arises depending on this body.

In reality each arising activity or phenomenon is a composition of matter and mind, mind-base or body matter; while thinking, imagining, are mind. In order to be able to notice matter and mind clearly, a note must be made of each and every mental and physical phenomenon as they arise. While contemplating during meditation, the meditator will realise that his mind tends to wander far and wide and visit places that he has been before. This fact is apparent only upon reflection.

After having carried out the practice in the manner indicated above for a time, there will be improvement in concentration. One will notice that the mind no longer wanders about but remains fixed on the object to which it is directed. At the same time the power of noting has considerably developed.

ON EVERY OCCASION OF NOTING ONE REALISES THAT THERE ARE ONLY THE TWIN PROCESSES OF

MATTER AND MIND (Rupa and Nama).

A SET OF OBJECT AND MIND, THE MIND NOTING THE OBJECT; MIND COMES INTO EXISTENCE.

INSIGHT INTO THE THREE CHARACTERISTICS

On repeated and continuous contemplation, one realises that nothing remains permanent and that: everything is in a state of flux.

New things constantly arise; each noting passes away immediately after arising; immediately another arises, which is again noted and which then passes away.

Thus the process of arising and passing away goes on, clearly showing that nothing is permanent. One is therefore convinced that: "things are not permanent".

They arise and pass away at every instance of noting. This is insight into impermanency. One is also convinced that arising and passing away are not desirable, as one usually experiences many painful sensations in the body, such as tiredness, heat, aches and pains.

At the time of noting these sensations, one generally feels that: this body is a mass of suffering; this is insight into suffering: Then at every time of noting it is realised that matter and mind arise according to their respective nature and conditioning. NOT according to one's wish!

One is therefore convinced that; they are not governable and they are not persons or living entities. This is insight into the absence of a self. On having fully acquired this knowledge; impermanence, suffering and absence of a "self", the maturity of Spiritual Knowledge of the Path and its Fruition, takes place and the first stage of realisation of Nibbana is won.

By winning the realisation of **Nibbana** in the first stage, one is freed from the rounds of rebirth in the unhappy life of lower existence. Everyone should, therefore, Endeavour to attain the first stage as a minimum measure.

It has already been explained that: the practice in **Vipassana** Meditation is to:

note, **observe** and to **contemplate** the successive arising of phenomena at the Six Sense Doors.

THESE PHENOMENA ARISE VERY SWIFTLY!

Seeing appears to arise at the time of hearing; hearing appears to arise at the time of seeing; it appears that both seeing and hearing arise simultaneously.

It appears that three or four phenomena of seeing, hearing, thinking, imagining arise simultaneously. It is not possible to determine the sequence of their arising due to their rapidity of arising.

THE REALITY IS THAT NEITHER seeing arises at the time of hearing NOR hearing arises at the time of seeing. THEY ARISE individually and successively, one following the other.

A meditator who has just begun the practice and who has not sufficiently developed Mindfulness, Concentration and Spiritual Knowledge will not, however, be in a position to observe all these phenomena as they arise. There is no immediate necessity to observe each and every phenomenon that arises, until practice improves.

However, a few prominent phenomena should be noted as far as is possible for the present.

Seeing or hearing arises only when due attention is given.

If one does not pay heed to any sight or sound, one may meditate without noting seeing or hearing.

Smelling arises rarely.

Experience of taste arises only at the time of eating.

In cases of seeing, hearing, smelling and tasting, meditators note them;

as they arise.

However, body impressions are always present. They are usually evident quite distinctly all the time. During the time that one is sitting, the body impressions of stiffness or the sensation of hardness in this position are distinctly felt. Attention should therefore be fixed on the sitting posture and a note made;

"sitting...sitting."

Sitting is an erect posture of the body consisting of a series of physical activities which are induced by the consciousness consisting of a series of mental activities. It is just like the case of an inflated rubber ball which maintains its round shape through the resistance of the air inside it: so is the posture of sitting, in which the body is kept in an erect posture. A good deal of energy will be required to pull up and maintain in erect position such a heavy load as the body. People generally assume that the body is lifted and kept in position by means of sinews. This assumption is correct only in the sense that sinews, blood, flesh and bones are also material elements.

The element of stiffening which maintains the body in an erect posture belongs to the material group and arises in the sinews, flesh, blood, etc. throughout the body similar to the air in a rubber ball. This element of stiffening is the air element. The body is kept in the erect position by the presence of the air element in the form of stiffening, which is continually coming into existence.

At the time of heavy drowsiness one may drop flat, because the supply of new material (air) to maintain stiffening is reduced. The state of mind in heavy drowsiness or sleep is unconsciousness. During the course of unconsciousness or sleep, mental activities are absent, and for this reason the body lies flat during sleep or heavy drowsiness.

During waking hours strong and active mental activities are continuously arising, and because of these there arises a series of air elements, stiffening the form. In order to realise these phenomena, it is essential to note attentively "sitting...sitting".

This does not necessarily mean that the body impressions of stiffening should be particularly searched and noted. Attention need only be fixed on the whole form of sitting posture, that is, the lower portion in a bending circular form and the upper portion in an erect posture. It will be found that the exercise of observing a single object of sitting posture is simple and does not require much effort. In the circumstances vigour is less and concentration is in excess, and one generally feels lazy to carry on the noting "sitting...sitting," repeatedly for a considerable time.

Laziness (stupor) generally occurs when there is excess of concentration and less of vigour.

This gives rise to a state of torpor. More vigour should be exerted, and for this purpose the number of notings should be increased. After noting "sitting," attention should be directed to a spot in the body where the sense of touch is felt and a note made; "touching."

Any spot in the leg or hand or hip where a sense of touch is distinctly felt will serve the purpose.

For example, after noting the sitting posture of the body as "sitting," the spot where the sense of touch is felt should be noted as "touching."

The noting should thus be repeated on these two objects of sitting posture and the place of touching alternately, thus:

"sitting... touching; sitting... touching; sitting... touching."

The practice of **Vipassana** is the contemplation of physical and mental phenomena arising.

Of the two, the mental group is subtle and less prominent whilst

the material group is coarse and more prominent.

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa



CHAPTER II: PRACTICAL EXERCISES BASIC EXERCISE I 1. SITTING MEDITATION

BASIC INSTRUCTIONS

To begin training, pick a quiet and peaceful place. Then settle down in the most comfortable posture that will enable you to meditate for some time.

Sit with the legs crossed to maintain a good balance. You might be more comfortable if they are not inter-locked but evenly placed on the ground, without pressing one against the other. If you find that sitting on the floor is not comfortable, sit on a cushion or obtain a more comfortable way of sitting. If this still does not work, sit on a chair, with no back support though. Maintain a straight back, looking straight ahead. Whatever position you select, it must enable you to sit comfortably for a considerable period.

When meditating on rising and falling, the meditator should keep his attention on the abdomen. He will be able to identify the upward movement (expansion) of the abdomen when breathing in, and the downward movement (contraction) when breathing out. Note:

"rising ...rising" for upward movements and "falling...falling" for downward movements.

If these movements are not clearly noticed, it is in order to feel the movements with the hands.

The meditator should not alter the natural tempo of his breathing. Neither should he slow down his breathing by the retention of his breath, nor quicken it by deep breathing. By changing the natural flow of his breathing he will soon tire himself. He must keep to the natural breathing, and proceed;

with the noting of "rising" and "falling".

On identifying the upward movement note: "rising ...rising"

and on the downward movement, "falling...falling".

The Labelling of these Terms or Names
Need Not be Done Verbally,
It is More Important to
Know the Actual State of the Object than to Know it by the
Term or Name.

It is therefore essential that the meditator makes every effort to be mindful of the movement of the rising of the abdomen, from the beginning till the end of the in-breath, and that of the falling of the abdomen, from the start to the finish of the outbreath, as if these movements were actually seen by the eyes.

As soon as rising occurs, there should be;

THE KNOWING MIND FIRMLY locked onto THE MOVEMENTS

The movement of rising as it arises
and
The mind knowing it
must come together
on every occasion, similar to
a pebble striking a wall.
They must impact at the same point.
Similarly;
The movement of falling as it falls
and
The mind knowing it
Must come together
On every occasion.

The meditator should carry on the exercise of continuously noting these two movements of:

"rising...rising"
"falling...falling".

Only interrupting to note mental activities as they arise. Thus:

NOTE EVERY MENTAL ACTIVITY AS IT OCCURS

For instance, it should be noted:
"thinking...thinking"
at the moment of thinking,
and

"reflecting... planning... knowing... attending...
rejoicing... feeling lazy... feeling happy...disgust...etc.",
as the case may be on the occurrence of each mental activity.

Meditating and noting mental activities as they arise is **Mindfulness of the Mind.**

Interrupt your concentration on the abdomen by reflecting on the process of breathing,

- how the air when inhaled sets up pressure that pushes from the inside. You must try to feel and know or realise this pushing up of the air from the inside and not so much on the abdomen, as the abdomen is only a label. This pushing outward of air from inside is the <u>real thing</u> that is happening when you are breathing in;
- the out flowing of the air on the out breathe and the abdomen contracting as the air gradually falls away.

Thus you must be mindful of these two movements that take place

When inhaling, the abdomen extends gradually, note; "rising... rising" When exhaling, the already extended abdomen gradually falls back into place, note;

"falling...falling."

At the same time that you are mindful of these two

movements, you will concentrate more on:

the <u>gradual force of air</u> extending the abdomen, and <u>the gradual contraction of the abdomen</u> when breathing out.

If these two points of mindfulness
"rising...rising"
"falling... falling"
are not effective in gaining concentration
add another and note;

"rising... rising falling... falling touching... touching"

In noting touching, you should <u>not</u> note the shape of the limbs or objects that are touching each other, but concentrate on the hardness at the point of contact and note; "touching... touching, rising... rising, falling... falling"

If concentration is still difficult with three notings, you may note the sitting position as well;

"rising...rising falling...falling sitting...sitting touching...touching". When you are sitting, you will realise the fact that the upper part of the body is erect and taut. You must not bring up the shape of the head, body, hands or legs, but you must be aware that the body is taut with the force of air that has pushed you up into the sitting position and the hard feeling, at the point of contact that you have when you are sitting.

With noting four mental phenomena: "rising... falling... sitting ... touching", your mind will become calm.

When your mind is calm and peaceful, your concentration will become keener and "INSIGHT" will arise. If your noting of; "rising... falling... sitting... touching", is effective in gaining concentration, you may meditate concentrating on them, however reverting to any notings of two, three or four phenomena is quite in order. From this exercise you learn the actual manner of noting the upward and downward movements of the abdomen.

You are not concerned with the form of the abdomen, hence <u>do not dwell</u> on the form of the abdomen. What you actually need to observe is the sensation of pressure on the body caused by the rhythmic movement of the abdomen as you breathe.

For the beginner it is a very effective method of developing the faculties of attention, concentration of mind and Insight in meditation. As practice progresses, the manner of the movements will be clearer.

The ability to know each successive occurrence of the mental and physical processes at each of the Six Sense Doors is acquired only when Insight Meditation is fully developed.

A beginner, whose attentiveness and power of concentration are still weak, may find it difficult to keep the mind on each successive rising and falling movement as it occurs. In view of this difficulty, a thought may arise; "I just don't know how to keep my mind on each of these movements." In which case bear in mind that this is a learning process.

The rising and falling movements of the abdomen are always present and therefore there is no need to look for them and it is quite easy for a beginner to keep his or her mind on these two simple movements. Continue with this exercise in full awareness of the abdomen's rising and falling movements.

CHANGING POSITIONS DURING SITTING

It may be that after sitting for a considerable time there will arise in the body, unpleasant feelings of stiffness, warmth, pain and so forth. These sensations should be noted as they arise. Mind should be fixed on the spot and a note made, thus:

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"stiffness...stiffness", on feeling stiff,
"warm...warm", on feeling warm,
"painful...painful", on feeling pain,
"prickly...prickly", on feeling a prickly sensation
And "tired...tired", on feeling tired.
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These unpleasant feelings are Feelings of Pain and the meditation on these feelings is Insight into Feeling.

Owing to the lack of Wisdom and Knowledge of Insight into Feeling, there will prevail a wrong view of one's personality or self, that these feelings belong to an entity, a body or a self as:

- "I" am feeling stiff,
- "I" am feeling hot,
- "I" am feeling painful,
- "I" was feeling well formerly but now
- "I" feel uncomfortable.

In reality, feelings arise owing to impressions on the body. Like the light of an electric bulb which continues to burn on the continuous supply of energy, so is the case of feelings, which arise anew on every occasion of coming into contact with impressions.

It is essential to understand these feelings clearly. When noting "stiff... stiff, hot...hot, painful...painful", the meditator may feel that such disagreeable feelings appear to grow stronger.

Due to such uncomfortable feelings, he may notice the arising of a desire to change his posture. This mind "desiring to change" should be noted "desiring...desiring". Then a return should be made to the feeling and noting "stiff... stiff", or "hot...hot", and so forth. If noting is continued with great patience in this manner, such unpleasant feelings will pass away.

PATIENCE LEADS TO NIBBANA

This is especially true in meditation than anything else. If a meditator cannot bear unpleasant feelings with patience and frequently changes posture in the course of his meditation, he cannot gain concentration. Without concentration, Spiritual Knowledge of Insight (Vipassana-nana), will not be possible. Without this, the attainment of Path, Fruition and Nibbana cannot be won.

CULTIVATION OF PATIENCE IS IMPERATIVE IN MEDITATION AND BEARING UP WITH UNPLEASANT FEELINGS IS ESSENTIAL.

A meditator should not change his posture immediately when unpleasant sensations arise, but must proceed with noting them as "stiff...stiff; hot...hot", and so on. Such normal painful sensations will ordinarily subside, and when concentration is strong and well developed, it will be found that even great pain will fade away when they are being noted with patience. On the fading away of suffering or pain, the usual exercise should be reverted to and noting carried out;

"rising...rising, falling... falling".

Only in the event that pain or unpleasant feelings do not subside in spite of patient and prolonged noting, should the meditator change his position.

When concentration is not strong enough pain will remain. In these circumstances there will often arise a mind wanting to change the sitting position, and this mind should be noted; "wanting...wanting," after which continue to note "lifting...lifting" lifting the hand; "moving...moving", on moving it forward.

The actions of changing position should be carried out slowly and mindfully, and these movements should be noted:

"lifting...lifting
moving...moving
touching... touching"
in the consecutive order of their movements.

If the body sways, a note should be made as "swaying...swaying"
on raising the leg as "raising...raising"
on moving as "moving...moving"
on putting down as "putting...putting".

If at any time there is no further movement to note, revert to noting the primary object of the abdomen "rising...rising, falling...falling".

There should be no stop or break in between notings.

The preceding noting and the one following should be continuous.

Similarly;
the preceding concentration and the one following should be continuous,
the preceding spiritual knowledge (nana) and the one following should be continuous.

In this way the gradual development, by stages, of Mindfulness, Concentration and Spiritual Knowledge takes place, and depending on their full development the final stage of Spiritual Knowledge of the Path will be attained.

The practice of **Vipassana** Meditation is similar to building a fire by rubbing two dry sticks together. As the sticks become hotter, due to the increasing friction, increasing vigorous effort will be needed. Only then will fire be produced. The essential ingredient is a sustained vigorous action without break. Similarly, a meditator should exert continuous and incessant effort without any break in between notings, thus ensuring continuity of concentration and gaining success in his meditation.

While thus occupied with his usual exercise, the meditator may feel an itch. He should then fix his mind on the spot and note; "itching...itching". Itch is an unpleasant sensation. As soon as it is felt there arises a mind wanting to rub or scratch. This should be noted; "wanting...wanting", after which no rubbing or scratching should be attempted as yet, but a note of "itching...itching", be made.

While occupied with meditation and noting in this manner, itching may disappear in most cases, in which case meditator should continue to note "rising...rising, falling...falling".

If on the other hand it is found that the itch does not disappear but it is necessary to rub or scratch; the contemplation of the process of rubbing or scratching should be carried out by noting "wanting... wanting". Continue noting:

- "raising...raising", on raising the hand,
- "moving...moving", on moving the hand,
- "touching...touching", when the hand touches the spot,
- "rubbing...rubbing", or
- "scratching...scratching", when rubbing or scratching,
- "withdrawing...withdrawing", on withdrawing the hand,
- "touching...touching", when the hand touches the body, and then afterwards meditation should be reverted to the usual exercise of noting; "rising...rising, falling...falling".

In every case of changing sitting positions during meditation, such actions should be carried out slowly and carefully, noting each action as it arises.

SIMULATED BEHAVIOUR AS A SICK PERSON

During the course of practice it is most appropriate if a meditator acts like a weak, sickly person; feeble and slow in all his activities. Perhaps the case of a person suffering from lumbago would be a more fitting example here. The patient must be cautious and move slowly to avoid pain. In like manner a meditator should slow down his actions.

Having lived a different lifestyle prior to his training, a meditator is now endeavouring to develop mindfulness, concentration and spiritual knowledge, alien to his normal living conditions. As these developing spiritual qualities have not matured as yet; they are not commensurate with the mundane physical and mental processes inherent in the meditator since birth.

It is therefore imperative to check and retard mental and body processes to commensurate with the maturity of mindfulness, concentration and spiritual knowledge. It is therefore instructed that slow motion exercises be carried out at all times.

AS A BLIND PERSON

Further, a meditator should imitate a blind person throughout the course of training. A mentally unrestrained person will not be dignified as he is usually inattentive. He does not possess a steady and calm manner, unlike a blind person, who is mindful, calm and composed and though spoken to, seldom turns around unmindfully. This composed manner is worthy of imitation.

A meditator should act in the same manner while meditating. He should not look around aimlessly and his mind must be concentrated solely on the object of meditation;

mindfully noting:
"...rising...
...falling..."

He should not react to external occurrences, but instead should note them as "seeing...seeing" or "knowing...knowing", and continue noting, "rising... falling".

A meditator should have a high regard for the exercise of slowing down his actions, and carry it out as though he were genuinely blind.

AS A DEAF PERSON

It is also necessary for a meditator to behave like a deaf person too. Ordinarily, a person on hearing a sound turns round and looks toward the direction of the sound. Or he turns round towards the person who speaks to him and makes a reply. He may not behave in a mindful manner. While on the other hand, a deaf person behaves in a composed manner and seldom takes heed of any sound or talk because he does not hear them.

Similarly a meditator's conduct should be of like manner; neither taking heed nor listening to any talk. If he happens to hear any sound or talk he should at once make a note "hearing...hearing", and then return to the usual exercise of noting "rising... falling".

He should proceed with his meditation intently just as if deaf. It should be remembered that practising meditation intently is the sole concern of a meditator; other things seen or heard are not his concern. He should not take heed of them even though they may appear to be strange or curious. When he sees any sights he must ignore them as also in the case of voices or sounds, he must ignore them. In the case of body actions he must act slowly and feebly as if sickly and weak.

2. WALKING MEDITATION **BASIC INSTRUCTIONS**

The act of pulling up the body to the standing position, in preparation for walking meditation, should be carried out slowly.

On coming to an erect position this should be noted "standing...standing", if he happens to look around, this should be noted "looking...seeing", and on walking, each step should be noted "right step... left step" or "walking... walking".

In each step attention should be fixed on the movement from the point of lifting the leg to the point of putting it down. While walking in quick steps or taking a long walk, it should be sufficient that each section of each step should be noted;

"right step... left step" or "walking...walking".

However, in the case of taking a slow walk, each step may be divided into three sections of:

lifting... pushing forward...putting down.

In the beginning of the exercise a note should be made on two sections in each step "lifting...lifting", by fixing the attention on the upward movement of the leg from the beginning to the end, and "putting...putting", on the downward movement from the beginning to the end.

Here it may be mentioned that, at the time of noting "putting… putting", when the leg is put down in the first step, the other leg happens usually to lift up to begin the next step. This should not be allowed to happen.

THE NEXT STEP SHOULD BEGIN ONLY AFTER THE COMPLETE ENDING OF THE FIRST STEP.

After two or three days this exercise would be easy and a meditator should carry out the exercise of noting each step in three sections;

"lifting...lifting, pushing...pushing, putting...putting."

For the present a meditator should start the exercise by noting;

"right step...left step, right step...left step,

"walking...walking"

while walking quickly,

and by noting
"lifting...lifting, putting...putting"
while walking slowly.

In the course of his walk the feeling may arise of wanting to sit down. He should note:

THE INTENTION "intention"

if he then happens to look up, "looking, seeing...looking, seeing"

on walking to the place to sit, "lifting...lifting, putting...putting",

on stopping "stopping...stopping",

on turning "turning ",

when he feels wanting to sit "wanting...wanting".

In the act of sitting there occurs a heaviness in the body and also a downward pull. Attention should be fixed on these factors and a note made, "sitting...sitting".

After having sat down there would be movements of bringing the hands and legs into position. These actions as they arise should be appropriately noted; "moving... bending... stretching..." and so forth.

If there is a lull in noting, and if sitting quietly he should revert to the usual exercise of noting "rising...rising, falling...falling" of the abdominal movements.

During meditation, feelings of pain, tiredness or warmth should be noted, and then revert to the usual exercise of noting;

"rising...rising....
....falling...falling...."

If he feels sleepy he should note "sleepy...sleepy", and proceed with the noting of all acts of preparing for lying down and bringing into position the hands and legs;

"raising...raising"
"pressing...pressing"
"moving...moving"
"supporting...supporting"
"swaying...swaying"
when the body sways
"stretching...stretching"
when the legs stretch
"lying...lying"
when the body drops and lies flat.

These trifling acts in lying down are also important and they should not be neglected. There is every possibility of attaining Enlightenment during this limited time. On the full development of concentration and Spiritual Knowledge, Enlightenment is attainable during a moment of bending or stretching.

EVERY CARE IS THEREFORE NEEDED TO CARRY ON THE PRACTICE OF MEDITATION WITHOUT RELAXATION OR OMISSION.

METHODS OF WALKING MEDITATION

The following are the methods of noting Walking Meditation. As mentioned earlier, each step is observed closely and carefully as one, two, three or six sequences of movement.

THE FIRST METHOD:

Note the step as one sequence of movement;

"left foot forward...right foot forward,

left foot forward...right foot forward..."

THE SECOND METHOD:

note the steps as two sequences of movement;

"lifting...lifting,

dropping...dropping..."

THE THIRD METHOD:

note the steps as three sequences of movement;

"lifting...lifting,

pushing...pushing,

dropping...dropping..."

of the one foot, and

"lifting...lifting,

pushing...pushing,

dropping...dropping..."

of the other foot.

In all cases, meditator should:

DIRECT THE MIND TO BE TOTALLY AWARE AND NOTE THE FORWARD MOVEMENT OF THE STEP AND

NOT ON THE IMAGE OF THE FOOT.

What must be realised is the awareness of the element of motion that is going up gradually into the air when lifting the foot.

Knowing that it goes up and being aware of it is paramattha, the real thing that is happening at the moment i.e.

MENTAL and BODY process; the mind knowing the physical lifting and dropping.

When lifting the foot, meditator must attentively note the gradual upward movement of the foot. Then when the foot is being pushed forward, meditator must be aware of the foot moving forward slowly and then when dropping the foot, meditator must be aware of the foot falling or dropping down slowly lower and lower.

All these sequences of movement must be keenly observed and watched attentively so that when the foot is being lifted slowly inch by inch, meditator will realise that it gets lighter and lighter as it is being lifted. When the foot is being pushed forward meditator will notice and observe the gradual forward movement then when dropping or putting down the foot, meditator will experience the heaviness of the foot descending lower and lower to the floor.

WHEN MEDITATOR HAS THIS AWARENESS IN MIND IT IS THE BEGINNING OF INSIGHT KNOWLEDGE.

Lightness is brought upon by; the heat element, element of warmth and air element of motion or movement.

Heaviness is caused by earth, element of toughness or hardness and water, element of liquidity.

THE KNOWLEDGE OR AWARENESS OF SUCH
MENTAL AND PHYSICAL PHENOMENA
IS THE BEGINNING OF GAINING
PENETRATIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE INTRINSIC NATURE
OF
MENTAL AND BODY PROCESSES AS IT REALLY IS

THE FOURTH METHOD:

observe each step as six sequences of movement; beginning to lift...

...LIFTING

beginning to push...

...PUSHING

beginning to drop...

...DROPPING.

When the foot is being lifted, the heel is lifted first. Only after that are the toes raised and lifted when the leg is lifted.

When the foot is being pushed forward meditator must know that the movement of the foot is going forward and not backward. When dropping the foot, the forward movement is checked a bit, and when the meditator begins to put the foot down it drops downwards slowly and finally the foot touches the ground or floor and the foot is dropped.

ANOTHER METHOD: observe each step as six sequences of movement;

intending to lift,
LIFTING
intending to push,
PUSHING
intending to drop,
DROPPING.

While meditating the meditator must be mindful of mental and physical phenomena at the instant of their arising.

Meditator can advance to noting each step as six sequences of movement;

LIFTING.....

RAISING.....

PUSHING.....

DROPPING.....

TOUCHING.....

PRESSING

When lifting the foot, be aware of the heel lifting itself, note; "lifting">>>>lifting"

The toes will raise themselves upwards, note; "raising">>>> raising"

Next push your foot forward, note; "pushing">>>>pushing"

After pushing the foot forward, gradually drop it and carefully observe the foot coming down slowly to the floor, note; "dropping">>>>>dropping"

As it gradually comes down, know and feel the touching of the foot on the floor or ground, note;

"touching>>> >>touching"

Finally in order to lift the other foot, pressure will be exerted on this foot, note;

"pressing>>> >>pressing"

3. MEDITATING WHILE PERFORMING DAILY ACTIVITIES.

In intensive meditation,

CONTINUOUS MINDFULNESS

should be incorporated into the daily activities as an uninterrupted practice of Vipassana Meditation.

In the daily activities there are not many opportunities for sitting or walking meditation. However at such busy times, being mindful of the daily tasks or activities, will go a long way in the uninterrupted practice of **Vipassana** meditation. Daily activities such as:

- opening and closing doors, making beds,
- folding the sheets,
- changing clothes and washing them,
- arranging or preparing meals,
- eating,
- drinking and
- other regular daily activities should be mindfully performed.

Note all other activities, such as preparing to eat: seeing food on the table "seeing...seeing" stretching to take the food "stretching... stretching" touching the food "touching...touching" preparing food "preparing...preparing" taking the food "taking...taking" bending the head "bending...bending" opening the mouth "opening...opening" putting the food in "putting...putting" raising the head "raising...raising"

chewing "chewing...chewing" knowing the tastes "knowing...knowing", swallowing "swallowing...swallowing".

Those earnest and diligent meditators who are new in the practice will not find it easy to be aware of all movements at the beginning. Some movements may be missed, but meditators should not be discouraged if this happens. Later when Knowledge or Mindfulness becomes stronger and advanced, the penetrative Insight Knowledge will enable mindfulness of every phenomena arising.

When practising mindfulness on daily activities, meditators should be keenly aware of the activities that are the most prominent. For example;

if stretching of the hands is the most distinctive, note,

"stretching...stretching"

if bending the head is more prominent, note,

"bending...bending"

if chewing is more prominent, note,

"chewing...chewing".

Meditator must remember to be mindful of only one prominent movement at any one moment. If the mind which is focussed on that one distinctive movement becomes really concentrated then other movements should be noted as they arise, until contemplation becomes deep and advanced leading to insight.

Mahasi Sayadaw has said that chewing is the most outstanding and distinct movement. It is only the lower jaw that is working when we note "chewing". If meditators are aware of this lower jaw movement they will be able to contemplate on the chewing movement easily and well.

When the intention to sit appears foremost in the mind, meditator should note; "intending to sit...intending to sit", and when seated, note; "sitting...sitting".

A Meditator,

in the act of sitting must gradually and slowly lower the body onto the chair, at the same time realising the HEAVINESS of the body.

He should reflect on the mental and body processes. When the intention to stand comes to mind, meditator should note; "intending to stand up…intending to stand up".

The mind which desires to get up is caused by the element of motion vayo, which pushes the body up, note; "filling up energy...filling up energy", "supporting...supporting".

When energy is sufficient, meditator will gradually move upward with the hands supporting the body and meditator eventually stands, note "standing...standing".

He must realise and reflect on the slow and gradual upward movement. Watch it precisely, closely and well. He must know and observe closely and enthusiastically the slow gradual motion involved in standing up, as this is ultimate reality.

A Meditator knows that: when standing, the body become light and when sitting, the body becomes heavy.

Rising makes the body light and that is a combination of: heat or temperature and motion or air.

Sitting makes the body heavy and that is earth or hardness and water or cohesiveness.

Physical actions or movements are impermanent; the knowledge of mindfulness is impermanent; thus physical (rupa) and mental (nama) phenomena are impermanent.

Whatever arises is subject to passing away THIS IS IMPERMANENCE (anicca).

The arising and passing away or birth and decay of mental and physical phenomena is quick and troublesome, THIS IS SUFFERING (dukkha).

Nothing within us can protect us or stop this dukkha from arising or disappearing THIS IS NON-SELF (anatta)

MINDFULNESS OF SLEEP

Though it is late continue meditating. A dedicated yogi must be prepared to face the risk of spending many nights without sleep. The scriptures are emphatic on the necessity of developing the qualities of energetic vigour in the practice of meditation.

In the hard struggle
one may be reduced to a mere skeleton
of
skin, bone and sinew.
Flesh and blood wither and dry up,
but one should not give up trying
so long as one has not attained whatever is attainable
by perseverance, energy and endeavour.

These instructions should be adhered to with great determination. It may be possible to keep awake if concentration is strong enough to beat off the sleep but one will fall asleep if sleep gets an upper hand.

When one feels sleepy one should make a note; "sleepy...sleepy", when the eyelids are drooping; "drooping...drooping", and so on. After meditating in the manner indicated, one may be able to shake off the sleepiness and feel fresh again. This feeling should be noted; "feeling fresh...feeling fresh", after which revert to the usual noting; "rising...rising, falling... falling".

However, in spite of such determination one may still be unable to keep awake. A beginner should therefore try to keep himself mostly in the postures of sitting and walking, as in a lying posture it is easier to fall asleep.

At night at the instance of going to bed a meditator should lie down mindfully and proceed with the contemplation of "rising" and "falling", before falling asleep. In this position he may perhaps fall into relaxing sleep at which time it is not possible to carry on with meditation.

THREE OR FOUR HOURS SLEEP IS SUFFICIENT FOR A MEDITATOR.

When sleepy, make a note, "sleepy". After you have gained sufficient concentration, you will be able to overcome drowsiness and you will feel refreshed as a result. Meditate on the basic object again. If you are unable to overcome the drowsy feeling, you must continue noting drowsiness until you fall asleep. The state of sleep is the continuity of sub-consciousness. It is similar to the first state of rebirth consciousness and the last state of consciousness at the moment of death. This state of consciousness is feeble and therefore, unable to be aware of an object.

When you awake, the continuity of sub-consciousness arises between moments of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching and thinking. Because these phenomena are of brief duration they are usually not clear and therefore not noticeable. Continuity of sub-consciousness remains during sleep; a fact which becomes obvious when you wake up; for it is in the state of wakefulness that thoughts and sense objects become clear.

Meditation should start the moment you are wake. a beginner may not be able to meditate at the very first moment of wakefulness, but a start should be made once you are ready. For example, if on awakening you are reflecting, you should be aware of this and begin your meditation by noting; "reflecting; reflecting".

Then proceed with the noting of rising and falling, on getting up from the bed, mindfulness should be directed to every detail of the body's activity. Each movement of the hands, legs and rump must be performed in complete awareness.

Are you thinking of the time of day when awakening?

If so, note "thinking...thinking".

Do you intend to get out of bed?

If so, note "intending...intending".

If you are preparing to move the body into position for rising, note "preparing...preparing".

As you slowly rise, "rising...rising".

Should you remain sitting for any length of time, revert to noting the abdominal movements, "rising...rising, falling...falling".

As soon as one awakes and prepares to leave the bed, there may be body movements in turning this side or that side, and in moving the hands and legs and so forth. These actions should be noted in their order of occurrence.

Or if one becomes aware of the mind leading to various body movements one should start meditation by noting the mind in the first place. Or if one becomes aware firstly of the painful sensations one should start by noting the painful sensations and then proceed with body movements. If one stays quietly without moving, attend to the exercise of noting, "rising...rising, falling...falling".

If one intends to get up one should note "intending...intending",

and then proceed with the noting of all actions successively in bringing the legs and hands into position in readiness to getting up.

Note; "raising...raising", on raising the body,
"sitting...sitting", when the body is erect and
in a sitting position,
and if there are any other actions of bringing legs and hands
into position these actions should also be noted. If there are no
phenomena arising revert to the usual exercise of noting,
"rising...rising, falling... falling".

4. LYING DOWN INSTRUCTIONS

In the act of lying down, noting should be carried out with due care. When one feels sleepy and wants to lie down, note: "sleepy...sleepy, wanting...wanting", on raising the hand ... "raising...raising" on stretching "stretching...stretching" on touching "touching...touching" on pressing "pressing...pressing" and on lying down.... "lying...lying".

The action of lying down (as in all action) should be carried out very slowly. On touching the pillow, note; "touching…touching". There are many places of touch all over the body but each spot only needs to be noted at one time. In the lying position there are many body movements for bringing the legs and hands into position also. These movements should be noted carefully;

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"raising...raising"
"stretching...stretching"
"bending...bending"
"moving...moving" and so on.
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On turning the body, note "turning... turning", and at the moment when there is no other phenomenon arising, the usual exercise of noting; "rising...rising, falling...falling", be reverted to.

When lying on the side or on the back and there is nothing particular to be noted, then revert to the usual exercise.

BASIC EXERCISE II

While occupied with the exercise of observing each of the abdominal movements, other mental activities may arise between the noting of each rising and falling.

Thoughts or other mental functions, such as intentions, ideas, imaginings, are likely to arise **between** each mental note of rising and falling. They cannot be disregarded.

Note each as it arises.

If you imagine something, you must know that you have done so, note, "imagining...imagining".

If you think of something, note, "thinking...thinking".

If you reflect, "reflecting...reflecting".

If you intend to do something, "intending...intending".

When the mind wanders from the object of meditation, which in this case is the rising and falling of the abdomen, note, "wandering...wandering".

Should you imagine you are going to a certain place, note, "going...going", when arriving, "arriving...arriving".

Thinking of meeting a person, note, "meeting...meeting". Should you speak to him or her, "speaking...speaking".

If you imagine you are arguing with somebody, note, "arguing...arguing".

If you envision or imagine a light or colour, note, "seeing...seeing".

A mental vision must be noted on each and every occurrence of its appearance until it passes away.

After its disappearance, continue with Basic Exercise I, of being fully aware of and noting rising and falling of the abdominal movements. Proceed carefully, without slackening.

If you intend to swallow saliva while thus engaged, note;

"intending".

While in the act of swallowing;

"swallowing...swallowing".

If you intend to spit,

"spitting...spitting".

Then return to the exercise of noting rising and falling.

Should you intend to bend the neck,

"intending...intending".

In the act of bending,

"bending...bending".

When you intend to straighten the neck,

"intending...intending".

In the act of straightening the neck,

"straightening...straightening".

The neck movements of bending and straightening must be done slowly. After noting each of these actions, proceed in full awareness and note the rising and falling of the abdomen.

BASIC EXERCISE III

While continuing meditating for some time, in one position, that of sitting or lying down, you are likely to experience feelings of fatigue, stiffness in the body, arms or legs. When this happens, you should keep the knowing mind on that part of the body where such feelings arise and carry on meditating, noting tiredness or stiffness.

Do this naturally, that is, neither too fast nor too slowly. These feelings will gradually become fainter and finally cease altogether. Should these feelings become intense or unbearable, you may then change position.

However, do not forget to **note "intention to change"**, before you proceed to change your position. When making the position change, each movement must be noted in its respective order and in detail.

Perform these actions in a slow and deliberate manner. As soon as you are settled in the new position, continue with the meditation in this position, keeping to the procedure outlined in the following paragraph.

Should an itching sensation be felt in any part of the body, keep the mind on that part and note, "itching...itching".

Do this in a regulated manner, neither too fast nor too slowly. When the itching sensation disappears in the course of full awareness, continue with the exercise of noting the rising and falling of the abdomen. Should the itch continue and become too strong and you intend to rub the itchy part, be sure to note, "intending...intending".

Slowly lift the hand, simultaneously noting the actions of "lifting...lifting" and "touching...touching", when the hand touches the part that itches, rub slowly in complete awareness of "rubbing...rubbing".

When the itching sensation has disappeared and you intend to discontinue rubbing, mindfully note "intending...intending". Slowly withdraw the hand, concurrently noting, "withdrawing...withdrawing".

When the hand rests in its usual place touching the leg, "touching…touching". Then again devote your time to noting the abdominal movements.

If there is pain or discomfort, keep the knowing mind on that part of the body where the sensation arises. Note the specific sensation as it occurs, such as,

"painful...painful",
"aching...aching",
"pressing...pressing",
"piercing...piercing",
"tired...tired",
"giddy...giddy".

It must be stressed that the mental note must neither be forced nor delayed but made in a calm and natural manner at the moment of its arising.

The pain may eventually cease or increase. Do not be alarmed if it increases. Firmly continue meditating. If you do so, you will find that the pain will almost always cease. But if, after a time, the pain has increased and becomes unbearable, you must ignore the pain and continue with the noting of rising and falling.

As you progress in mindfulness you may experience sensations of intense pain: stifling or choking sensations, pain as from the slash of a knife, the thrust of a sharp-pointed instrument, unpleasant sensations of being pricked by sharp needles, or of small insects crawling over the body.

You might experience sensations of itching, biting, intense cold. As soon as you discontinue the meditation you may also feel that these sensations cease. When meditation is resumed you will have them again as soon as you gain mindfulness. These sensations are not to be considered as something wrong. They are not manifestations of disease but are common factors always present in the body and are usually obscured as the mind is normally occupied with more conspicuous objects.

As the mental faculties become keener you will be more aware of these negative sensations. With the continued development of meditation the time will come when you can overcome them and they will cease altogether. If you continue, firm in purpose, you will not come to any harm. You may lose courage, become irresolute in meditation and discontinue for some time. However, when you resume, you may encounter these unpleasant sensations again repeatedly as your meditation proceeds. If you continue with determination you will most likely overcome these painful sensations and may never again experience them in the course of your practice.

When meditating you may occasionally notice the body swaying back and forth. Do not be alarmed; neither be pleased nor wish to continue to sway. Should you intend to sway the body, then mindfully note "intending...intending". While in the act of swaying, note "swaying...swaying". The swaying will cease if

you keep the knowing mind on the action of swaying and continue to note swaying until the action ceases. If swaying increases in spite of your noting it, then lean against a wall or post or lie down for a while.

Thereafter continue with your meditation. Follow the same procedure if you find yourself shaking or trembling. When meditation has progressed you may sometimes feel a thrill or chill pass through your back or the entire body. This is the feeling of intense interest, enthusiasm or rapture, a natural occurrence in the course of a good practice.

When your mind is in contemplation you may be startled at the slightest sound. This is because you feel the effect of sensory impression more intensely while in a state of concentration.

If you are thirsty while contemplating, note, "thirsty...thirsty".

When you intend to stand, "intending...intending".

Keep the mind intently on the act of standing up, note;

"standing...standing".

When you look forward after standing up straight, note,

"looking...looking, seeing...seeing".

Should you intend to walk forward, "intending...intending".

When you begin to step forward, note each step as

"walking...walking", or "left, right".

Be aware of every moment in each step from the beginning to the end when you walk, strolling or when taking walking exercise.

Note each step in two sections as follows: "lifting...lifting, putting...putting".

After sufficient practice, note each step in three sections:

"lifting...lifting",
"pushing...pushing",
"putting...putting",

or
"up...up",
"forward...forward",
"down...down".

Looking at the water faucet "looking, seeing"
When you stop walking "stopping,.. stopping"
When you stretch the hand "stretching...stretching"
When the hand touches the cup "touching...touching"
When the hand takes the cup "taking...taking"
When the hand dips the cup into the water "dipping...dipping

When the hand brings the cup to the lips "bringing...bringing"
When the cup touches the lips "touching...touching"
Should you feel cold at the touch "cold...cold"
When you swallow "swallowing...swallowing"
When returning the cup "returning...returning"
Withdrawing the hand "withdrawing...withdrawing"
When you bring down your hand "bringing...bringing"
Touches the side of the body "touching...touching"
If you intend to turn back "intending...intending"
When you turn round "turning...turning"
When you walk forward "walking...walking"
At the place where you intend to stop "intending...intending "
When stopping "stopping...stopping"

If you remain standing for some time continue the noting of rising and falling. But if you intend to sit

"intending...intending"

Walking forward to sit down "walking...walking"
On arriving at the place where you will sit "arriving...arriving"
When you turn to sit "turning...turning"
While in the act of sitting down "sitting...sitting"

Sit down slowly, and keep the mind on the downward movement of the body. Note every movement in bringing the hands and legs into position. Then resume noting the abdominal movements.

Should you intend to lie down, note "intending...intending". Then proceed with the noting of every movement in the course of lying down:

"lifting...lifting",
"stretching...stretching",
"putting...putting",
"touching...touching",
"lying...lying".

Then take as the object of meditation every movement in bringing the hands, legs and body into position. Perform these actions slowly. Thereafter, continue with noting rising and falling. Should pain, fatigue, itch, or any other sensations be felt, be sure to note each of these sensations.

NOTE ALL FEELINGS, THOUGHTS, IDEAS, CONSIDERATIONS, REFLECTIONS, ALL MOVEMENTS OF HANDS, LEGS, ARMS AND BODY. IF THERE IS NOTHING IN PARTICULAR TO NOTE, REVERT TO RISING AND FALLING PROCESS.

Perform the acts of washing the face or taking a bath in due order and in complete awareness of every detailed movement, for instance;

"looking...looking", "seeing...seeing",
"stretching...stretching", "holding...holding",
"touching...touching", "feeling cold...feeling cold",
"rubbing...rubbing".

In the act of eating, dressing, making the bed, opening and closing doors and windows, handling objects, be occupied with every detail of these actions in sequence.

DO NOT WAVER IN YOUR EFFORT. YOU WILL MAKE FEWER OMISSIONS IF YOU PERSIST IN YOUR PRACTICE.

When you reach an advanced stage of the practice you will also be able to notice more details than those examples mentioned above.

ADVANCEMENT IN THE PRACTICE

While engaged in the regular practise of noting body movements you need not be concerned with objects of seeing and hearing. As long as you are able to keep your mind on the abdominal movements of rising and falling it is assumed that the purpose of noting the acts and objects of seeing is also served.

However, should you intentionally look at an object; then simultaneously note, two or three times, "seeing...seeing". Then return to the awareness of the abdominal movements. Should someone come into view, make a mental note of

"seeing...seeing", two or three times and then resume attention to the rising and falling movements of the abdomen.

Did you happen to hear the sound of a voice?

Did you listen to it?

If so, note "hearing...hearing, listening", and revert to "rising and falling".

Should loud noises be heard, such as the barking of dogs, loud talking or shouting, immediately note two or three times, "hearing...hearing", then return to your basic exercise.

Should you fail to note and dismiss such distinctive sounds as they arise, you may inadvertently fall into reflections about them instead of proceeding with intense attention to rising and falling, which may then become less distinct and clear. It is by such weakened attention that mind-defiling passions breed and multiply.

If such reflections do arise, note "reflecting...reflecting", two or three times, then again take up the noting of rising and falling.

Should you forget to note body, leg or arm movements, and as you realise it later, then mentally note "forgetting...forgetting", and resume your usual noting on abdominal movements.

At times breathing slows down and rising and falling movements are not clearly perceived. When this happens, move your attention to "sitting...sitting", "touching...touching"; or when lying down, to "lying...lying", "touching...touching".

While noting touching, your mind should not be kept on the same part of the body but on different parts successively. There are several places of touch and at least six or seven should be noted.[*]

[*] Some of these points where the touch sensation may be observed are: where thigh and knee touch, or the hands placed together, or finger to finger, thumb to thumb, closing of the eyelids, tongue inside the mouth, lips touching when mouth is closed.

BASIC EXERCISE IV

Up to this point you have devoted quite some time to Vipassana Meditation. You may begin to feel discouraged thinking that you have not made adequate progress. By no means give up, note; "discouraged...discouraged".

Before you gain sufficient strength in attention, concentration and insight, you may doubt the correctness or usefulness of this method of training. If so, turn to reflection of the thought, "doubtful...doubtful". Do you anticipate or wish for good results? If so, make such thoughts the subject of your reflections; "anticipating...anticipating" or "wishing...wishing".

Recalling the manner in which training was conducted up to this point? If so reflect "recollecting...recollecting".

Examining the arising phenomena in order to determine whether it is mind or matter? If so, then note "examining...examining".

Regretting that there is no improvement in your contemplation? If so, attend to the feeling of "regret...regret".

Conversely, are you happy that your noting is improving? If you are, then contemplate the feeling of being "happy...happy".

This is the way in which you note each and every item of mental phenomenon as it arises, and if there is no intervening thought or perception to note, revert to the noting of "rising" and "falling".

Earnest practice is from waking moment till the last moment before sleep. You must be occupied constantly either with the basic exercises or with mindful attention throughout the day and at night when you are not asleep. There should be no relaxation.

Upon reaching a certain stage of progress you will not feel sleepy in spite of prolonged hours of practise. On the contrary, you will be able to continue day and night.

BREATH AS THE MAIN OBJECT: VIPASSANA

Sayadaw U Silananda

SITTING MEDITATION

For those yogis whose choice of the primary meditation object is the breath; focus your attention on the breaths; keep your mind at the tip of the nose, or at the entrance of the nostrils.

The in-breath and the out-breath each last about four or five seconds. Be really mindful of the breaths. You may feel a sensation of the air at the tip of your nose or in your nose. Be mindful of it. And concentrate on the nature of breath, the moving nature or the supporting nature of breath, rather than the shape or form of the breath.

When you breathe in, be mindful of the in-breath for the whole duration of the in-breath, or from the beginning to the end. And when you breathe out, be mindful of the out-breath for the whole duration, or from the beginning to the end.

Do not let your mind follow the breath into your body or outside the body.

Try to see the in-breath and out-breath as two separate things, not just one and the same breath going in and coming out.

Your mind is like a gatekeeper standing at the gate, taking note of people going in and coming out.

Do not force or strain yourself. Just calmly be mindful and watch the breaths.

You may make a mental note when you breathe in and when you breathe out, as "in", "out," "in", "out."

Making mental notes, or labeling, is just to help you keep your mind on the object; if it interferes with your meditation, you don't have to do it, but just be mindful of the object. What is important in this meditation is mindfulness of the object at the moment, and not the notes you make.

If your mind can be on the breaths only, that is very good. However, mind has a tendency to wander quite often. So, if, in the course of keeping your mind on the breaths, your mind wanders or goes out and you are aware of it, do not feel guilty, or be upset; just be mindful of its going out. Or you may note, "going out, going out, going out," two or three times and then go back to the breaths.

If you see something or someone in your thoughts, be mindful of seeing, and note, "seeing, seeing, seeing," until that object disappears from your mind; then go back to the breaths.

If you hear somebody talking in your thoughts, be mindful of hearing and note, "hearing, hearing, hearing," and then go back to the breath.

If you talk to someone in your thoughts, or if you talk to yourself, be mindful of talking and note, "talking, talking," and then go back to the breaths.

If you speculate about something, be mindful of speculating; if you analyze something, be mindful of analyzing;

if you make judgments, be mindful of making judgments.

In Vipassana meditation, you pay just bare attention to the object, without any additions of you own, as "beautiful", "ugly", "good", "bad", etc. Or, in other words, you take the object as it is, without subjective additions of your own.

If you remember something in the past, be mindful of the remembering and note, "remembering, remembering, remembering" or "thinking, thinking, thinking," and then go back to the breaths.

If you think of the future and make plans, be mindful of it and note, "thinking of future, thinking of future, thinking of future,", or "planning, planning, planning," and then go back to the breath.

If you become lazy, be mindful of your laziness and note, "lazy, lazy," The laziness will go away after some moments, then go back to the breaths.

If you feel bored, be mindful of boredom and note, "bored, bored, bored," until boredom goes away, then go back to the breaths.

If you experience resistance, be mindful of it and note, "resisting, resisting, resisting." When resistance disappears, go back to the breaths.

If you have thoughts of attachment or greed or lust, again do not feel guilty, but be mindful of these thoughts and note, "attachment, attachment, attachment," or "greed, greed, greed," or "lust, lust, lust," until they disappear and then go back to the breaths.

If you are upset or angry for any reason, just be mindful of that anger, or, make that anger the object of meditation. Concentrate on your anger, or you may note, "anger, anger, anger" or "angry, angry, angry" or "upset, upset, upset." After some moments, the anger will disappear and when it has disappeared, go back to the breaths.

If you want to swallow your saliva, first be mindful of the intention or desire to swallow, saying to yourself, "intention, intention, intention," or "desire, desire, desire;" and when you have gathered the saliva in your mouth, be mindful of the gathering and note, "gathering, gathering, gathering." When you swallow it down, be mindful of swallowing and note, "swallowing, swallowing, swallowing," then go back to the breaths.

If you have an itching sensation, do not scratch it right away. Concentrate on the place of that itching and be mindful of it, noting, "itching, itching, itching."

In most cases, itching will go away after some time. When it goes away, return to the breaths. Sometimes, the itching will not go away, but will even become more intense. In that case try to be with it, taking note of it and be aware of it, as long as you can. If you think you cannot bear it any longer, you may scratch. But before scratching, be mindful of the intention or

desire to scratch; and when you move your hand to the place where you experience the itch, be mindful of moving. Move your hand slowly, following the movement with mindfulness. When your fingers touch the place, note "touching, touching, touching."

When you scratch, note "scratching, scratching, scratching." When you take the hand back, note; "taking, taking, taking" or "moving, moving, moving."

When your hand touches your lap, the knee or the other hand again, be mindful of touching and note, "touching, touching, touching."

Then go back to the breaths.

If you have painful or unpleasant feelings in the body (numbness, stiffness or heat); focus your mind on these feelings and mindfully note each of these feelings consecutively.

If you have pain somewhere in the body, focus on the place of that pain, and be mindful of that pain, noting, "pain, pain, pain."

You will have to be very patient with painful feelings. Pain will not easily go away. You have to be patient and be mindful of it. It may go away or it may become more acute. Stay with it as long as you can.

Actually pain is a very good object for meditation. It is a strong object. Your mind is pulled towards the place where there is pain. So be mindful of it and try to see it just as a sensation, an unpleasant sensation.

It is important that you do not identify pain as yourself, so do not note, "it is my pain" or "I feel pain." There is just the pain, just the sensation. If the pain becomes so intense that you think you cannot bear it any longer, you may ignore the pain altogether and go back to the breaths, or you may make movements or change posture to ease the pain. When you make movements or change posture, first note the intention to change; be mindful of the intention to change and then make movements slowly; one at a time, following each movement with mindfulness. And when you have made the changes, go back to the breaths.

The breath is the primary object of your meditation. Whenever there are no other objects to be mindful of, just be mindful of the breaths.

If there are more prominent objects, then you take note of them, be aware of them, or be mindful of them, and then go back to the breaths.

Do not force or strain yourself, just calmly watch the objects, take note of them and be mindful of them. Do not try to forcefully push distractions or emotions or feelings in the body away, just watch them and let them go by themselves.

The rest is the same as for taking the rising and falling of the abdomen as main object. The only difference is to substitute 'movements of the abdomen' with 'breaths'.

COMMON TO BOTH METHODS

Let your mindfulness be precise, i.e., going concurrently with the objects. Take only one object at a time; take the one which is most prominent and be mindful of it. If you cannot decide which is most prominent, choose just one and be mindful of it.

What is important in this meditation is to be mindful of the object at the present moment; so whether you are mindful of the main object or the secondary object, so long as you are mindful, you are doing the right thing.

Do not have any expectations, do not expect to experience something strange or to see visions or to get results or even to get concentration. Expectations are good because they motivate us to practise, but when we are right in the practice, they become obstacles to concentration. That is because they are a mild form of greed or attachment which is a hindrance to concentration.

If expectations come up in spite of yourself, do not be irritated by them; just be mindful of them and note, "expecting, expecting, expecting." Then go back to the breaths or the movements of the abdomen.

When you practise mindfulness you make effort, mental effort; the effort you make thus, must be neither too much nor too little; if you make too much effort, you will become agitated and you cannot concentrate; and if you make too little effort, you will become sleepy and again cannot concentrate. The effort you make must, therefore, be well balanced. If you miss to be mindful and then remember, then be mindful of that missing, note, "missing, missing, missing", or "forgetting,

forgetting, forgetting." Above all, do not be tight or tense in your mind; be relaxed, and calmly watch, or be mindful; making mental notes.

SOME SALIENT RECAP

It has been emphasised during this brief outline of the training that you must contemplate on each mental occurrence good or bad, on each bodily movement large or small, on every sensation (bodily or mental feeling) pleasant or unpleasant and so on.

If, during the course of training, occasions arise when there is nothing special to contemplate upon, be fully occupied with attention to the rising and falling of the abdomen. When you have to attend to any kind of activity that necessitates walking, then, in complete awareness; note each step "walking...walking" or "left, right...left, right". But when you are taking a walking exercise, contemplate each step in three sections; "up, forward, down".

The student who thus dedicates himself to the training night and day, will be able in not too long a time to develop concentration to the initial stage of the fourth degree of Insight (Knowledge of Arising and Passing Away) [Udayabbaya-nana. See Part II; Progress of Insight.] and onward to higher stages of Insight Meditation.

As rising occurs, the mind makes a note of it, and thus the object and the mind coincide. As falling occurs the mind makes a note of it and thus the object and the mind coincide. Thus it is always the mind which knows the object at every stage of noting.

These two elements of <u>material object</u> and <u>knowing mind</u> arise in pairs, and apart from these two there does not exist any other thing either in the form of a person or self. This fact will be realised personally in due course.

The fact that matter and mind are separate will be clearly perceived during the time of noting "rising, falling". The elements of matter and mind are linked up in a pair and their arising coincides, that is: The material process of rising coincides with the mind knowing it, the material process of falling coincides with the mind knowing it, and the respective processes of lifting, pushing, putting coincide with the respective minds knowing them. This knowledge in respect of matter and mind rising separately is Spiritual Knowledge of Insight (nama-rupa-pariccheda-nana). It is the preliminary stage in the whole course of Spiritual Knowledge of Insight. It is important to have this preliminary stage developed in a proper manner.

On continuing the practice of meditation for some time, there will be a considerable progress in Mindfulness and Concentration. At this level it will be perceived that, on every occasion of noting, each process arises and passes away at the very moment. But it is, on the other hand, considered generally by uninstructed people that body and mind remain in a throughout the life or existence, permanent state that the child that is now the adult, is the same; same young mind has matured that both body and mind are one and the same person. The reality is that it is not so.

Nothing is permanent.

Every thing comes into existence for a moment, then passes away.

Changes are taking place very swiftly and these will be perceived in due course.

END OF BASIC PRACTISE

TO COME: PROGRESSIVE PRACTISE