

WISDOM
DEVELOPS
SAMĀDHI

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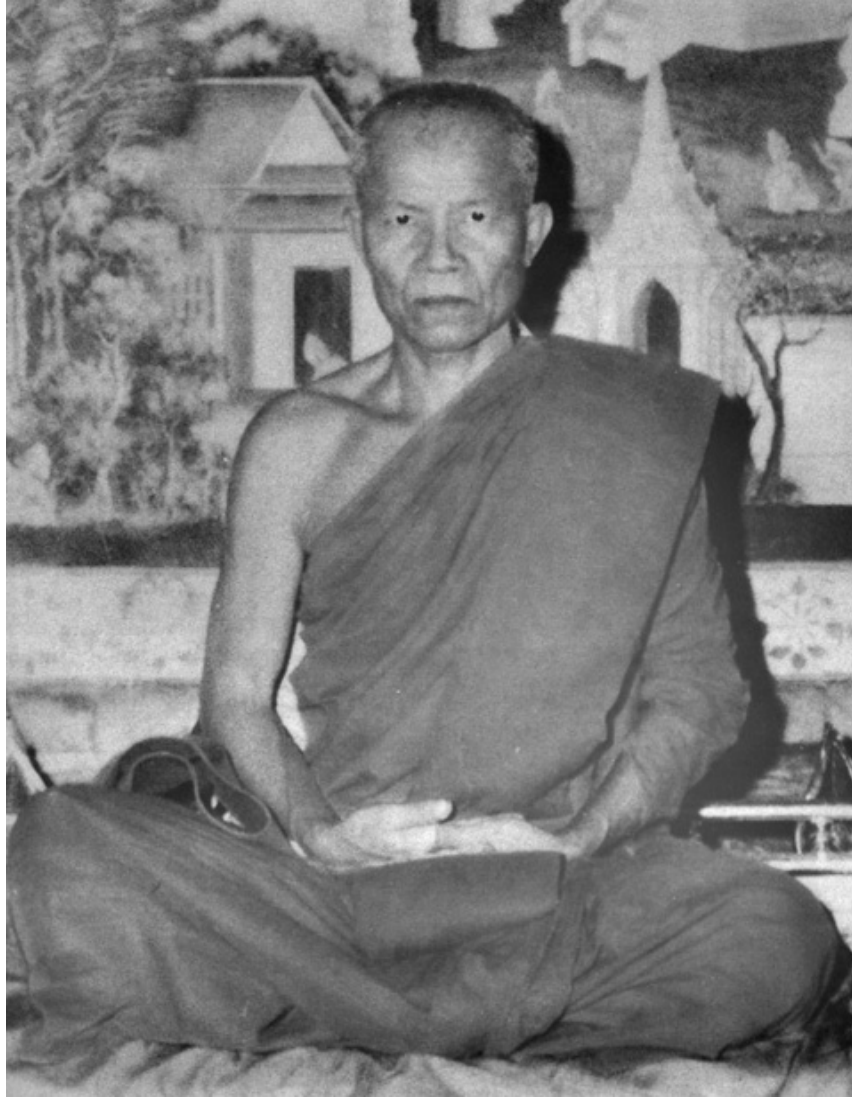
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“Wisdom Develops Samādhi” was written by Venerable Ācariya Mahā Boowa and it gives most of the fundamentals of his teaching on meditation.

Many words have been left in Pāli because there is often no adequate translation in English; it is hoped the reader will forgive any difficulties that this may make, but it is felt better that the reader should not-understand rather than mis-understand. However, a fairly comprehensive glossary has been included at the back, which should cover all the Pāli words that are not actually explained in the text.



The Author

SĪLA

SĪLA – IS THAT WHICH SETS A LIMIT to the “outgoing exuberance”¹ in a person’s actions of body and speech and the responsibility for these actions and their results rests with the heart.

Good people do not like to associate with someone whose “outgoing exuberance” is not restrained by Sīla, and nobody trusts him. In business and other affairs, even if there are only one or two people who have bad Sīla and no sense of shame in their behaviour, it is certain that the social group in which they live and work cannot remain secure for long. It is bound to be destroyed or set in disorder by them in whatever way they can, as soon as they have a chance when others are off their guard. It is like living with a fierce poisonous snake which is just waiting to bite whenever one is unprotected.

Thus Sīla is the Dhamma which protects the world, keeping it cool and happy so that there shall be no cause for doubt, suspicion and mistrust which can arise from a mutual lack of confidence in those things which are liable to cause friction and trouble. These things often start in a small way and develop into larger things, things which everyone wants to avoid.

Sīla is of many kinds, but here we will only consider the five Sīla, the eight, ten, and 227 Sīla, which different kinds of people should variously maintain as it suits their status, age, and physical capabilities.

¹ Outgoing exuberance- is a translation of the Thai word “kanong”, which is more usually translated as “high-spirited”, “exuberant”, (Thai-English Students Dictionary – Mary Haas). But the usage of the word in the context of this article is unusual, and means the display of self by way of body, speech and thought, and involving the conceited opinion of self which such a display is designed to proclaim, both to oneself and others. All of which arises from those defilements of character which are called “Rāga Taṇhā” (sexual arousing).

The five Sīla are the most important for lay people who have dealings with society in its various aspects. They should maintain these Sīla as that which gives a recommendation of their individual personal integrity and of their mutual integrity, thus keeping them from falling apart when they gain and lose from each other in business or society everywhere.

It is noticeable how, if there are one or two people working in business, in a company or in government service, who always maintain the five Sīla, they are just the people who are most liked, praised and trusted in all kinds of affairs by their business associates, such as those affairs which are connected with money. Whether such people remain in that work or go elsewhere, they will be well liked and respected everywhere, because they maintain Sīla, it means that they also have Dhamma within their hearts – like the taste of food which cannot be separated from its nature. And conversely, when such people have Dhamma within them, they also have Sīla, so that whenever they break any part of their Sīla it means that at that time they do not have Dhamma within them, because Dhamma is associated with the heart and Sīla is associated with bodily actions and speech. Therefore the good and bad actions of the body and speech indicate and show the state of the heart – which is the leader and the one that is responsible.

If the heart always has Dhamma within it the ways of the body and speech are bound to be clean and free from blame in all their activities. Therefore, people who perform clean actions of body and speech proclaim by these actions that they are the kind of people who have Dhamma in their hearts, and moral behaviour in their actions, speech and hearts. This attracts the hearts of other people everywhere so that they turn to such people – and so it is that they are always popular and well thought of in all ages.

Even those who are unable to promote their actions, speech and hearts in the foregoing way still have respect and reverence for those who have moral behaviour in their actions, speech, and hearts, in the same way as all of us have respect and reverence for the Lord Buddha and his true followers (Sāvaka). This indicates that moral behaviour, meaning that which is good and graceful, is always desirable and valuable in the world, and is never out of date.

Sometimes however, it happens that the nature of moral behaviour is altered from its true or “inherent nature” into doctrines and traditions which come from a people’s national, class, or cultural background. This is the reason why moral behaviour becomes

a thing of nation, class or cult, in accordance with these popular doctrines; and this is why different peoples throughout the world are constantly criticising and blaming each other. But apart from this, moral behaviour is the way of merit which can always lead this age towards progress and development for as long as people in this world are still interested in adjusting their own actions of body, speech, and heart to accord with the ways of moral behaviour.

Whenever the world has been disturbed and troubled, it is obvious that it is because people have been lacking in moral behaviour and nowadays, if people do not hasten to improve themselves in accordance with the true nature of moral behaviour, the powers of the world will soon erupt in their full fury, and even those who wield the power will not survive and all will be destroyed.

But in particular in each family circle, if Sīla, which is the basis of proper behaviour is lacking both husband and his wife will lack confidence in each other. Before long there will arise doubt and suspicions that each is associating with other women and men and having clandestine love affairs, which will undermine the unity and prosperity of their family. If moral behaviour is lacking to this extent, the dissatisfaction in their hearts will begin to come to fruition and they will be full of trouble and worry. Even work, which is the basis of steady family life, will be disrupted, and the children will all be involved in the prevailing air of dissention. But those who continue to act in immoral ways that are progressively worse than the foregoing, are sure to find that sooner or later, all those things which were firmly established suddenly start to flare up into dissention and trouble. Like a pot full of water which is hit and breaks and all the water pours out and disperses at once.

So if the world wants prosperity and civilization, it is still necessary that it should conform to the standards of moral behaviour – and how can anyone truly speaking, object to the principle of truth which is moral behaviour, which has been in the world since time immemorial?

Natural moral behaviour does not have to be asked for as precepts from a Bhikkhu (Monk) or from someone in an official capacity in a Wat (monastery) or elsewhere before it is established. For if a person respects and likes those characteristics within himself which are right, good and graceful, and if he behaves in this way personally as

well as in association with others, avoiding actions which are contrary to such good behaviour, it indicates that he has moral behaviour within his character.

The reasons why morality arises in the heart and in the behaviour of a person are:

firstly – that it arises from a person’s “inherent nature”, as already mentioned above.

secondly – that it comes from association with wise people, such as recluses and teachers – and that after learning from them one puts their teaching on moral behaviour into practice.

These two things are sufficient to arouse the practice of moral behaviour in oneself, and to enable one to become a person in whom it is constantly present.

These two will also be sufficient to preserve one’s own status and that of one’s family in all forms of society with which they have dealings, and it will maintain a freedom from suspicion and doubt both within one’s family circle and amongst one’s friends.

Lay people may practise only the five Sīla, and while their activities are within the bounds of moral behaviour, it will enable them and their families to be at ease with a clear heart.

As for the eight, ten, and 227 Sīla, they are based upon the five Sīla and are progressively more refined for those people who wish to practice the higher levels of moral behaviour. But both in the practices of maintaining Sīla and in paying attention to what one is doing, the rules or the method differ progressively from those of the five Sīla as one goes higher.

Summarising briefly, Sīla of every grade is for the purpose of controlling “outgoing exuberance” in the behaviour of the body and speech. For one who practises it correctly, it is also for the purpose of living in a “peaceful” way with a happy and easy heart. And if one associates with other people, who themselves maintain Sīla, it is essential that one should oneself be a good person. But those who have low or vulgar minds are not likely to understand the necessity for Sīla, because they do not want to become good people, nor to get involved in the world of good people, and they always try to break up the happiness of others and to instigate trouble and anger in the world whenever they get a chance to do so.

One should not think that moral behaviour is exclusively a human faculty, for even animals can have some aspects of it. One needs only to observe the animals which people look after in their own homes to see how in some degree the hearts and the behaviour of animals are permeated with the nature of Dhamma.

One who always has moral behaviour as the basis of his character, besides being good natured, having the confidence and being popular with the people of his village or district, will also be good natured within himself every day of this life and of the next life also.

Moral behaviour is therefore a quality which is always necessary in the world.



SAMĀDHI 1

ALL TYPES OF KAMMAṬṬHĀNA-DHAMMA are for controlling the “outgoing exuberance” of the heart. The heart which is not controlled by a Kammaṭṭhāna is liable to the arising of “outgoing exuberance” throughout life. This is so from infancy to old age, it is so with the rich and the poor, with the clever and the stupid, with those in high and low position in life, with the blind, deaf, paralysed, maimed, deformed, and so on endlessly.

In Buddhism such people are considered to be still at the age of a “heart with outgoing exuberance”. Their hearts have no greatness, they find no contentment, they are ill-fated as regards happiness of heart, and when they die they lose in all ways – like a tree which may have many branches, flowers, and fruit, but if its main root is damaged it will die and lose its greatness and everything else. But unlike the body of a human being who has died, the trunk and branches of the tree may still be useful for some other purpose.

The baneful effect of the “outgoing exuberance” of a heart which does not have Dhamma as its guardian, is that it never finds true happiness, and even if happiness does arise due to the “outgoing exuberance” of the heart searching for it and finding it, it will be happiness of the type in which one is (like an actor) playing a part, which increases the “outgoing exuberance”, making the heart go increasingly in the wrong direction, and not the type of happiness which is truly satisfying.

SAMĀDHI – which means calm or stability of heart, is that which opposes the “outgoing exuberance”. The heart on the other hand, does not want to take the “medicine”, and the MEDICINE is the KAMMAṬṬHĀNA.

“Outgoing exuberance” of the heart has been the enemy of all beings for countless ages, and a person who wants to subdue the “outgoing exuberance” of his own heart will need to compel his heart to take the MEDICINE – which is the KAMMAṬṬHĀNA.

Taking the medicine means training one’s heart in Dhamma and not allowing it to go its own way, for the heart always like to have “outgoing exuberance” as a companion. In other words, taking the medicine means that the heart brings Dhamma into itself as its guardian.

The Dhamma which is the guardian of the heart is called the Kammatṭhāna.

There are forty types of Kammatṭhāna which variously accord with the different temperaments of people. They include:

1. The 10 Kasiṇa (Devices for gazing at and concentrating upon)
2. The 10 Asubha (Contemplation of the states of the decom-position of a dead body)
3. The 10 Anussati (Various objects of contemplation)
4. The 4 Brahmavihāra (Friendliness, Compassion, Joy, and Equanimity)
5. The 1 Āhārapatikkūlasaññā (Recollecting the loath-someness of food)
6. The 1 Catudhātuvavatthana (Defining the four elements)
7. The 4 Arūpa (Developing the four formless Jhānas)

Here we will confine ourselves to the consideration of a few of these methods which are in general use and which are found to give satisfactory results. They include:

1. Contemplation of the thirty-two parts of the body, including: Kesā (hair of the head), Lomā (hair of the body), Nakhā (nails), Dantā (teeth), Taco (skin)...etc. This first group of parts is called the “Five Kammatṭhāna”.
2. Contemplation of the “Buddha”, the “Dhamma”, and the “Saṅgha”.
3. Ānāpānasati (Awareness of breathing in and out).

Whichever method is used it should suit one’s character, for characters differ, and to teach that everyone should use only one type of Kammatṭhāna may well prove to be a hindrance to some people, thus preventing their attaining the results which they should attain.

When one finds the type of meditation that suits one's character, one should set one's mind to begin doing the practice with a preparatory repetition (Parikamma), such as, "Kesā" (hair of the head). One should then repeat the word "Kesā", but one should repeat it mentally and not out loud, and at the same time one should keep one's attention fixed upon the hair of the head. If however, one finds that thinking, on its own, is not able to capture the heart, one may repeat the preparatory repetition in the manner of a chant so that the sound captivates the heart and it becomes calm and quiet. One should continue repeating the preparatory repetition until the heart has become calm and then one can stop. But whichever preparatory repetition is used, one should retain conscious awareness of that Kammatthāna. Thus in the foregoing example of "Kesā", one should retain conscious awareness of the hair on one's head.

If one uses one of the preparatory repetitions "Buddho", "Dhammo", or "Saṅgho", one should set up knowledge of it just in the heart alone. These are not like the other types of Kammatthāna, for here one should repeat "Buddho" (or "Dhammo", or "Saṅgho") so that it is in continuous contact with the heart and remains there until the one who repeats the "Buddho" of the preparatory repetition and the "one who knows", who is the heart, are found to be identical.

If it suits one's character better to use the preparatory repetition "Dhammo" or "Saṅgho", one should repeat it so that it is in contact with the heart and remains there until it is found to be identical with the heart. This is done in the same way as the Kammatthāna "Buddho".

Ānāpānasati Bhāvanā (the development of awareness of breathing) uses the breath as the objective support of the heart and consists in knowing and mindfulness (Sati) of in and out breathing.

In becoming aware of breathing, one should at first fix attention on the feeling of the breath at the nose or the palate (roof of mouth),² as it suits one, because this is where the breath initially makes contact, and one may use this as a marker point for holding one's attention. Having done this until one has become skilled, and the in and out breathing has become finer and finer, one will progressively come to know and

² This method of practice is not done with one's mouth open so the breath as physical air does not pass over the palate. But nevertheless many people have a strong feeling response at this point as though the breath were passing back and forth.

understand the nature of the contact of in and out breathing, until it seems that the breathing is located either in the middle of the chest or the solar plexus.³

After this one must just fix one's attention on breathing at that place and one must no longer be concerned about fixing attention on the breathing at the tip of the nose or the palate, nor about following it in and out with awareness.

In fixing attention on the breath one may also repeat "Buddho" in time with the breath as a preparatory repetition to supervise the in and out breathing, in order to assist the "one who knows" and to make the "one who knows" clear with regard to the breath. Then the breath will appear more and more clearly to the heart.

After having become skilled with the breath, every time one attends to the breathing process, one should fix attention at the point in the middle of the chest or the solar plexus.

In particular, it is important to have mindfulness established. One must establish mindfulness to control the heart so that one feels the breath at every moment while it is entering or leaving, whether short or long, until one knows clearly that the breathing is becoming progressively finer with every breath – and until finally it becomes apparent that the finest and most subtle breath and the heart have converged and become one.⁴ At this stage one should fix attention on the breath exclusively within the heart, and there is no need to worry about the preparatory repetition, for in becoming aware of the breath as entering and leaving, and as short or long, the preparatory repetition is only for the purpose of making the Citta become subtle.

When one has attained the most subtle level of breathing, the Citta will be bright, cool, calm, happy, and just knowing the heart – and there will be no connection with any disturbing influence. Even if finally at that time, the breath gives up its relationship with oneself, there will be no anxiety because the Citta will have let go of the burden and one will just have knowledge of the heart alone. In other words, it will be non-dual (Ekaggatārammaṇa).

³ The breath is seen (or felt) in the middle of the chest or the solar plexus, much as it is felt at the tip of the nose in the earlier stages of the practice. On being questioned, the Author said that "the middle of the chest" and "the solar plexus" were one place located at the bottom end of the breast bone. But he also said that if one understood them to be two separate places, either of which could be the location for awareness of breathing, one would not be wrong.

⁴ In other words, it seems as if the Citta is the breathing, and as if the breathing is the Citta.

This is the result that comes from developing the practice of Ānāpānasati Kammatṭhāna. But it should also be understood that whichever Kammatṭhāna is practised, and whoever practises it, this is the kind of result that should be attained.

Concerning the preparatory development (Parikamma Bhāvanā); by using one of these forms of Kammatṭhāna for controlling the heart with mindfulness, one will gradually be able to curb the “outgoing exuberance” of the heart. Calm and happiness will then arise and develop, and there will be only one thing influencing the heart, which will be a knowing of the heart alone without any disturbance or distraction, for there will be nothing which can irritate or disturb the heart to make it fall away from this state. This is the nature of happiness of heart, just the heart being free from all vain imaginings and thought creations.

When this state is attained, the person who is doing the practice will know that which is wondrous in his heart, the like of which he has never encountered before. This is a deeply felt state of happiness, more so than anything which he has previously experienced.

It is also possible that while practising a given type of Kammatṭhāna, the characteristics of that form of Kammatṭhāna may appear to some people. For example, hair of the head, or hair of the body, or nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, or bones, etc., any of which may appear and be seen clearly with the heart, as though one were looking at it with one’s eyes. If this happens, one should pay attention to it and see it clearly until it becomes fixed in one’s heart, and the longer one can pay attention to it, retain it in this way and fix it in one’s heart, the better.

When the above object has been intimately fixed in one’s heart, one must appreciate it in the right way by attending to the unpleasant and loathsome aspects of it, for this is the nature of all the parts of the body, both internally and externally. Then divide the body into parts, or into groups of parts depending on their nature. One may take such groups as hair of the head, hair of the body, flesh, bones, and so on; and one may contemplate them as rotting and decayed, as being burnt, as being eaten by vultures, crows and dogs, and see them breaking down into their basic elements – earth, water, fire, air.

Whether one has much or little skill, doing the practice in this way will be of great value when it is done for the purpose of making the heart skilled in seeing the body, for the purpose of seeing truly what is in the body, and for the purpose of reducing and eliminating delusion in regard to the nature of the body, this delusion being what gives rise to sexual craving (Rāga Taṇhā) – which is one aspect of the “outgoing exuberance” of the heart. One’s heart will then become progressively more calm and subtle.

It is important when parts of the body appear, that one should not ignore them and pass them by without interest, nor must one be afraid of them, but one should fix them right in front of one then and there.

When a person who practises meditation has seen this body until it has truly become fixed in his heart, he will feel wearied of himself and will feel the sorrow and misery of himself so that he is horrified and shocked. In addition, the heart of a person to whom the body appears, and who faces up to it while practising meditation will be able to attain Samādhi very quickly, and the practice of seeing the body will make his wisdom clear at the same time as his heart becomes calm.⁵

A person who does not see the parts of the body should understand that all preparatory meditation (Parikamma Bhāvanā) is for the purpose of leading the Citta to a state of both calm and happiness, so one should not feel doubtful about any of these methods that they will not lead the Citta to a state of calm, and later on to see danger⁶ with wisdom. One must be determined in whichever meditation one is practising, and repeat whichever preparatory repetition suits one, without becoming disheartened nor feeling like giving up.

It should be realised that whichever method of meditation is practised, it leads to the same goal as all the other methods, and it should also be realised that all these methods of Dhamma will lead the heart to peace and happiness – in other words, to NIBBĀNA – which is the final goal of all types of meditation development. Therefore one must do one’s own meditation practice and not be concerned about other types of meditation, otherwise one will be in a state of doubt and uncertainty, and unable to decide which of

⁵ Because one is using parts of the body as one’s Kammaṭṭhāna, once the Samādhi develops, wisdom will automatically develop, seeing the true nature of the body as Anicca, Dukkha, Anattā, and loathsome. In other types of practice, such as Ānāpānasati, it is necessary to make the effort to turn towards contemplations of the body, and such like, once Samādhi is developed, but with contemplation of the body it is inherently part of the practice.

⁶ Danger – means the danger of this body which may die at any time from any one of many causes, and also the danger of the defilements (Kilesas) which may lead one to bad or terrible realms and births.

them is the right way, which would be a constant obstacle to one's Citta, thus preventing one from carrying out one's original resolve.

Instead, one must determine that one will be really mindful in the practice, and one must not arrange Sīla, Samādhi, and Paññā in any special order, nor let them go away from the heart, because the defilements (Kilesā) of passion, hate, delusion, and the rest, dwell in the heart and nobody has arranged them in order.⁷ When one thinks in wrong and faulty ways, it arouses the defilements in one's heart. One does not decide nor arrange that this one will come earlier, and that one later, for if it is a defilement immediately one thinks wrongly, and whatever type it is, so it arises, and they all make one troubled or passionate in the same way. The defilements are always bound to be of this nature, and it is of no consequence in which order they arise for all of them are able to make one troubled and passionate.

Therefore in curing the defilements, one must not wait to develop Sīla first, then Samādhi second, and Paññā third – which may be called: “developing Samādhi stage by stage” – for this is always in the past and future and one would never be able to attain calm and happiness.



⁷ This passage means that one must not develop Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā concurrently, because the Kilesas arise higgledy-piggledy, and at any time one may require the methods of either Sīla, Samādhi or Paññā to cure particular types of Kilesas. Thus one could not successfully deal with more than a part of the arising Kilesas if one were to develop these three in order, one after the other.

SAMĀDHI 2

Wisdom develops Samādhi

THE TRUE PURPOSE OF MEDITATION PRACTICE is to bring about calm in the heart. If one cannot attain calm by lulling the heart with a preparatory method (Parikamma), one must use the way of subduing it by intimidation. In other words, by using wisdom to search out and examine those things to which the Citta is attached, and depending on how skilful one's wisdom is, to search for a way to goad the disobedient Citta with what wisdom reveals until it surrenders to wisdom and the heart accepts the truth about the things to which it is attached. Then the heart cannot be distracted and restless and must drop into a state of calm; in the same way a work animal whose "outgoing exuberance" must be trained by constant goading so that it surrenders to the will of its master.

The following analogy may help to illustrate this method. In a place where there are few trees and each one standing on its own, if a man wanted to cut one down he could do so and make it fall where he wanted. He could then take it and use it as he wished with no difficulty.

But if he wanted to cut a tree down in a forest where its branches were entangled with other trees and creepers, he may find it difficult to fell the tree and to make it fall just where he wanted. So the woodcutter must use his wisdom and examine carefully to find out what is entangled with the tree, and then by cutting away all the entanglements he could fell it just where he wanted and use it however he wished without difficulty.

All of us have characters which are comparable with these two trees, for some types of people do not have much in their environment to burden them and act as a drag on

their minds. When they use only a preparatory meditation such as “Buddho”, “Dhammo” or “Saṅgho”, the Citta is able to become calm and peaceful and drop into a state of Samādhi. This becomes the basis for the development of wisdom (Paññā) and enables them to go ahead with ease – which is called “SAMĀDHI DEVELOPS WISDOM”.

But there are other people who have many things in their environment to burden and oppress their hearts and their natures are such that they like thinking a lot. If they train themselves using a preparatory meditation as described in the foregoing chapter, they are not able to cause the Citta to drop into the calm of Samādhi. They must therefore carefully use wisdom to examine the reasons for this, in order to sever the root cause of their distraction by means of wisdom.

When wisdom has been nagging at those things to which the Citta is firmly attached, what the Citta knows about them cannot be superior to that which wisdom reveals, so the Citta will then drop into a state of calm and attain Samādhi.

People of this type must therefore train the Citta to attain Samādhi by using wisdom, which may be called “WISDOM DEVELOPS SAMĀDHI” – and is also the title given to this book.

When Samādhi steadily develops due to the use of wisdom, the Samādhi then becomes the basis for further wisdom at a higher level. This latter stage then conforms with the basic principle that: “SAMĀDHI DEVELOPS WISDOM”.

.....

A person who wants to train his heart to become skilful, and to know what is behind the deluded tricks of the defilements (Kilesā), must not be attached to study and learning in Buddhism to such an extent that it gives rise to the defilements. But also he must not abandon study and learning, for to do this goes beyond the teaching of the Lord. Both these ways are contrary to the purpose which the Lord Buddha desired that one should aim at.

In other words, when one is practising meditation for the purpose of developing Samādhi, do not let the Citta grasp at what it has learnt by study, for it will be led into thoughts of the past and future. One must instead make the Citta keep to the present,

which means that just that aspect of Dhamma which one is developing must be one's only concern.

When there is some question or point of doubt in connection with one's Citta which one is unable to resolve, one may then check it by study and learning after one has finished one's meditation practice. But it is wrong to check one's practice all the time with what one has learnt by study, for this will be mere intellectual knowledge, and not knowledge which comes from development in meditation, and it is not the right way.

Summarising the above: if the Citta attains calm with an object of calm (Samatha), that is, with a preparatory repetition that comes from an aspect of Dhamma that one is developing, one should continue with that method. But if it attains calm only by the use of wisdom, using various expedient methods to overcome difficulties, then one should always use wisdom to help in the attainment of calm.

The results which come from training in both these ways (i.e. Samādhi develops wisdom, and wisdom develops Samādhi), are the development of CALM and WISDOM, which will have a hidden radiance coming from the calm.



SAMĀDHI 3

SAMĀDHI IS BY NAME AND NATURE “CALMNESS”. It is of three kinds as follows:

1. Khaṇḍika Samādhī – in which the heart becomes unwaveringly fixed and calm for a short time, after which it withdraws.
2. Upacāra Samādhī – of which the Lord said, that it is almost the same, but it lasts longer than Khaṇḍika Samādhī. Then the Citta withdraws from this state.

Here, Upacāra Samādhī will be briefly discussed from the viewpoint of the “Forest Dhamma”,⁸ before going on to the third type which is “*Appaṇā Samādhī*”.

In Upacāra Samādhī, when the Citta has dropped into a calm state it does not remain in that state, but partially withdraws from it to follow and get to know about various things which have come into contact with the heart.

Sometimes something arises concerning oneself and one sees a Nimitta which is sometimes good and sometimes bad, but in the first stage the Nimitta will generally be something about oneself. If one is not careful this can lead to trouble, because Nimittas which arise from this kind of Samādhī are of innumerable varieties.

Sometimes in front of one there appears an image of oneself lying down dead, the body decayed and swollen, or it may be the dead body of someone else. Sometimes it is a skeleton, or bones scattered about, or maybe one sees it as a corpse being carried past.

⁸ “Forest Dhamma” is the Author’s way of saying that the following exposition is derived from the experiences of meditation monks and not from theory or books.

When such a Nimitta appears, a clever person will take it as his Uggaha Nimitta; in order that it may become the Paṭibhāga Nimitta,⁹ because this will steadily lead to Samādhi becoming firm and to wisdom becoming penetrating and strong.

For a person, who has a strong ability in maintaining a detached rational attitude, to be successful in gaining value from such a Nimitta he will always tend to develop mindfulness and wisdom (Sati-Paññā) when faced with it. But there are a lot of people whose natures are timid and easily frightened, and Upacāra Samādhi may do harm to the Citta of a person of this type because this class of Samādhi is of many different kinds and many frightening experiences can occur. For example, the image of a man may appear, whose bodily shape, colour and social position¹⁰ are all frightening, and he may appear as though about to slash at one with a sword, or to eat one.

If however, one has little fear and is not timid, one can suffer no harm in such circumstances and one will learn more and more new methods of curing one's Citta from this type of Nimitta, or Samādhi. But with a timid person – who usually tends to look for fearful things – the more he sees a frightening Nimitta the larger it becomes, and at such a time he may unfortunately be driven mad.

As for external Nimittas which come and go, one may or may not know whether a Nimitta is external or whether it arises from oneself. But when one has become skilled with internal Nimittas which arise from oneself, one will be able to know which are external Nimittas. External Nimittas are associated with many different happenings of people, animals, Pretas, Bhūtas (ghosts of the dead), the son of a Deva, a Devatā, Indra, or Brahma, any of which may at that time be associated with one's Samādhi, even as one talks to a guest who comes on a visit. When such incidents occur they may last for a long or a short time depending on how long the necessary conditions last that are required for such happenings.

Sometimes however, the first set of conditions dies away and another set of conditions arises continuing from the first set, which is not easily brought to a close for the theme may be of short or long duration. When it dies away and the Citta withdraws, it may have spent several hours in this state.

⁹ The definitions of the glossary are here used in a different sense. The Author said when questioned that the sense in which they are used herein is that the Uggaha Nimitta is the basic Nimitta, the one that "uprises" or comes into being. When the Uggaha Nimitta breaks up into its components, it is called the Paṭibhāga Nimitta. Thus for example, the vision of one's physical body may be the Uggaha Nimitta, but when this breaks open and displays all the parts and organs, it is the Paṭibhāga Nimitta.

¹⁰ E.g., a soldier, a judge, the executioner, etc.

For however long the Citta remains concentrated in this kind of Samādhi, when it withdraws one will find that it has not increased one's strength of Samādhi, nor made it more firm and durable, nor will it have helped to develop and strengthen one's wisdom. It is like going to sleep and dreaming, when one wakes one's mind and body will not have gained their full strength.

But when one withdraws from the type of Samādhi in which one became concentrated and remained in this one state, one will find that the strength of one's Samādhi has increased and it has become more firm and durable. Like someone who sleeps soundly without dreaming, when he wakes his body and mind will feel strong.

In Upacāra Samādhi, if one is still not skilled and does not use wisdom to be careful and watchful on all sides, it may cause much trouble – and can drive one mad. Those people who practise meditation generally call this state “Broken Dhamma”, and it comes about because of this type of Samādhi. But if it is done with due care it can be of value in connection with some things.

As for the Uggaha Nimitta which arises from the Citta, as was explained at the beginning of this chapter, this Nimitta is the most suitable basis for the development of the Paṭibhāga Nimitta, which accords with the principles of meditation of those who want a method which is both skilful and truly wise, because this is the Nimitta that is associated with the Ariya Sacca (Noble Truths). One must absorb the impression of the Paṭibhāga Nimitta into one's heart, then it may be considered to be the Ariya Sacca.¹¹

Both Nimittas which arise from oneself and those which come from external sources may lead to trouble if one is a timid person, and it is important to have wisdom and courage when things happen. But one who has wisdom is not one-sidedly biased against Upacāra Samādhi. It is like a poisonous snake, which although dangerous, is sometimes kept by people who can benefit from it.

The methods of practising with both kinds of Nimitta that arise from this type of Samādhi (Upacāra Samādhi) are thus as follows:

- a. The Nimitta which arises from the Citta is called the “internal Nimitta”, and one must go on and turn it into the “Paṭibhāga Nimitta as has already been explained above.

¹¹ For example the image of the dead body or its parts would be Dukkha Sacca (The Noble Truth of Suffering).

- b. The Nimitta which arises and is due to external entities such as a person or animal. If one is still not skilled at Samādhi, one must stop and one must not, for the time being take any further interest in the matter. But when one has become skilled at Samādhi, one may let the Citta go out and follow the Nimitta and find out what is taking place. It will then be of great value to link together the events of past and future

Samādhi of this kind is very strange, and one must not go to extremes and hastily become either enraptured by it, or sorry, but one must make the heart bold and fearless when the various kinds of Nimitta arise from Upacāra Samādhi, and at the outset see them in terms of the Ti-lakkhaṇa (Anicca, Dukkha, Anattā) as soon as any appear.¹² Then they will not cause any trouble.

It should however, be understood that the kind of Samādhi in which these Nimittas appear does not occur in every case, and where it does not occur, for however long the Citta remains in a concentrated state, hardly any Nimittas appear. These are the type of people of whom one may say that, “wisdom develops Samādhi”. With these types of people, even when the Citta has dropped down into a calm and concentrated state, Nimittas do not arise however long they remain in this state, because wisdom is associated and gets involved with the Samādhi.¹³

But where “Samādhi develops wisdom”, it is probable that a Nimitta will appear in nearly every case, because, this kind of Citta drops into a concentrated state very quickly; like a person who falls into a well or pit, he does so because he is not careful and falls suddenly. Thus the Citta drops down all at once and reaches its resting place, then it retreats from there and comes to know various things, and at that moment a Nimitta appears. This is the way it occurs in nearly all such people whose Citta is of this type.

But whatever type of Samādhi is developed, wisdom is always the thing that is important. When one has withdrawn from Samādhi, one must contemplate the

¹² This means that one should keep to the “Middle Way”, avoiding the extremes of desire for a pleasant Nimitta and aversion from an unpleasant one. Also that one should not become attached to a pleasant Nimitta and then be sorry when it changes or goes. By seeing the Ti-lakkhaṇa in all Nimittas one remains detached and safe.

The Ti-lakkhaṇa (three Characteristics) include:

Anicca – Impermanence, transience

Dukkha – Suffering, discontent

Anattā – Not self

¹³ One is constantly examining and investigating the state of Samādhi while it is present, and this effectively prevents any Nimittas arising.

elements (Dhātu) and the Khandhas with wisdom, because wisdom and Samādhi are a “Dhamma pair” which go together and cannot be separated.

So if Samādhi does not progress sufficiently, one must use wisdom to assist it.

This is the end of the section dealing with Upacāra Samādhi.

3. Appaṇā Samādhi – is Samādhi that is subtle, firm, and unwavering, and in which one can remain concentrated for a long time. One may also remain concentrated in this state, or withdraw from it as one wishes.

.....

It should be understood that Samādhi of all types is what aids and supports the development of wisdom, and the extent to which it does this depends on the strength of one’s Samādhi. In other words, Samādhi which is gross, middling, or subtle, aids and supports wisdom which is gross, middling, or subtle respectively, and it is up to a wise person to turn his Samādhi to use by developing wisdom.

But generally speaking, whatever type of Samādhi is attained, one who practises meditation is likely to become attached to it, because when the Citta drops into a concentrated state and while it rests there, a state of calm and happiness is present. It can be said that in being attached to Samādhi, or calm, the Citta has no problems while it remains concentrated, and it can remain at rest for as long as one wishes, depending on the level of one’s Samādhi.

An important thing is that, when the Citta has withdrawn, it still longs for its state of repose although one has enough calm to meditate using wisdom – and one’s calm is sufficient so that one should be able to use wisdom very effectively. But one still tries to stay in a state of calm, without being at all interested in the development of wisdom. This is becoming addicted to Samādhi and being unable to withdraw from it in order to go further.



WISDOM

THE RIGHT AND SMOOTH WAY FOR ONE who practises meditation, once the Citta has become sufficiently calm to see the way, is to begin by training it to investigate the parts of the body with wisdom, either singly or as many parts, opening up and looking into one's own body. One may start from hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, spleen, heart, liver, pleura, kidneys, lungs, small intestine, large intestine, fresh food, old food (digested food)...etc., these altogether, being called the thirty two parts of the body. These parts are by normal standards always loathsome and detestable, and there is not one of them which is beautiful and charming – as they are usually thought to be by people in the world.

In life these parts are loathsome and unpleasant, and in death even more so, quite irrespective of whether they are the bodily parts of an animal or human beings, man or woman, for this is the nature of all of them.

The world is full of things such as these loathsome parts and it is hard to find anything more strange. But whoever lives in this world must have such things, must be such things and must see such things.

ANICCA – Impermanence – is the nature of this body.

DUKKHA – Hardship and Pain – is the nature of this body.

ANATTĀ – The negation of the desires of all beings – is the nature of this body.

Things which do not fulfill any of one's hopes are about and within this body. Delusion with regard to beings and Saṅkhāras, is delusion with regard to this body. Attachment to beings and Saṅkhāras is attachment to this body. Separation from beings

and Saṅkhāras is separation from this body. The infatuations of love and hate are infatuation with this body. Not wanting death is anxiety about this body – and when dead, the weeping and mourning of relations and friends is because of this body.

The distress and suffering from the day of one’s birth to the time of one’s death is because of this body. All day and night, animals and people run this way and that in swarms, searching for places to live and food, because of the nature of this body.

The great cause and the great story in this world, which is the wheel that whirls people and animals around without ever letting them open their eyes properly to the nature of their state, and is like a fire burning them all the time, is the story of this body which is the cause of it all. Beings are inundated by the defilements (Kilesā) until they are quite unable to extricate themselves from this situation, because of this body. In brief, the whole story of this world is the story of what concerns this body alone.

When one examines the body and what is related to it with wisdom, in the foregoing way without stopping, so that it becomes clear and evident to the heart, from where can the defilements raise their army to prevent the heart dropping into a state of calm? Wisdom is proclaiming the truth and making the heart listen, and when it is doing this all the time, where can the heart go to oppose the truth that comes from wisdom? From the heart come the defilements, and from the heart comes wisdom, so how could it be that the heart, which is “oneself”, should not be able to cure one’s own defilements by means of wisdom? And when wisdom dwells upon the body in this way, why should one not see clearly within the body?

When the heart views the body in the foregoing way, with wisdom, it will become wearied both of one’s own body and the bodies of other people and animals. This will reduce one’s pleasurable excitement in regard to the body, and will thus withdraw “Upādāna” – fixed attachment – to the body, by means of “Samuccheda-pahāna” (cutting off attachment by abandoning it). At the same time one will know the body and all its parts as they truly are, and one will no longer be deluded by love or hate for the body of anyone or anything.

The Citta in using the spyglass of wisdom to go sightseeing in the “City of the Body” can see one’s own “Body City” and then that of other people and animals quite clearly, until one comes to see in greater detail that all the roads, streets and alleyways are

divided into three aspects, which are the Ti-lakkhaṇa – Anicca, Dukkha, Anattā – and into four aspects, which are the four elements (Dhātu) – Earth, Water, Air, Fire – and this is so throughout every part of the whole body. Even the lavatory and the kitchen are to be found within this “Body City”.

One who is able to see the body clearly in this way may be classed as “Lokavidū” – one who can see clearly within the “City of the Body” throughout all the three world spheres (Ti-loka - dhātu) by means of “YATHĀBHŪTANĀṆADASSANA” – which means seeing in a true way everything within the body and coming to the end of all doubts with regard to the body – and this is called “**Rūpa Dhamma**”.

We now go on to a discussion of Vipassanā in connection with “**Nāma Dhamma**”.

Nāma Dhamma includes Vedanā, Saññā, Saṅkhāra, and Viññāṇa, these four being the second group of the five Khandhas, but they are more subtle than the Rūpa Khandha which is the body. One cannot look into them with one’s eyes, but one can come to know them by way of the heart.

Vedanā – means those things (feelings) which are experienced by the heart that are sometimes pleasant, sometimes painful, and sometimes neutral.

Saññā – means remembering (recollecting) – for example, remembering names, sounds, objects, and things, or verses in the Pāli language, etc.

Saṅkhāra – means thinking or thought constructing (imagination) – such as thoughts which are good or evil, or thoughts which are neither good nor evil; or for example, thought constructing which is based on the past and imagining the future.

Viññāṇa – means awareness (sense awareness) – of forms, sounds, smells, tastes, or things which touch us, and of mental objects, just at that moment when these things come into contact with the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or heart respectively.

These four Nāma Dhammas are the activities of the heart, they come from the heart, they may be known in the heart, and if the heart is still not careful they are also the deceivers (Māyā) of the heart, and so they are also the things which can hide or obscure the truth.

Investigation of these four Nāma Dhammas must be done with wisdom, and entirely in terms of the TI-LAKKHAṆA, because into whatever mode they change, these Khandhas always have the Ti-lakkhaṇa present within them. But when investigating these four Khandhas one may do so in any one of them and in any one of the Ti-lakkhaṇa as one's heart truly prefers, or one may do so generally in all of them together if it prefers it that way, because each of the Khandhas and Ti-lakkhaṇa are aspects of Dhamma which are linked and related together. Thus if one investigates only one of the Khandhas or Ti-lakkhaṇa, it will lead one to understand, and to see deeply and fully into all the other Khandhas and Ti-lakkhaṇa, the same as if one investigated them all together at the same time, because all of them have the Ariya Sacca as their boundary, their territory, and as that which accommodates them.¹⁴ This is like eating food, all of which goes down into one place (the stomach) and then permeates to all parts of the body, which is the total territory that accommodates it.

Therefore one who practises must set up mindfulness and wisdom so as to get close and intimate with the Nāma Dhamma – which are these four Khandhas. All the time these Khandhas are changing, for they appear, remain for a time then die away and cease, and being impermanent they are also Dukkha and Anattā. This is how they display and proclaim their true nature, but they never have time to stop and look at it. They never have time to become calm, not even one moment. Internally, externally, everywhere throughout every realm (Loka-dhātu), they proclaim with one voice that they are impermanent, and are thus Dukkha and Anattā, and that they reject the longings of beings *and this means that none of these things have an owner*. They proclaim that they are always independent and free, and that whoever deludedly becomes attached to them only meets with suffering, depression and sorrow which fill his thoughts and heart until in the end his tears of misery are like an ever-flooded river – and it will continue to be thus throughout time while beings remain deluded and entangled. Yet it is easy to point out that the five Khandhas are the well of tears of those who are steeped in delusion.

Investigating all the Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas (things in nature) with right wisdom so as to know them clearly is for the purpose of minimising one's tears and for

¹⁴ This means that wherever one looks into the Ti-lakkhaṇa and the five Khandhas, one finds the four Ariya Sacca.

diminishing the process of becoming and birth, or for cutting them away from the heart, which is the owner of Dukkha, so that one may receive perfect happiness.

Sabhava Dhammas such as the Khandhas are poisonous to one who is still sunk in delusion, but one who truly knows all the Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas as they are, cannot be harmed by them and may still obtain value from them in appropriate ways. It is like a place where thorny bushes grow, they are dangerous to anyone who does not know where they are and who gets entangled in them. But someone who knows all about them can use them to make a fence or a boundary for a building site, thus obtaining value from them in appropriate ways. Therefore, one who practises must act skilfully in relation to the Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas.

All these things (Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas) arise and die away based on the Citta the whole time, and one must follow and know what is happening to them with an all-embracing wisdom that will immediately know what they are up to. One must take this up as an important task to be done in all four postures, without being careless or forgetful.

The teaching of Dhamma (Dhamma-desanā) which comes from the Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas everywhere at this stage, will appear by way of unceasing mindfulness and wisdom, and this teaching will not be lacking in eloquence of expression. All the time it will proclaim the facts of the Ti-lakkhaṇa within one by day and night, and while standing, walking, sitting or lying down, and this is also the time when one's wisdom should be ripe for listening, as though one were meditating on the Dhamma Desanā of the wisest of Bhikkhus.

At this level, the person who is doing the practice will be completely absorbed in his research into the true nature of the Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas which are proclaiming the truth of themselves, and he will hardly be able to lie down and sleep because of the strength of the energy in the basis of his nature, which searches by means of wisdom into the Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas without resting or stopping – these (Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas) being the same as the basis of his nature.

Then from the Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas he will obtain the truth, and it will be made clear to his heart by wisdom that all the Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas everywhere throughout the three world spheres (Ti-loka-dhātu) are of such a nature

and normality that none of them seem to be the defilements and craving (Kilesā and Tanhā) in any way whatsoever, which is in contrast to the deluded understanding of most people.

The following simile may help to explain this. Supposing some things are stolen by a thief, those things become tainted by association with the thief. But once the authorities have carefully investigated the case until they have sufficient witnesses and evidence, and are satisfied, the stolen goods which have been recovered can be returned to their original owner, or kept in a safe place so that no blame shall be attached to them. The authorities are then no longer concerned with the stolen goods, but only with the punishment of the thief. They must then obtain evidence against the thief and arrest him and bring him to trial in accordance with the law. When the truth of his guilt is established by reliable witnesses and evidence, the blame is put on the accused in accordance with the law, and any others who were not to blame would be allowed to go free, as they were before the incident.

The behaviour of the Citta with ignorance (Avijjā), and all the Sabhava Dhammas, are similar to this, for the Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas throughout all the three world spheres (Ti-loka-dhātu) are not at fault and are entirely free from any defilements or evil ways, but they are associated with them because the Citta, which is entirely under the power of Avijjā, does not itself know the answer to the question: “who is Avijjā”.

Avijjā and the Citta are blended together as one, and it is the Citta which is completely deluded that goes about forming loves and hates which it buries in the elements (Dhātu) and Khandhas – that is, in forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and bodily feeling, and in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and heart. It also buries love and hate in Rūpa, Vedanā, Saññā, Saṅkhāra, and Viññāṇa, throughout the whole universe (Ti-loka-dhātu). It is the things of nature which are seized, and it is love and hate which come from the whole of this deluded heart that grasp and seize them.

Because of the power of seizing and grasping, which are the causes, this “Avijjā heart” wanders through birth, old age, sickness, death, going round and round in this way through each and every life, regardless of whether it is higher or lower, good or evil, through all the three realms of becoming (Bhava).

The different kinds of birth that beings may take in these realms of becoming are countless, yet the Citta with Avijjā is able to grasp at birth in any of these realms in accordance with the supporting conditions of this Citta and depending on how weak or strong and good or evil they may be. This heart must then go and be born in those circumstances that present a complete environment to which the heart (with these supporting conditions) is related.

Thus the Citta gradually changes into ways which are false to its true nature, due only to the power of Avijjā, and it begins to stain and colour everything in the universe in a false manner, thus altering the natural state. In other words, the original basic elements change and become animals, people, and birth, old age, sickness and death, in accordance with the usual delusion (or Avijjā) of beings.

When one understands clearly with wisdom, that the five Khandhas and the Sabhava Dhammas are not the main story, nor the ones who started the story, but are only involved in the story because Avijjā is the one who wields the authority and power, compelling all Sabhavas to be of this nature, then wisdom searches for the source of it all, which is the “CITTA THAT KNOWS”, which is the “well” out of which all the stories of all things arise endlessly in all situations, and wisdom has no confidence in this knowledge.

When mindfulness and wisdom have been developed by training for a long time until they are fully proficient, they will be able to surround and penetrate straight through to the “great centre”. In other words, “the one who knows” (i.e. the Citta that knows), who is full of Avijjā, does not hesitate to fight against wisdom. But when Avijjā can no longer stand against the “Diamond Sword”, which is unshakeable mindfulness and wisdom, it falls away from the Citta which has been its supreme throne for aeons.

As soon as Avijjā has been destroyed and has dropped away from the Citta, due to the superior power of “MAGGA ÑĀṆA”, which is the right weapon for use at this time, the whole of the truth which has been suppressed and covered by Avijjā for countless ages is then disclosed and revealed as the “goods which have been stolen”,¹⁵ or as the entire and complete truth. Dhamma which was never before known, then finally

¹⁵ This passage means that under the influence of Avijjā, the Citta has usurped the Khandhas and Sabhava Dhammas and thinks of them as being its property. When Avijjā is destroyed it seems that all these are “goods which have been stolen”, and are not the property of the Citta at all, but are neutral, natural phenomena.

appears as “YATHĀBHŪTANĀṆADASSANA” – knowledge and true insight into all Sabhava Dhammas – which are revealed without the least thing remaining hidden or obscured.

When Avijjā, the Lord who rules the round of death, has been destroyed by the weapon of “PAÑÑĀ NĀṆA”, Nibbāna will be revealed to the one who thus acts truly, knows truly, and sees truly – it cannot be otherwise.

All the Sabhava Dhammas, from the five Khandhas to the internal and external Āyatanas and up to the whole of the Ti-loka-dhātu are the Dhamma which is revealed as it truly is. There is then, nothing that can arise as an enemy to one’s heart in the future – except for the vicissitudes of the five Khandhas which must be looked after until they reach their natural end.

So the whole story is that of Avijjā – which is just “false knowing” – which goes around molesting and obstructing natural conditions so that they are changed from their true natural state. Just by the cessation of Avijjā, the world (Loka), which means the natural state of things everywhere becomes normal and there is nothing left to blame or criticise it. It is as if a famous brigand had been killed by the police, after which the citizens of the town could live happily and need no longer go about watchfully for fear of the brigand.

The heart is then possessed of “YATHĀBHŪTANĀṆADASSANA” which means that it knows, sees and follows the truth of all the Sabhava Dhammas, and this knowledge is balanced and no longer inclines to one-sided views or opinions.

From the day that Avijjā is dispersed from the heart, it will be entirely free in its thinking, meditating, knowing and seeing into the Sabhava Dhammas which are associated with the heart. The eye, ear, nose, etc., and form, sound, smell, etc., then become free in their own natural sphere respectively, without being oppressed and forced, nor promoted and encouraged by the heart as usually happens. Because the heart is now in a state of Dhamma and impartiality, for it is impartial towards everything so that it will no longer have any enemies or foes. This means that the Citta and all Sabhava Dhammas in the Universe (Ti-loka-dhātu) are mutually in a state of complete peace and calm by virtue of the perfect Truth.

The work of the Citta and of insight (Vipassanā) into the Nāma Dhammas which are associated with the Citta ends at this point.

.....

I want to beg the pardon of all who practise for the purpose of getting rid of the defilements using the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha, who find this exposition different from those that you have been used to. But one should see that the Dhamma in all the old Buddhist texts also points directly at the defilements and the Dhamma which are within oneself, for one must not think that the defilements and Dhamma are hidden elsewhere, external, apart from oneself.

One who has “Opanayika Dhamma” (Dhamma which leads inwards) firmly in his heart will be able to free himself, because the “Sāsana Dhamma” (Buddhist Dhamma) teaches those who listen to make it “Opanayika” – in other words, to bring the Dhamma into oneself. And please do not think that the Dhamma teaching of the Buddha is a thing of the past or future and that it concerns only those who are dead and those who are yet to be born. One should realise that the Lord Buddha did not teach people who were already dead, nor those who were still to be born. He taught people who lived at that time and who were still alive in the same way as all of us are still alive, for it is the nature of Buddhism to exist in the present and to be always a thing of today.

May you all be happy without exception, and may blessings come to all of you who read or hear this.

Thank you



GLOSSARY OF PĀLI TERMS

Ācariya – teacher

Appanā – absorption (in the object)

Ānāpānasati – the meditation practice in which one endeavours to be mindful of the feeling of in and out breathing

Anattā – see Ti-lakkhaṇa

Anicca – see Ti-lakkhaṇa

Ariya Sacca – the four Noble Truths; i.e. the truth of Dukkha; the truth of the origination of Dukkha; the truth of the cessation of Dukkha; and the Path leading to it

Arūpa – immaterial, formless

Āsava – “Outflows” – those defilements that “flow out” from the heart into thoughts, speech and action. There are usually considered to be four:

- i) Kāmāsava – the āsava of sensual desire
- ii) Bhavāsava – the āsava of desire for existence
- iii) Diṭṭhāsava – the āsava of opinionatedness
- iv) Avijjāsava – the āsava of ignorance

Asubha – lit.: inauspicious (to the Kilesas), loathsome; also the ten contemplations of the decomposition of a dead body

Avijjā – the negative of “Vijjā”. So Avijjā means the lack of any knowledge that is higher than the level of mere convention, or lack of insight. It is ignorance so profound that it is self-obscuring, turning everything upside down, it makes us believe that what is wrong is right, what is unimportant is important, what is bad is good, and what we normally call knowledge is Vijjā whereas in fact it is Avijjā. In fact, Avijjā is the opposite of insight and finally of enlightenment.

Āyatana – spheres of sensation. They include the internal Āyatana – eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and heart, and the external Āyatana – the spheres of sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and mind.

Bhava – becoming, the realms of existence

Bhāvanā – the practice of developing one’s Citta by the training in meditation. It is training of the mind as distinct from training of bodily action and speech, which are covered by Sila.

Bhikkhu – mendicant monk

Bhūta – ghost of the dead

Brahma – god, but neither eternal, omnipotent nor omniscient

Brahma Vihāra – friendliness, compassion, joy, and equanimity form the four meditation subjects

Buddha – usually the first teacher, derived from “supreme knowing”

Buddho – a Parikamma for the recollection of the Buddha

Buddha sāsana – see Sāsana

Citta – the Heart. The Citta has often been translated as the “mind” or the “mental factors” because it is said that the four Khandhas of Vedanā, Saññā, Saṅkhāra, and Viññāṇa are the Citta. Although this is true it must be realised that these are by way of being “modifications of the Citta”. The Citta in its true unmodified state is beyond the Khandhas and it has no “signs” by which it may be known in the sensory universe.

The Citta is translated as “Heart” because the experience of those who are skilled in meditation is that the incoming sensations appear to “gravitate” to the heart and it appears that it is from here that the above four modifications of Citta spring forth. It is also well to avoid the present trend of thinking that the mind is just the “thinking apparatus” (which is Saṅkhāra Khandha) and located in the head (brain).

Deva (m); Devatā (f) – general term for gods and goddesses in those realms immediately higher than human

Dhamma – although only having one meaning, it is impossible to define. However the various facets or aspects of Dhamma can be defined or described. Thus it can mean: the (true) teaching, the truth, the way to understanding truth and Nibbāna, that which is of value in one’s heart, the ultimate, etc.

Dhamma desanā – the teachings of Dhamma; Dhamma talk

Dhammo – the Parikamma used for the recollection of the Dhamma

Dhātu – elements, of earth, water, fire, air – these being symbolic for: material, cohesion, energy, and mobility

Dukkha – see Ti-lakkhaṇa

Ekaggatārammaṇa – non-dual, oneness of the Citta

Heart – is usually a translation of the Thai word “chai”, and is synonymous with the word “Citta”

Indra (Skt) = Inda or Sakka (Pāli) – Chief of the gods

Kammaṭṭhāna – (kamma = action; ṭhāna = a base) Literally this means a “basis for action”. It is usually taken to mean the forty subjects of meditation (as listed in the Visuddhimagga). But the way that it is used by many monks who practise meditation in Siam is to mean the whole way of training which eventually leads to the skill in samādhi and paññā, etc. (an idea of what this entails may be had from the earlier parts of the second Sutta in the Dīgha Nikāya, Samaññaphala Sutta).

Khandha – the five groups which make up a “person”: Rūpa – body; Vedanā – feelings; Saññā – memory; Saṅkhāra – thought; Viññāṇa – sense awareness

Kilesa – defilements. These are what soil, stain or defile the heart making it impure and dirty. The usual list includes: greed, hate, dullness and stupidity, conceit, opinionatedness, uncertainty, mental torpor, restlessness, no sense of shame in doing wrong, no fear of the consequences of doing wrong.

Loka-dhātu – those things which go to make up the world, both externally and within oneself

Magga; Phala; Nibbāna – (magga = path; phala = fruit; nibbāna = extinguished) These three words are often found coupled together and they may be thought of as the three transcendental states of development. Magga – the Path – means the Noble Eightfold Path, but in this context it refers to that moment when all the factors of the Path “crystallise” in one’s heart and the “path out” from Saṃsāra is attained. Phala – the fruit – is the resulting state that comes from the moment of attaining the path. Nibbāna – is the extinction of the Āsavas, the Kilesas and Taṇhā. Often called the moment of enlightenment.

This explanation is given with hesitancy as all three of these terms have precise meanings which can only truly be known by someone who has had the experiences concerned. They can never be properly understood merely from the explanation found in books, nor from thinking or imagining about them.

Māyā – delusion, deceit

Nāma-rūpa – (lit. name and form) But usually translated as body and mind, although the true meaning is more subtle than the gross physical body and the full developed mental apparatus.

Ñāṇa – higher-knowledge

Nibbāna – see Magga

Nimitta – an appearance that may take place in terms of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching or mental impression, and which arises based on the Citta and not upon the relevant sense organ. Examples of Nimittas are: the seeing or hearing of ghosts, pre-cognition, clairvoyance, etc.

“One who knows” – is in fact a mode of the Citta. To illustrate this, supposing that one has told a lie to someone; one’s actions, speech and thoughts may all be in accordance with the lie, but somewhere inside is the “one who knows”, and it is always aware that this is a lie. It must however, be born in mind that except in rare cases, the “one who knows” is still under the influence of Avijjā, so that although it knows it might know many things wrongly.

Opanayika – “leading inwards”. This has in other places been translated as “leading onwards”, which although grammatically correct, does not appear to be warranted in most cases.

Paññā – wisdom

Parikamma Dhamma– “preparatory Dhamma” – this refers to the preparatory object for focussing the attention when one starts to practise meditation. It includes such things as the repetition of “Buddho”, the feeling of the breath going in and out at the tip of the nose, etc.

Paṭibhāga – equal, similar, likeness, resemblance

Phala – see Magga

Preta (Skt) = Peta (Pāli) – hungry ghost

Rāga Taṇhā – lust (sexual craving)

Rūpa – see Nāma-rūpa and Khandha

Sabhava Dhamma – natural things, or things in nature

Samādhi – calm or stability of the heart; the training to attain absorbed concentration of mind

Samatha – calm

Samuccheda-pahāna – overcoming by abandoning or giving up

Saṅgha – the Order of Buddhist monks, but also in a more restricted meaning of Sāvaka Saṅgha

Saṅgho – the Parikamma for the recollection of Saṅgha

Saṅkhāra – see Khandha

Saññā – see Khandha

Sāsana – system, as e.g., a system of religion; Buddha Sāsana means Buddhism, and this is the name by which it is normally called in Buddhist countries.

Sati – mindfulness; recollection, often considered with Paññā

Sāvaka – may be translated as “disciple of the Buddha”, although the actual meaning is “hearer”, in other words one who hears the Dhamma from the Buddha

Sīla – morality. But it also has a wider connotation in its higher and more subtle levels, for it includes all bodily actions and speech, which are assessed as right or wrong, depending on whether they make one’s heart less or more passionate. It can also be described as “that which sets a limit to one’s outgoing exuberance”.

Taṇhā – craving. This is the chief cause of Dukkha and includes:

- i) Kāma taṇhā – the craving for pleasure
- ii) Bhava taṇhā – the craving for things to remain the same
- iii) Vibhava taṇhā – the craving to change and become something else

Ti-lakkhaṇa – the three characteristics. This refers to the three things that are invariably found to be natural to all phenomena. They are: Anicca – the unstable, non-permanent, transient nature of all things in Saṃsāra; Anattā – that the animistic idea and attitude which people and beings attribute to themselves, others and other things, which give rise to the firmly held attitude that there is a presiding (Self) entity in the five Khandhas is in fact a convenient fiction and truly speaking quite false; Dukkha – the unsatisfactory, un-fulfilling nature of everything in Saṃsāra.

Ti-loka-dhātu – all of the universe – see loka-dhātu

Uggaha – learning or taking up

Upacāra – approaching or getting close (to the object)

Upādāna – grasping, attachment for

Vedanā – see Khandha

Viññāṇa – see Khandha

Vipassanā – insight, of such a type as is deep and effective in “curing” the defilements. It is insight which arises based on Samādhi, and not just an intellectual exercise.

Yathābhūtañāḍassana – knowing and seeing the basis of things as they are in truth