

A discourse on
VIPASSANĀ
(SPIRITUAL INSIGHT)

Delivered at the Rangoon University Dhammayon

by

The Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw

of

Burma



Translated by Dr. Ko Gyi

Buddhasāsanā Nuggaha Organization
Mahāsī Thāthana Yeikthā
Rangoon

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V I P A S S A N A
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A DISCOURSE ON VIPASSANĀ

[Spiritual Insight]

*delivered at the Rangoon University Dhammāyon
by the Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw*

(May 1974)

SUBJECT OF THE DISCOURSE

As is usual, the main emphasis of this evening's discourse will be on *Vipassanā* because it is a subject of vital importance which behoves a teacher to deliver for the instruction of his audience as much as it commands careful attention on the part of the latter to listen and learn.

The Buddha had set a sequence for the subjects He would address in his sermons, and they were enumerated in the following order.

- i *Dāna Kathā*, which deals with the subject of alms-giving or charity, and describes how one should offer alms or practise charity; and what kind of consequence or fruition would result thereby
- ii *Sīla Kathā* which deals with the subject of morality, such as keeping the five precepts, and explains how morality is developed, and what benefits its practice will bring

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- iii *Sagga Kathā*, which describes the delights of the Devas' blissful existence attainable through the practice of *Dāna* and observance of *Sīla*
- iv *Magga Kathā*, which exposes the demerits of sensual pleasures that abound in the sphere of Devas and points the way to their renunciation, and to the attainment of *Ariya magga* (Noble or Sublime Path) through the practice of *Samatha* (quietude) and *Vipassanā bhāvanā* (insight meditation).

Because the first three Kathās are subjects most often covered in discourses, I shall not deal with them here. Even the first portions of *Magga kathā* will have to be excluded in order that I may devote the entire time this evening to the completion of my discourse on *Vipassanā*.

Discourses on *Vipassanā* are being delivered by many Dhammakathikas (those who preach the Dhamma), and there may be variations in their individual presentations. The important thing is that whoever practises *Vipassanā* according to the instructions of a discourse should derive *Vipassanā* insight through immediate personal experience and in full accord with the expositions in the Dhamma.

We therefore commit ourselves to the propagation of working instructions on *Vipassanā-bhāvanā* (insight meditation) which will ensure

SUBJECT OF THE DISCOURSE

that those who follow them in its practice will achieve personal experience of true *Vipassanā* insight. In discharge of this commitment, I shall begin my discourse with the recital of a keynote *gāthā* (stanza) from Satti Sutta which says:

*“Sattiyā viya omattho deshamānova matthake
Kāmarāgappahānāya sato bikkhu paribbaje.”*

This is the rendition in verse of a statement of personal opinion made to the Buddha by an anonymous Deva. According to the exegesis in the first chapter of *Sagāthāvagga saṃyutta*, this statement may be assumed to have been made by a Brahmā (a celestial being of the Brahmā world; a noble being) from the fact that his life span was described as having ranged over many worlds. The Pālī *gāthā* (stanza) may be translated as follows.

“With the same urgency and despatch as someone whose breast has been impaled with a spear or whose head is on fire would seek immediate relief from the affliction thereof, the Bikkhu who is mindful of the perils of *Samāsārā* (round of births; cycle of the continuity of existence) should make haste to rid himself of the defilements of *Kāmarāga* (sensual pleasure) through *Samatha.jhāna* (quietude as a result of abstract meditation).”

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NON-ACCEPTANCE OF A STATEMENT OF TRUTH IS THE MANIFESTATION OF LOW INTELLIGENCE

As already mentioned, this is the submission by a Brahmā of his opinion to the Buddha. Certain people do not believe in the existence of Devas and Brahmās on the ground that they have not seen them personally. This is because they do not have the ability to perceive and because their level of knowledge and observation is low. They might turn round and say that they do not believe because their high intellect and rationality would not permit acceptance of the existence of Devas and Brahmās. As a matter of fact, the situation is very similar to the disbelief of certain easterners when the western world announced the invention of aeroplanes for the first time. It may also be likened to the non-acceptance by some people of the fact that space vehicles have landed man on the moon.

Buddha had spoken of Devas and Brahmās through personal knowledge of their existence and this has been supported by observations of persons endowed with *Abhiññā* (transcendent knowledge) and by Arahats. Buddha in his omniscience had perceived more abstruse and refined dhamma and expounded them also. Arahats with superior intellects have had personal experiences of these Dhamma and had thereby supported Buddha's expositions. If for the reason that they cannot see the Devas and Brahmās, certain people will

DHAMMA PRONOUNCEMENTS DESERVE CREDENCE

not accept their existence, we may conclude that their intelligence is still inadequate.

PRONOUNCEMENTS OF THE DHAMMA DESERVE THE SAME CREDENCE INVARIABLY GIVEN TO SCIENTISTS' FINDINGS

Brahmās are free from attachment to sensual pleasures. Their life-span covers a range of many worlds. Men and Devas belonging to the *kāma-loka* (sensuous sphere or plane of existence comprising eleven kinds of sentient beings) have short life spans. During the lifetime of Gotama Buddha, man generally lived to the age of one hundred years. Some died before that age while others live beyond one hundred years to one hundred and fifty or sixty. Much further back in time man had lived, according to statements in the religious chronicles, up to three or four hundred years of age. Man's lifespan cannot however be considered long. The devas have a much longer life span in comparison. Mortal human beings do not realize this. We could only learn about these facts through the teachings and observations of the Buddha and the Arahats. For example, in today's world, scientific knowledge is continually advancing. Men of science have been studying the nature of the world. Others who have no personal knowledge of science, learn from the findings of the scientists. Information on such matters as the nature and dimension of the stars and planets, their orbits and relationships, the

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nature of other celestial systems (Cakkavalās) etc., are gathered by scientists using their methods and calculations and others accept such information as true. Although we are not endowed with the knowledge that scientists have, we use our common sense and intelligence and accept the scientists' information whenever we find it plausible.

In the same way, what the Buddha had told us out of His own omniscience and experience we should accept and believe as, for instance, in the case of accepting the fact that Devas and Brahmās exist. We accept such facts although we do not know them through personal experience, because we can use our rational thinking and accept them as plausible. If we aspire for personal experience and knowledge of these facts, there are methods through the practice of which such experience and knowledge can be attained. *Jhānas* (mystic or abstract meditation; ecstasy; absorption) and *Abhiññās* achieved by such practice can lead to conviction as a result of personal experience. It is therefore irrational to adopt the attitude of non-acceptance of a fact just because one has no personal knowledge of it while methods exist by practising which such knowledge is attainable.

ERROR OF JUDGING OTHERS BY ONE'S OWN STANDARDS
WHERE DIFFERENCES IN STATUS PRECLUDES COMPARISON

Some people say they cannot believe anything of which they have no personal experience.

ERROVS OF JUDGING OTHERS BY ONE'S OWN STANDARDS

This attitude stems from their presumption that others would not know what they themselves do not.

One person can appraise another's ability only when both belong together in the same category of development, intellectual or spirie-tual. It is wrong to assume that one can similarly appraise others who belong to a different category, as in the instance of someone with no training in mathematics who contends that a learned mathematician is no better than he in doing an arithmetical sum. To refuse to believe what someone with a profound knowledge of the world has expounded just because it is beyond one's comprehension is lamentable folly. The egregious error lies in equating one's intellectual calibre with the exponent's, and assuming that what one does not know, the other cannot.

One accepts the existence of Devas and Brahmās because the Buddha said so, and because one believes that He had seen and known them even though one may not be able to perceive their existence personally. There is in Buddha's teaching much else which is of greater import. It is necessary to study them thoroughly if one really wants to gain personal knowledge thereof, and one can surely achieve this if one sets out to study seriously. Buddha's teachings are all available for knowledge as well as

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personal experience, one of the attributes of the Dhamma being *Sandiṭṭhiko* which means that practice of the Dhamma certainly leads to personal insight and direct experience.

THE BRAHMĀ'S VIEW

As stated earlier, the life span of Devas is much longer than man's. Yet, in the estimation of the Brahmas, the Devas seem to be dying off after very brief spells of life. A Brahmā would therefore take pity on men and devas for their very short lives, assuming that lust for sensual pleasure has relegated them to the planes of human or Deva's existence where they die very soon. Should they strive for deliverance from bondage to this lust and achieve states of *Jhāna* as a Brahmā has done, they would also attain the existence of Brahmas and live for aeons of time measurable in world cycles. In this way, they would be relieved of the misery of very frequent deaths.

Thus the Satti Sutta, which says "With the same urgency and despatch as someone whose breast has been impaled with a spear or whose head is on fire would seek immediate relief from the affliction thereof, the Bhikkhu who is mindful of the perils of *Samsārā* (round of births; cycle of the continuity of existence) should make haste to rid himself of the defilements of *Kāma-rōga* (sensual pleasure) through *Samatha-jhāna*. (quietude as a result of abstract meditation).

THE BUDDHA'S VIEW

To put it briefly, the Brahmā's message is that attempts must be made immediately to achieve *Jhāna* in order to divest oneself of *Kāmarāga*.

We humans can observe many small animals whose lifespan is very short. Some insects appear to live only for a few days. Others are extremely small and presumably very short-lived also. One feels pity for these insects which live a few days only to die and be reborn into another short life. In the same way, Brahmās are moved to pity when they observe men and Devas coming to life and dying in a very short time, thus going through repeated cycles of brief periods of life. They hold the view that if men and devas should attain *Jhānas*, they would be rid of the lust for sensual pleasures and reach the realm of the Brahmās, which they believe is the best attainable state. Hence the expression of this opinion by one Brahmā as rendered in the Satti Sutta which was made to Buddha in the hope that He would approve it as true.

BUDDHAS' VIEW

Buddha noted, however, that the Brahmā's statement of view was incomplete and erroneous. Rejection of *Kāmarāga* (lust for sensual pleasures) can be brought about either by *Samatha-jhāna* or by *Anāgāmi magga* (the third of the four Maggas, or paths to Nibbāna).

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In the case of *Anāgāmi magga*, *Kāmarāga* is completely uprooted and this leads to rebirth in the Brahmā world. Here *arahatta magga*, the final step to Nibbāna, is attained. Rejection of *Kāmarāga* through *Anāgāmi magga* is therefore a commendable achievement of a high order.

On the other hand rejection of *Kāmarāga* through *Samatha-jhāna*, does not achieve its complete annihilation. During the *Jhānic* state or existence as a Brahmā there is freedom from *Kāmarāga*, but at the end of life in the Brahmā world, there can be rebirth in the human or Deva realms. *Kāmarāga* would then rear its head again. If he finds good companionship, and lives a virtuous life he will be born again as man or Deva. If through diligent practice he attains *Jhāna*, he can regain existence in the Brahmā world. If, however, he should fall among evil companions, he could be led to heresy and sinful conduct whereby he may be cast into the four *apāyas* (States of suffering or punishment). Therefore, rejection of *kāmarāga* merely by recourse to *Samatha jhāna* is not a valuable or rewarding achievement. This is Buddha's view and all disciples of the Buddha do not attach much value to rejection of *Kāmarāga* through *Samatha Jhāna*. At the end of existence in Brahmā realm which had been attained as fruition of *Jhāna*, rebirth could take place in the human world and the continuum of innumerable

DIVESTING ONESELF OF SAKKĀYADIṬṬHI

deaths and rebirths would prevail. The expected liberation from the misery of recurring deaths would still be unattainable. To emphasise the need for and ensure the attainment of this liberation, the Buddha restated the *Gāthā* as follows:

“*Sattiyā viya omaṭṭho, deshamānova matthake Sakkāyadiṭṭhippahānāya, sato bhikkhu paribbaje*” which means

“With the same urgency and despatch as someone whose breast has been impaled with a spear or whose head is on fire would seek immediate relief from the affliction thereof, the *Bikkhu* who is mindful of the perils of *Samsārā* (round of births) should make haste to free himself from *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* (the heresy of individuality).”

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVESTING ONESELF OF SAKKĀYADIṬṬHI

Just as it is of extreme importance to remove the spear impaling one's breast and treat the injury, or to put out the fire that burns one's head, it is imperative that one should divest oneself of *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*. For anyone who has not rid himself of *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*, even the attainment of existence in the Brahmās' realm is no surety against rebirth in the human or Deva worlds and the misery of frequent deaths; nor can relegation to the four *Apāyas* (states of suffering or punishment) be ruled out.

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Once free from *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*, however, one is forever delivered from the perils of being cast to the four *Apāyas* and will only be reborn in the human or *Devā* worlds no more than seven times. At the latest, then, one would achieve Arahathood and attain *Parinibbāna* in the seventh existence. Should one reach the Brahmā realm also, achievement of Arahathood and attainment of *Parinibbāna* would take place there. It is therefore most important and essential to uproot *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* through achievement of *Ariyamagga* (the sublime path). It is on this account that Buddha had pointed out the error in the Brahmā's pronouncement of Satti Sutta and enjoined us "to make haste to free ourselves from *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* through the sublime path of *Ariyamagga*."

WHAT IS SAKKĀYADIṬṬHI

The wrong view or interpretation of the apparent, perceived aggregate of physical and mental elements as individual *Atta* or "I", is *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*. This Pāli word is a union of three component words namely, *sa*, *kāya* and *diṭṭhi*. "Sa" means visible, perceivable presence; "kāya" means an aggregation; and "diṭṭhi" means wrong view and wrong interpretation. When "sa" and "kaya" are put together, a joint word "*sakkāya*" is derived which means a visible, perceivable aggregation of *rūpa* (assemblage of material (physical) elements and properties) and *nāma* (assemblage of consciousness and

SAKKĀYADIṬṬHI ASSOCIATED WITH VISION

mental properties). *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* is the wrong view and wrong interpretation of the aggregation of *rūpa* and *nāma* as individual *atta*, "I", or sentient being.

SAKKĀYADIṬṬHI ASSOCIATED WITH THE FACULTY OF VISION

What is evident is that at the moment of seeing there simultaneously exist the eye (physical organ of sight without which none can see); visible physical source of light or colour; and the mental faculty of recognising vision. The first two are "*rūpas*" because, on their own, they have no cognitive property; and encounter with or exposure to such opposing or unfavourable conditions as heat or cold would bring about adverse changes. In simple terms they may be described as *anārammana* (incapable of cognition). The mental faculty of recognising vision, of being conscious of seeing is "*nāma*". Thus, at the moment of seeing, what clearly exist are the aforesaid "*rūpas*" and "*nāma*". Yet ordinary humans do not realize this fact and what in reality is an aggregate of "*rūpas*" and "*nāma*" is mistakenly assumed by them as individual "*atta*" or "I". This is *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*.

The eye as well as the whole body of which it is part is misconceived as an individual "I" who sees. When one sees one's own hand, for instance, – "I" am seeing "my" hand; the

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subject who sees is "I". All three components, the eye, the object of sight and the eye-consciousness, are assumed to belong in the same individual "I". This is *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*. When seeing others, the interpretation would be that a person, a woman, a man, a living *atta* or an individual is seen. This is also *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*. Beginning with eye-consciousness, all consciousness and mental properties as well as the whole body are collectively presumed one's own, thereby giving rise to a clinging attachment to the individual "I". This is *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*, a heresy always present in ordinary man, and so deeply rooted and firmly ensconced that the number of cases of its rejection is very few and far between. Perhaps, attachment to the individual "*atta*" may be considerably reduced as the result of a wide study of Abhidhammā and other Buddhist texts. But complete detachment is unlikely.

Mere study of Abhidhammā as an intellectual exercise will not lead to freedom from the bondage of *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*. But momentary detachment from the "*atta*" heresy occurs each time "*anatta*" consciousness arises through the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* in relation to the consciousness of sight, sound, touch, etc. Whenever lapses occur in the mindful application of *Vipassanā bhāvanā*, attachment to *atta* will yet prevail again. Only the attainment of *Ariya magga*

THE FOUR TYPES OF ATTACHMENT TO ATTA

(sublime path) can completely eradicate this heresy. Ceaseless efforts should therefore be directed to its rejection through spiritual insight that leads to *Ariya magga*.

THE FOUR TYPES OF ATTACHMENT TO ATTA

There are many treatises and scriptures in India which describe and explain the *atta* principle in great detail. The acceptance of the idea that one can achieve whatever one wishes to bring about, is *Sāmi* type of *atta*-attachment; that the body always harbours an *atta* or individual "I" is *Nivāsī* type; that "I" myself walk, stand, sit, sleep, see, hear, act etc., is *Kāraka* type; and that the individual "I" myself solely enjoy the pleasurable and suffer the displeasurable is *Vedaka* type. Adherents to the *atta* principle according to these four types take the view that *atta* actually exists. But the teaching of Buddha denies the existence of *atta* in firm and explicit terms. This is very clearly brought out in such sermons of the Buddha as the Anatta Lakkhana Sutta. The majority of people in India believes in the *atta* principle. They believe that the tiny individual *atta* really exists, and that if contact with or understanding of this *atta* can be accomplished, all suffering would cease, as set forth in some of their writings. There is no written doctrine extant in Burma, however, which endorses the view that there is a tiny *atta* "creature" in the individual. But clinging or attachment to the

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idea of a living, individual *atta* does remain nevertheless. This *atta*-attachment not only characterises the common man or worlding, but also manifests itself in animals.

All the essential properties of *rūpa* and *nāma* which bring about processes that lead to seeing visible objects, hearing audible sounds are taken together and wrongly interpreted as being incorporated into the single entity of a living "I". Such deep-rooted misconception is *atta diṭṭhi* or *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*.

ARISING OF SAKKĀYADIṬṬHI THROUGH SENSE PERCEPTION OF SOUND

At the moment of hearing also, just as in the case of vision, the physical organ concerned, namely the ear and the physical force of sound vibrations (*rūpas*); and the mental property of sound perception (*nāma*) are clearly recognizable. These clearly recognizable aggregates of *rūpas* and *nāma* are wrongly interpreted as the individual "I" or as a living entity. In the same way, the source of the heard sound is also misconceived as a living individual creature. This is the wrong view, wrong belief and wrong assumption of *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*.

At the moment of smelling, the physical organ concerned, viz. the nose, and the physical or material source of smell (*rūpas*); and the mental property of olfactory perception (*nāma*) are recognizable. Here again, aggregates of these

SAKKĀYADIṬṬHI ASSOCIATED WITH SOUND PERCEPTION

recognizable *rūpas* and *nāma* are misconceived as a living, individual "I" or individual creature. This is *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*.

By the same token, during the process of eating food, edible matter and taste-perceptive physical organ, tongue (*rūpas*); and mental faculty of gustatory perception (*nāma*) are distinctly recognizable. But the aggregation of these component *rūpas* and *nāma* is misinterpreted as the living, individual "I" or a living individual creature. This is *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*.

The process of touch or contact involves a very wide area. Touch or contact can be established in all parts of the body. Sight only involves the two eyes of the recipient body; hearing involves the two ears; smell involves the two nasal passages; and taste involves the tongue; whereas touch or contact takes place in all adequately nourished, normally functioning parts of the body, from head to foot, externally as well as internally. In every point of contact diffused throughout the recipient body, there is a distinct *kāya pasāda* (body-consciousness sense base). Therefore, when touch or contact takes place between the subject and the sense object, three manifestations are involved; namely, the *kāya pasāda* of the recipient body and the sense object, both of which are *rūpas*; and the mental faculty (*nāma*) of the perception of touch. When aggregations of these *rūpas*

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and *nāma* are however wrongly conceived as "I" or a sentient creature, it is *sakkāyadiṭṭhi* again.

While giving rein to one's imagination, thoughts or schemes, the physical base on which each is focussed (*rūpa*); and the idea (*ārammana*) which supports or is the object of each projected thought (also *rūpa*); and the mental faculty which thinks, schemes and knows (*nāma*) are manifested. When these manifest *rūpas* and *nāma* are aggregated and wrongly presumed as the basis on which "I" am thinking, scheming or imagining, it is *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*.

In fact, total aggregation of all perceptions relating to the ocular, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile and mental processes is also liable to be misconceived as contributory to an individual "I" or *atta*, which again is *sakkāya diṭṭhi*.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ELIMINATING SAKKĀYA DIṬṬHI

For a person who has heard the teaching of Buddha and benefitted therefrom, such phenomena as sight, hearing etc., are each understood as a continuum involving alternating moments of the arising and cessation of related *rūpas* and *nāmas*. Such a person will not be oppressed by a firm bondage to *sakkāya diṭṭhi*. For others who have not had the opportunity to benefit from Buddha's teaching, attachment to the heresy

THE IMPORTANCE OF ELIMINATING SAKKĀYADIṬṬHI

of individuality would be very closely and firmly established. They would be fully convinced that a living individual *atta* or "I" really exists. Some may even go further and believe that a soul resides in each individual; that it relinquishes its habitat on the death of the host and takes up its new abode in the body of an infant about to be born. All this is *sakkāya diṭṭhi*.

As long as *sakkāya diṭṭhi* holds sway, immoral or sinful actions (*akusalakamma*) would abound, bringing about a commensurate rise in the risk of relegation to the *apāya*. It could be said that the doors to *apāya* are kept open and ready to take in all those still wallowing in the thralldom of *sakkāya diṭṭhi*. That is why it is most important that one should eliminate *sakkāya diṭṭhi*. If it is possible to uproot *sakkāyadiṭṭhi* entirely, there shall hence-forth be no possibility of being cast into *apāya*. There shall be no further commitment of *akusalakamma* and no past *akusalakamma* can be brought to bear upon the issue of relegation to *apāya*. The doors to *apāya* shall be closed forever and all suffering inherent in the *apāya* state will never be encountered again. Even rebirths in the human and Deva realms will not occur for more than seven times. All suffering that stems from aging, ill health and death which would attend further rebirths beyond the said maximum of seven would be

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eliminated; and during the maximum of seven rebirths, the final stage in the sublime path viz. *arahatta magga* would be achieved and Nibbāna attained.

It would thus be seen how important it is to rid oneself of the heresy of individuality and why Buddha enjoined us in Satti Sutta "to make haste to free ourselves from *sakkāya diṭṭhi* through the sublime path of *ariya magga*." Whoever is impaled by a spear should not brook any delay or tardiness, but take immediate steps to remove the prime weapon and treat the wound. The immediate concern of anyone whose head is on fire must be to put out the fire as soon as possible. Similarly, it is an overriding necessity to eliminate *sakkāya diṭṭhi*, to extinguish its raging flames immediately. Efforts should be started at once to this end because of the constraint of uncertainty. There is no way of ascertaining the length of our current existence. We cannot determine how long we will live nor foresee when, on what day and at what time we shall die. Time is therefore of the essence. We cannot afford to procrastinate any further.

BEGIN THESE EFFORTS TODAY

Vipassanā practice, which is most relevant to and essential for deliverance from the bondage of *sakkaya diṭṭhi*, should begin now, right away. It should be established and maintained with

THE FOUR SAMMAPPADHĀNA^१

Sammappadhānam (supreme effort, right exertion) to ensure the extinction of *kilesā* (moral defilements). Urgency of advocacy for *vipassanā* practice is prompted by the uncertainty of what tomorrow holds in store, whether one will live it through or be claimed by death which lurks and awaits the fateful hour. Death with discase, poison and diversity of lethal weaponry at its command is inexorable. It is not accessible to negotiation or conciliation. One cannot bargain for postponement of its visitation; nor take recourse to bribery, nor marshal one's own forces to repel its assault. Hence, the crucial need for immediate action to start the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā*. The important point which cannot be overemphasised is the need for immediate action, the need to start *vipassanā* practice now, this very day.

THE FOUR SAMMAPPADHĀNA (SUPREME EFFORTS)

There are four functions of *Sammappadhāna*:

- i Making efforts to prevent the arising of latent or unrisen evils or unwholesome states
- ii Making efforts to reject, or disburden oneself of evils or unwholesome states that have already arisen
- iii Making efforts to develop unrisen good (meritorious) or wholesome states

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- iv Making efforts to maintain, augment and completely fulfil good meritorious or wholesome states which have already arisen.

(i) Latent or unrisen evils (unwholesome states) refer to such cases as taking the life of any sentient being; robbing (stealing) other's property; utterance of lies, etc, which have not arisen in oneself but have been seen arising in others. Seeing or hearing others get into such evil or sinful states should prompt one to avoid or take precautions against the arising of such evils. In the same way, for instance, as proper environmental and personal hygiene, avoidance of unsafe contaminated food and water, etc have to be taken as preventive measures when others are seen to be afflicted with the prevailing disease during an outbreak of diarrhoea, the arising of sinful (unwholesome) states in others should serve as the signal for instituting measures to prevent similar states arising in one's own self.

(ii) One also has to safeguard oneself against further incidence of evil (unwholesome) states which had arisen in the past. This function also involves efforts to reject *Anusaya kilesā* (latent dispositions to moral defilement).

(iii) Unrisen good (meritorious) or wholesome state refers to status resulting from virtuous practice of *Dāna* (charity), *Sīla* (morality) or

THE FOUR SAMMAPPADHĀNA

Bhāvanā (meditation) which has not arisen in oneself. If such *Dāna* as offering of food and robes to the Sanghā (Buddhist priesthood, clergy) has not been performed before, one should make an effort to start the practice of *Dāna* within one's own capability and circumstance. *Sīla* is a code of morality and the basic *Panca sīla* (five precepts) are binding on all Buddhists. If one has not observed these five precepts conscientiously, one should take steps to do so. As far and as often as possible one should make efforts to embrace the observance of the eight precepts also. Similarly, efforts should be stepped up to embark upon the practice of *Bhāvanā*. *Samatha bhāvanā* (meditation exercise leading to quietude or tranquility) which is also synonymous with *samādhi* (concentration), may be practised as for example *Buddhanussati*. This is the repeated reflection on and constant mindfulness of virtues of the Buddha. The most important thing, in the final analysis, is to embark on an unprecedented course, the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā*. Its stern demands notwithstanding, one's utmost efforts invested in this discipline are sure to be most profitable and rewarding. Benefits would grow apace and provide support to the attainment of spiritual insight.

Admittedly, *Vipassanā* practice is no simple task and this is why it is outside the experience

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of most people, and why we are trying our best to provide instruction and guidance for simple approaches thereto. While paying attention to such lectures as the one being delivered now, one should be able to learn the method by which *Vipassanā bhāvanā* may be practised within the confines of one's home and progress steadily on the path to spiritual insight. *Mātikamātā* of ancient times who progressed in such fashion to *Anāgāmi* status (the third of the four sublime paths to Nibbāna), was a standing example of such achievement.

At the present time, only a small number of people may attain *Vipassanā* insight after a few days of meditation. For some who are highly endowed, *Vipassanā* insight may be reached in seven days while for others fulfilment may take anywhere between fifteen or twenty days to one or two months. The main thing to be borne in mind is that efforts should be maximal and sustained till at least the *Sotāpattimagga* (the first of the four sublime paths to Nibbāna) is attained. This is a clear indication for the third *Sammappadhāna* which relates to application of supreme efforts to attain a meritorious state not yet achieved (*Sotāpattimagga* in this instance). As a result of these efforts, *Sakkāya diṭṭhi* is eliminated. *Sagadōgāmicimagga*, *Anāgamimagga* and *Arahantamagga* would have to be attained in that order through *Sammappadhāna*.

EXPOSITIONS OF THE MAHĀSATIPATTHĀNASUTTA

Efforts directed towards the maintenance of meritorious states already achieved; further expansion of these states and fulfilment or realization of the final objective denote the endeavours made, for example, to keep up the level of *Dāna kusala* (charitable activities) already established; to achieve *jhāna* and to attain *magga* and its *phāla* (fruit or outcome of *magga*). It is especially important for supreme efforts to be applied to maintenance of such a meritorious state as accrues from *vipassanā* insight; and for successive attainment of higher states of merit. As far as possible, efforts must continue for the attainment of the final stage of *Arahattamagga*. *Sammappadāna* should thus be applied exclusively to the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* to achieve *Ariya magga* (sublime path).

Buddha thus enjoined the Bhikkhu (who, being aware of the perils of *Samsārā* wished to escape therefrom) to take immediate steps for developing mindfulness by which to free himself from *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*.

How *Vipassanā bhāvanā* may be practised through mindfulness has been expounded by the Buddha in *Mahāsatipatthāna Sutta*.

EXPOSITIONS OF THE MAHĀSATIPATTHĀNA SUTTA

"There is a path laid on the four *Satipatthāna* (foundations of mindfulness), Oh Bhikkhus" said the Buddha, "and this is the only path and direction which has to be taken."

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(i) *Kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ*—mindfulness, at each occurrence, of the arising of movements and postures of the body (assemblage of physical elements)

(ii) *Vedanānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ* – mindfulness of each arising of sensation or feeling

(iii) *Cittānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ*—mindfulness of each arising of thought or impression and
(iv) *Dhammānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ* – mindfulness of each arising of Dhamma (condition, property, characteristic of natural phenomena).

This categorization is made according to the sense object which the mind has to support and provide a base for. If considered from the standpoint of mindfulness, however, it is a single process which needs no further classification. Mindfulness is also referred to as *appamāda* (vigilance).

Satipaṭṭhāna is the only sublime path, and it is set in a specific direction, namely towards the cleansing of all defilements from sentient beings. When all moral defilements are cleansed, *Arahattamagga* is attained; a Bodhisatto (a being destined to attain Buddhahood) or Pacceka bodhisatto (one who is destined to become a Paccekabuddha) would attain Buddhahood or Paccekabuddhahood respectively. Thus Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Arahats have all been cleansed of *kilesā* defilements through Sati-

IMPORTANCE OF THE CLEANSING OF MORAL DEFILEMENTS

paṭṭhāna, and attained Buddhahood, Pacceka-buddhahood and Arahatsip respectively. This is the only sublime path-way.

IMPORTANCE OF THE CLEANSING OF MORAL DEFILEMENTS

Only when cleansed of moral defilements can there be an end of all suffering. Hence the vital necessity for uprooting these defilements. All creatures yearn for release from suffering; and cleansing of moral defilements as pre-requisite for deliverance therefrom can only be achieved through Satipaṭṭhāna.

Moral defilements comprise ten categories. These are, *Loba* (craving), *Dosa* (illwill, hatred), *Moha* (ignorance, wrong perception), *Māna* (pride, conceit), *Ditthi* (false view), *Vīcīkicchā* (doubt, indecision), *Thina* (sloth), *Uddhacca* (restlessness), *Ahirika* (shamelessness in the commission of *akusala kamma*) and *Anottappa* (lack of fear in the commission of *akusala kamma*).

Similarly, *Issā* (envy, jealousy), *Macchariya* (grudge), and *Kukkucca* (remorse, brooding over past wrong deeds, wrong words; etc) may also be considered elements of moral defilements.

Of these *Kilesā*, *Moha* is difficult to conceive. It does not lend itself to interpretation as easily as the words *Loba* and *Dosa* do. It is not generally recognized that acceptance of traditional beliefs (such as in the permanence of certain states; in a blissful existence; and in the individuality

of living beings) is *Moha* or *Avijjā*. Because of the lack of mindfulness regarding the arising of sense perceptions such as in the case of sight and hearing, there is no realization that these are just manifestations of the characteristics and properties of *Rūpa* and *Nāma*, and such non-realization is *Moha* or *Avijjā*. This *Avijjā* should be removed by developing the practice of mindfulness with regard to arising of sense perceptions.

Diṭṭhi is another word which is difficult to interpret. People holding wrong views consider themselves right and stubbornly cling to their ideas and beliefs. They go even further and make attempts to propagate their heresy.

THE SIX SAMMĀDIṬṬHI (RIGHT VIEWS)

At this point, it is necessary to understand *Sammādiṭṭhi* as opposed to *Micchādiṭṭhi* (wrong views, false doctrine). *Sammādiṭṭhi* has been critically reviewed and classified in the *Aṭṭhakathā* as comprising—

- (i) *Kammassakathā sammādiṭṭhi*
- (ii) *Jhāna sammādiṭṭhi*
- (iii) *Vipassanā sammādiṭṭhi*
- (iv) *Magga sammādiṭṭhi*
- (v) *Phala sammādiṭṭhi* and
- (vi) *Paccavekkhanā sammādiṭṭhi*.

THE SIX SAMMĀDIṬṬHI

Of the six, *Paccavekkhanā sammādiṭṭhi* is the retrospective examination of *Magga*, *Phala* and *Nibbāna* after the realization of *Nibbāna* through attainment of *Arahatta magga* and *Arahatta phalo*. This does not entail any special effort. When *Magga* and *phala ñāṇa* have been attained *paccavekkhanā sammādiṭṭhi* takes place automatically. *Phala sammādiṭṭhi* is also a resultant of *Magga sammādiṭṭhi* and arises simultaneously without effort.

But *Kammassakathā sammādiṭṭhi*, *Jhāna sammādiṭṭhi*, *Vipassanā sammādiṭṭhi* and *Magga sammādiṭṭhi* need to be brought about through diligent efforts. However, *Kammassakathā sammādiṭṭhi* being knowledge (*ñāṇa*) concerning *kamma*(action) and corresponding result, its general idea is widely known among Buddhists even from young age when cognitive faculty has developed. When the age of fifteen or sixteen is reached this knowledge is reinforced by listening to sermons like the one being delivered now, and by reading and studying appropriate treatises on the Dhamma and thus *Kammassakathā sammādiṭṭhi* comes to be well established in the minds of these teenagers. This knowledge concerning the commission of *Kamma* and the result thereof acquired as it is through instruction and acceptance cannot of course, bear comparison with knowledge derived from personal experience of actual practice such as *Vipassanā ñāṇa*. The former is knowledge

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based on *Saddhā* (confident belief born of conviction).

These days, some people subscribe to the view that they cannot believe anything which they have not themselves experienced. It is not possible for anyone to have had personal experience of every thing. If one is dogmatic about not accepting anything which is outside one's own experience, how can the daily affairs of life be managed? For instance, there are railway train services taking passengers from Rangoon to other places such as Mandalay, Prome, Moulmein etc. That these different services take people to the respective destinations will have to be accepted even if one has had no previous personal experience to support such acceptance. Similarly, there are vessels in the Inland Water Transport which take passengers to riverine towns such as Pyapon, Bassein, etc., on scheduled services; as also airplane services to take passengers to different towns or different countries, and each time one wishes to travel to a certain destination in an appropriate transport, one has to take the service proffered without question, whether one has previous personal experience of travelling in such transport or not. In those instances, one has to take certain information on trust, otherwise the destination will not be reached. If one accepts others' statements of experience as true, and take the indicated

BUDDHA'S CREDIBILITY

transport system, one would reach the desired destination.

One should therefore accept as truth what the Buddha, from his Omniscience, had stated about unwholesome actions resulting in ill effects; and wholesome actions resulting in good effects. The Arahats also have supported these statements because they have personal experiences to prove their truth. Thus, the righteous people, accepting fully the relationship between actions and their results, avoid the unwholesome and undertake the wholesome activities such as the practice of *dāna* (charity), thereby escaping re-birth to *apāyas*, reaching happy existences in the human or Deva realms and finally attaining Nibbāna.

BUDDHA'S CREDIBILITY

Buddha would never speak on any subject without personal experience and knowledge of it; nor rely on conjecture or impression for delivering his sermons. Having attained Supreme Enlightenment, discovered the Four Noble Truths, and gained clear insight and in-depth understanding thereof, Buddha's compassion for mankind led him to offer it the greatest of gifts, namely, knowledge of these Noble Truths. A parallel may be drawn with the contemporary education system, in which teachers try to impart all they know to their pupils. In this teacher pupil relationship, pupils should believe the teachers' words and be grateful for their goodwill and

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concern for the pupils' instruction. In the same manner, mankind should give credence to Buddha's teaching and be grateful for His instructions on precept and practice. But just believing alone will not do. One should follow His teaching and practise accordingly and benefits would certainly accrue.

HOW TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS AND PUT THEM INTO PRACTICE

When illness occurs, one visits a physician and places confidence in and reliance on his ministrations. This is because one believes that if the physician's instructions and directions are followed properly, one will get well. With trust and confidence one takes medicine prescribed by the physician and abstains from dietary items and physical activities he disapproves. Health is recovered and thus one personally experiences the benefits of following the physician's advice. Similarly, when Buddha's teachings are accepted with firm conviction and followed diligently in practice, essential comprehension and insight will be derived through immediate personal experience. Therefore as a first basis, the facts of precursor *kamma* (action), and its result should be accepted. This acceptance and cognizance of action and its corresponding result is *Kammassakathā-sammāditthi*. This is derived just through the act of acceptance: no special effort is required.

PRACTISING ACCORDING TO INSTRUCTIONS

Whosoever is endowed with *Kammassakathā sammādiṭṭhi* abstains from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct. This is *Sammā kammanta* (Right action), one of the constituents of the Noble Eightfold Path. He also abstains from lying, slandering, harsh speech and frivolous talk which is *Sammā vācā* (Right speech); abstains from unwholesome livelihood such as trading in arms, slaves, intoxicants, animals for slaughter, and poison, which is *Sammā ājīva* (Right livelihood). These three constituents of the Noble Eightfold Path may be grouped under *Sīla* (Morality). When these three constituents of the Noble Eightfold Path are taken, *Sīla visuddhi* (purity of sīla) is attained. These are the *Sīla* (morality) factors built on the three aforesaid constituents of the Noble Eightfold Path which will be the basis for *samādhi* (concentration) and *paññā* (wisdom).

When *Sīla visuddhi* is attained, one may, if one has the capacity, develop *Jhāna sammādiṭṭhi* in conjunction with *Sammā samadhi* (Right Concentration). Any one of the forty *Samatha kammaṭṭhāna* (exercises leading to quietude) eg *Paṭhavīkaṣiṇa* (one of ten processes by means of which mystic meditation is induced by concentrating the mind on a hypnotic circle (*kaṣiṇa maṇḍala*) covered, in this instance with clay i.e., earth — *paṭhavī*; the objective being one-pointedness of the mind leading eventually to *appanā samādhi* i.e., ecstatic

concentration, absorption) ; or *ānāpāna* (mindfulness of respiration which comprises *āna* inhalation and *apāna*, exhalation ; which leads to one-pointedness of the mind and progressively to insight and thence to arāhatship) or the Thirty-two *koṭṭhāsa*) meditation on the loathsomeness of the thirty-two impure parts of the body e.g., hair, nails, teeth, etc., which leads to dispassion) may be concentrated on with the purpose of achieving *Jhāna* (state of ecstasy or absorption). Knowledge which comes with the achievement of *Jhāna* is *Jhāna sammādiṭṭhi*. Here, knowledge is not the prime concern. The essential outcome is *Jhāna samādhi*; because with its establishment, *nīvarana* (hindrances to mindfulness and quietude) would be overcome and *Citta visuddhi* (purity of the mind) attained.

When *Citta visuddhi* is attained *Vipassanā sammādiṭṭhi* should be developed. *Vipassanā sammādiṭṭhi* is *Vipassanā ñāṇa* (intuitive knowledge or insight) which is endowed with immediate experience and knowledge of the nature of *Anicca Dukkha* and *Anatta*. When *Vipassanā ñāṇa* is fully matured and complete, Nibbāna is realized and *Ariyamagga ñāṇa* developed. This is *Magga sammādiṭṭhi*. Once this is attained, *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* is uprooted. *Vipassanā maggaṅga* has to be developed, therefore, for the attainment of *Magga Sammādiṭṭhi*. That is why *Vipassanā Sammādiṭṭhi* is designated the *pubba-bhāga magga* (precursor magga) of *Ariyamagga sammā-*

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diṭṭhi. The forerunners of *Vipassanā sammādiṭṭhi* are the *Mūla* (basic) *Maggaṅgas* namely, *Kamma-sakathā sammādiṭṭhi*; *Sīla maggaṅga* comprising *sammā vācā*, *sammā kammanā*, *sammā ājīva* and *Jhāna sammādiṭṭhi*.

If one wishes to attain Nibbāna, one must first develop and complete the fulfilment of *Mūla maggaṅgas*. Attempts must be made to achieve *Sīla visuddhi* on the basis of *Kammassakathā sammā diṭṭhi*. For the laity this is not very difficult to achieve. The understanding of *kamma* (action) and its related result, and the acceptance of their relationship are already established since childhood; and keeping the five precepts has also begun early on in life. Even if these measures were not thoroughly addressed during the early years of life, taking the five precepts just before beginning the meditation session would suffice ordinarily. Going on next to attempts at developing *Jhāna* will, in the majority of instances, be hard to accomplish. For that reason, an alternative would be to adopt the *Suddha vipassanā yānika* method, and begin *Vipassanā bhāvanā* right away. Starting from bodily contact with sense objects, all distinctly recognizable *rūpas* and *nāmas* should be continuously observed as they arise, thus establishing mindfulness. It is possible that while engaging oneself in this mindfulness, one's thoughts and ideas would often stray. Such mental diversion

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should be noted and the mind disburdened thereof, immediately. When *Vipassanā samādhi* has been developed to a high degree of intensity, the mind will no longer be assailed by such vagrancy. It will be continuously focused on the object of meditation. Such strong *Vipassanā samādhi* is *Samādhi maggaṅga*, which is the primary, basic foundation

Following this, *Nāma rūpa pariccheda ñāṇa* (knowledge which enables one to distinguish between *nāma* and *rūpa* components in the object of meditation); *Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa* (knowledge which enables recognition of cause and effect clearly, to the end that one may be distinguished from the other); and *vipassanā ñāṇa* (insight into the arising and cessation of sensory phenomena and the realization of the characteristics of *Anicca*, transitoriness or impermanence; *Dukkha*, suffering or sorrow; and *Anatta*, no-self or non-individuality), will be progressively developed and refined. When, as a result of this process, *Vipassanā ñāṇa* reaches a state of maturity and fulfilment, *ariya maggaṅga*, the faculty to know and experience Nibbāna will arise. The development and progress along the three stages of *Mūla maggaṅga*, *Pubbabhaṅga maggaṅga* and *Ariya maggaṅga* are thus presented according to Buddha's teaching and this teaching deserves the highest credence. I will explain this again in more detail.

THE TRUTH OF THE DHAMMA

THE TRUTH OF THE DHAMMA IS VERIFIABLE BY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

One of the attributes of the Buddha Dhamma is that personal experience verifies its truth* (*sandiṭṭhiko*). If practised, one is bound to experience its truth. This may be likened to the experience of the efficacy of good medicine when it is taken, or to the personal perception of the taste of a certain item of food when it is actually eaten. Buddha's teaching is that all sentient beings are essentially aggregates of *rūpa* and *nāma*. A Yogī (one who practises *Vipassanā bhāvanā*) beginning with the perceptions derived from physical contact, tries to be continuously mindful of the arising of each and every consciousness; and having strengthened and consolidated his *Vipassanā samādhi* becomes aware of the fact that in each state of consciousness there are only two components—the object of consciousness (*rūpa*) and the mental faculty which perceives (*nāma*). This is realized through self-knowledge as, for instance, when concentrating on the breathing process and observing the rising of the abdominal wall during inspiration, it becomes clear through mindfulness that there is the rising abdomen (*rūpa*) and the mental faculty which knows or feels its rising (*nāma*). Similarly mindfulness of the process of taking steps for walking will reveal that it involves the *rūpa* which steps and the *nāma* which perceives. Such direct personal experience and self-knowledge

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reveals that a sentient being is basically an aggregate of *rūpa* and *nāma* and that there is no individual person or creature. This confirmation of Buddha's teaching by one's own personal experience further heightens conviction of the truth of the Dhamma and bolsters *Saddhā* (confident belief based on knowledge or conviction)

Following this, one finds that one bends because one wishes to bend; and moves because one wishes to move, thereby discovering the cause – effect relationship, again confirming Buddha's teaching in this regard and strengthening *Saddhā*. Further progress in the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* will lead to the realization of a continuum of the arising and cessation of all phenomena, and bring out the facts of impermanence, suffering and non individuality. Buddha's teaching that "there is a continuum of arising and cessation" and that "all is impermanence, suffering and devoid of individuality," are brought home convincingly and accepted with renewed and greater *Saddhā*. It becomes very clear that Buddha taught what He knew through personal experience and according to a declaration of the Buddha which goes "Whosoever sees (grasps) my teaching, has truly seen me," one has really seen Buddha and understood His Teaching, because one has grasped the Dhamma through *Vipassanā bhāvanā*. At the

IMPORTANCE OF KAMMASSAKATHĀ SAMMĀDIṬṬHI

same time, one realizes that' having gained omniscience, Buddha had made His exposition of the Dhamma' for the benefit of all suffering sentient beings. These are explanations of how the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* enables direct, immediate knowledge of the Dhamma.

THE IMPORTANCE OF KAMMASSAKATHĀ SAMMĀDIṬṬHI

Direct, immediate experience stems from the fact that acceptance of the relationship between 'action' and its 'result' has engendered a positive milieu of confidence that facilitates mindfulness and insight. Those who will not accept the principle of 'action' and its corresponding 'result' will not take up *Vipassanā bhāvanā* nor will they listen and give serious thought to the discourses on the Dhamma. Direct personal knowledge cannot therefore come to them. Hence the importance of *Kammāssakāthā sammādiṭṭhi*.

A critical analysis will bring out the rationale of the principle of 'action' and its corresponding 'result'. Performance of good action, begets good result. When ethical principles are applied in a business enterprise it will thrive and bring prosperity. Whereas, if no scruples are observed and dishonest business practices are resorted to, undesirable consequences would ensue and the business enterprise would come to a bad end. How crime always brings the offender his due

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punishments is also clearly manifest to any observer. The unwholesome results of *akusala kamma* (immoral actions) sometimes appear as *Gati nimittam* (indication or sign of the state of existence to which a being may be re-born) when death is near. Such *Gati nimittam* may be so dreadful that the last moments of the dying were filled with absolute terror. On the other hand, the wholesome effects of *Kusala kamma* (moral actions) may bring about pleasant and gladdening *Gati nimittam* such as the beautiful abodes for blissful living, or devas and friends beckoning; and in some cases, the dying person may even be able to recount those *nimittas*. Such occurrences have been seen by many and mention is also made thereof in the scriptures.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SĪLA MAGGAṄGA

What has just been said is a brief account of how a critical analysis may be made of the existence and operation of the principle relating to 'action' which brings about its corresponding 'result'. Acceptance of the rationale of this principle and bearing it in mind is *Kamma-sakkāthā sammādiṭṭhi*. Whoever is endowed with this right belief (*Sammādiṭṭhi*) eschews all immoral actions which are liable to bring about unwholesome results. Abstinence from *musāvāda* (falsehood), *Pisunavācā* (slander), *Pharusavācā* (harsh speech) and *Samphapplāpa* (frivolous talk) is scrupulously observed. This abstinence consti-

tutes *Sammāvācā* (Right Speech). Abstinence from killing (*Pāṇātipāta*), stealing (*adinnādānaṃ*), and sexual misconduct (*Kāmesu micchācāra*) is also observed, thereby achieving *Sammā kammanta* (Right Action). At the same time *Micchājīva* (iniquitous livelihood) is abstained from, which leads to *Sammā Ājīva* (Right livelihood). Every conscious effort which leads to *Sammā vācā*, *Sammā kammanta* and *Sammā Ājīva* fulfils and maintains the three components of *Sīla maggaṅga* (the sublime Path of Morality).

ATTAINMENT OF JHĀNA SAMĀDHI

An impeccable morality and fully established *Sīla maggaṅga* permit *Samatha bhāvanā* which, if steadfastly focussed on a specific sense object, can develop *Jhāna samādhi*. The tide of joy and gladness which surges through the aspirant on the attainment of *Jhāna samādhi* is an overwhelming personal experience. During jhānic ecstasy, there is great buoyancy of the body and sense of well-being. There is also a concurrent feeling of happiness and much elation. This shows how *Samatha bhāvanā* when practised well and developed properly can bring immediate and outstanding benefits in the form of physical and mental well-being. One should not be content, however, with just *Jhāna samādhi* and what it has to offer, because this *Samādhi per se* cannot achieve *Sallekha kicca* (eradication of *kilesā* or moral defilements). *Sallekha Sutta* deals

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with forty-four observances which lead to eradication of *Kilesā*. Reference may be made on this subject to the said Sutta for comprehensive information.

VIPASSANĀ BHĀVANĀ FOUNDED ON JHĀNA SAMĀDHI

Whosoever gains *Jhāna samādhi* should use it as a basis for the development of *Vipassanā bhāvanā*. The modus operandi can take the form of alternating episodes, one following the other, involving *Jhāna samādhi* and *Vipassanā bhāvanā* which directs its attention and mindfulness on the preceeding *Jhāna samādhi*. It may also start with withdrawal from *Jhāna samādhi* and after reflection on and mindful *Vipassanā* observation of the jhānic state in which the Yogī had just been, attention and *Vipassanā bhāvanā* would then be directed to each perception out of several that may arise, as for example, those connected with vision, hearing, etc. The different kinds of sense objects to which, as they are encountered, such *Vipassanā bhāvanā* is addressed, are designated *Pakiṇṇaka saṅkhāras* (miscellaneous conditioned things subject to change, sorrow, etc.)

ATTAINMENT OF VIPASSANĀ SAMĀDHI

Those who cannot achieve *Jhāna samādhi* will begin *Vipassanā bhāvanā* and develop mindfulness of the *Pakiṇṇaka saṅkhāras* as they arise. When

VIPASSANĀ SAMĀDHI

Vipassanā samādhi grows in strength, *Nīvaranas* (hindrances) disappear and the observing mind stands out pure and clear. This is the manifestation of *Citta visuddhi* (purity of the mind) established through *Vipassanā somādhi*. At this stage, behind every single effort made for mindfulness, there is the impelling force of *Sammā vāyāma* (right effort) which is concerned with ensuring maximal mindfulness; as well as *Sammā sati* (right mindfulness); and *Sammā samādhi* (right concentration) which affects correspondence of the observing mind to and its firm focus on the sense object that is being observed. These are the three *Sammādhī maggaṅga* which serve as primary supportive *Maggaṅga* for *Vipassanā paññā*.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PAÑÑĀ MAGGAṅGA

When basic *Samādhi* has been firmly set up and grown in stature and strength, mindful observation of each sense perception confers insight into its true nature. It becomes possible to make a proper distinction between the observable, perceivable sense object (*Rūpa*) and the mental faculty that perceives (*nāma*); and cause is clearly distinguished from its corresponding result. This is *Ñāta pariññā*.

Thereafter, mindfulness brings direct knowledge of a continuously repeated cycle in the operation of which the perceived sense object as well as the perceiving faculty are concurrently

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going through a phase of fresh arising which immediately alternates with the other in which there is cessation. This personal observation of a cycle of continuous arising and cessation leads to the cognizance of impermanence or transitoriness; suffering; and non-individuality. Items of knowledge thus progressively acquired are termed *Tīraṇa pariññā*, and they constitute true *Vipassanā ñānas*. This realization, during the progress of *Vipassanā bhāvanā*, of the facts of impermanence, suffering and non-individuality is derived from personal experience and knowledge. It is not mere acceptance of what others say nor is it something learned from the study of scriptures. It is knowledge gained through direct personal experience, during the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā*, of the components of sense perception arising anew and immediately ceasing in a continually repeated cycle. The characteristics of impermanence(transitoriness), suffering(sorrow) and non-individuality(no-self) are experienced and truly understood. Therefore this realization is *Sammādiṭṭhi*.

Every incidence of such realization is supported by the prompting and orientation of *Sammāsaṅkappa maggaṅga* toward the right path. *Sammādiṭṭhi* and *Sammasaṅkappa* together constitute *Paññā maggaṅga*. When they are added to the three *Samādhi maggaṅga* (*sammāvāyāma*, *sammā sati* and *sammā samādhi*), there are five *Vipassanā maggaṅga*.

PAÑÑĀ MAGGAṄGA

These five *Vipassanā maggaṅga* are involved in all *Vipassanā* practices. The three *Sīla maggaṅga* are already established earlier on with the observance of the precepts. During *Vipassanā bhāvanā*, *Sīla maggaṅga* remain pure. When these three *Sīla maggaṅga* are added to the five *Vipassanā maggaṅga*, we have a total of eight *Vipassanā maggaṅga*.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE EIGHT VIPASSANĀ MAGGAṄGA

Assiduous practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* will promote development of *Vipassanā maggaṅga* and bring about full maturation of *Vipassanā ñāṇa*. The eight *Ariya maggaṅga* are thus achieved and Nibbāna realized. *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* and all other *Kilesā* (moral defilements) that lead to *Apāyas* are entirely eliminated by this single event. This marks the attainment of the state of *Sotāpatti magga*, the lowest stage in the *Ariyamagga*. Efforts should thus be made to divest oneself of *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* through *Ariyamagga*. It will be seen here that *Pubbabhāga maggaṅga* (precursor magga) is developed on the basis of *Samassakathā sammādiṭṭhi*, *Sīla maggaṅga* and *Sammādhī maggaṅga*; and with further development of *Vipassanāmaggaṅga* which is inherent in *Pubbabhāga maggaṅga*, Nibbāna is realized through *Ariya magga*. It is important to note the three successive *maggaṅga* which have to be developed in order to attain Nibbāna, These are—

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- (a) *Mūla maggaṅga* comprising *Kammassakathā sammīdiṭṭhi*, *Sīla maggaṅga* and *Samādhī maggaṅga*,
- (b) *Pubbabhāga maggaṅga* which is based on *Mūla maggaṅga*, and
- (c) *Ariya maggaṅga*.

From what has been said so far, you will recall that benefiting on strong support of *Sīla* and *jhāna samadhi*, or *vipassanā samādhī*, one who is endowed with confidence in and true conviction of *kamma* (action) and corresponding result, will develop *Vipassanā maggaṅga* in the form of *Pubbabhāga* (precursor) *maggaṅga*. This will lead to the attainment of *Sotāpatti magga* whereby moral difilements which potentiate relegation to *Apāya* such as *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* will be eliminated. Further development of this *Vipassanā maggaṅga* can lead to the crowning achievement of the ultimate, namely, *Arahatta magga* at which stage all moral defilements would be finally and completely purged; and full emancipation from their tyranny attained. This process of progressive development has to be guided by instructions embodied in the *Satipaṭṭhāna desanā*, Buddha's discourse (instruction) on the Foundations of Mindfulness.

NO VIPASSANĀ PAÑÑĀ NOR MAGGA PAÑÑĀ CAN ARISE
WITHOUT SATIPAṬṬHNA

The introductory *Aṭṭhakathā* (exegesis, commentary) of *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta* says:

NO PAÑÑĀ WITHOUT SATIPAṬṬHĀNA

“*Yasmī pana kāya vedanā citta dhammesu
kinci dhammaṃ anāmasitvā bhāvanā nāma natthi.
Tasmā tepi imināva maggena sokaparideve:
samatikkantābi veditabbā.*”

which Pālī passage may be interpreted as follows

“Without mindfulness directed to any one of the objects of *Satipaṭṭhāna*, namely, *Kāya* (body), *Vedanā* (feelings, sensations), *citta* (thoughts, ideas) and *Dhammā* (phenomena or characteristics of existence), no *Vipassanā paññā* nor *ariya magga paññā* can be developed. Thus, it should be inferred that *Santati*, minister of a royal court and *Patācārā* who were reputed to have overcome *Sokaparideva* (sorrow and lamentation) and attained the status of *Arhat* and *Sotāpanno* respectively after hearing one sermon (or *Gāthā*) delivered by the Buddha, must also have overcome *Sokaparideva* by following the instructions of *Satipaṭṭhāna desanā*.”

Mindfulness may be established by focussing earnest attention on the postures and attitudes taken, and movements made by the body (*Kāya*) which is an aggregation of *Rūpas*. These include awareness of walking, halting, sitting, reclining, bending, stretching and such other body movements and postures. Alternatively, attention can be directed to sensations or feeling (*Vedanā*) which are (a) pleasurable, (b) unpleasurable or (c) indifferent, indeterminate, neutral. Mindfulness may also be brought about by

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contemplating on the processes of thought, generation of ideas, etc., which are the functions of *citta*. Similarly, characteristics or phenomena of the perceptions of sight, sound, odour, taste, may each be the object of contemplation. Only through mindful observance of and sustained attention to any one of these four areas can *Vipassanā paññā* and *Magga paññā* be acquired.

Therefore, if *sammāsati* is applied to body stance and movements; to *vedanā*; *citta*; or characteristics of the perception of sight, sound, etc., and mindfulness or awareness is established, *Vipassanā paññā* will be generated. As *vipassanā paññā* is continuously nurtured, and developed the successive stages on the Ariyamagga will be reached and moral defilements (*Kilesā*) will be entirely wiped out and Arahatsip achieved. *Satipaṭṭhāna* is the only way by which efforts can be directed to the attainment of purification through removal of all vestiges of *Kilesā*. Hence Buddha's declaration to the effect that the four *Satipaṭṭhānas* constitute the one and only path that leads all sentient beings (including *Bodhisattos*, *Pacceka-bodhisattos*, *Ariyāsāvaka*-designates) to liberation from defilements of *Kilesā*.

IMPORTANCE OF DISBURDENING THE MIND OF ITS DEFILEMENTS

There are two kinds of defilements (filth, pollution). One is defilement of *Rūpa* and the

DISBURDENING THE MIND OF ITS DEFILEMENTS

other is of *Citta*. Of the two, it is more urgent and necessary for the *Citta* (mind) to be rid of its defilements. But the majority of people only understand how to attend to the *Rūpa* defilements i.e., how to clean themselves when their bodies are soiled with sweat, dirt, etc. They would bathe or wash themselves, clean themselves with soap, and in some instances, even put a final touch by applying sweet smelling creams or pastes to the body. Cleaning the body, however immaculately it has been administered, cannot by itself lead to deliverance from the sufferings of *Apāya*, senility, illness and death which are inherent in *Samsārā*, nor can it bestow rebirth in blissful celestial abodes of the Devas. The attainment of Nibbāna is certainly out of the question. Only when *citta* is cleansed (disburdened) of its defilements such as *Lobha*, *Dosa* and *Moha*, can the sufferings of *Apāya* and the shackles of *samsārā* be overcome and Nibbāna realized. Hence the vital importance of efforts to be made for disburdening the mind of its defilements. The only means of stamping out all moral defilements which assail the mind is the practice of *Satipaṭṭhāna*.

That is why mindful observance must be continuously applied to every bodily behaviour as they are initiated or brought about; every sense perception as it occurs; every thought or

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idea as it is generated; every phenomenon or characteristic of sense perception (as for example that of sight, sound, odour, taste, etc.,) as it is contemplated on. As one progresses in the application of such continuous mindfulness, one will realize that one's mind has been gradually cleansed of its moral impurities. This realization brings with it stronger conviction that the Buddha having Himself gone through the process of eliminating all moral defilements, had propagated its methodology, thus providing the means whereby His *Savakas* (disciples) were enabled to practise mindfulness accordingly and disburden themselves of all *Kilesā*.

One also begins to see that the outcome of this process is determined by the measure of effort that is expended for continuity of mindful observation. If the endeavour is slight, little benefit would accrue; if large, greater benefits would be derived in the purification of the mind; and if full endeavour is applied, complete elimination of *kilesā* would be achieved. *Satipaṭṭhāna* is the only way by which all *kilesā* can be cleansed and deliverance from the shackles of *Samsara* attained. When *Sotāpatti magga* stage is reached, one fourth of the defilements of *Citta*, namely, *Eakkāyadiṭṭhi* (the heresy of individuality); *Vicikicchā* (doubt, indecision); and *Loba* (craving), *Dosa* (ill will, hatred), *Moha* (ignorance, wrong perception) which lead to *Apāya*,

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would be cleansed. Attainment of *Sagadāgāmi magga* would bring about the cleansing of half of the *kilesā* defilements. Coarser forms of *Kāma rāga* (sensual pleasure) and *Vyāpāda* (malevolence) would be disburdened at this stage. When *Anāgāmi magga* is attained one would be rid of three fourths of *kilesā*, because all vestiges of *Kāma rāga* and *Vyāpāda* would have been stamped out. When the final *Arahatta magga* is reached, one is completely free from all *kilesā* defilements. Thus *Satipaṭṭhāna* is the only pathway which leads to liberation from all defilements of the *Citta* (mind). This fact is of the utmost importance and should always be clearly kept in mind.

FREEDOM FROM SOKA

The same pathway leads to deliverance from the oppression of *Soka* (grief or sorrow). *Satipaṭṭhāna*, which is continuous application of mindful observance to bodily posture or behaviour; sensation; thought process; phenomena of sense perception as they arise, is the only way by which one can overcome grief and sorrow. Sentient beings do not wish to suffer from grief or sorrow, and would be only too willing to procure remedies, charms, mantra etc., which can ensure freedom therefrom, if such were available. What can really dispel grief or sorrow, however, is the practice of *Satipaṭṭhāna*.

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OVERCOMING PARIDEVA

Some people are liable to be stricken with much grief and be thrown into uncontrollable fits of wailing and lamentation on the death of a husband, a wife, a son, etc. If such persons should take up the practice of *Satipaṭṭhāna* diligently, they would derive great relief from their affliction within a few days. Continuation of *Satipaṭṭhāna* would, in course of time, bring complete release from the throes of grief. *Satipaṭṭhāna*, therefore, is also the pathway by which *Pariveda* (wailing, lamentation) can be overcome.

OVERCOMING DUKKHA AND DOMANASSA

Dukkha (physical pain or suffering) may arise spontaneously in the body, or may arise from injuries inflicted by another person's physical assault. It may also result from burns due to insolation or fire. Such physical pain or suffering is hard to bear and nobody wishes to be exposed to it. *Domanassa* (mental suffering) is unbearable anguish caused by calamities befalling one's kith and kin, or by loss or destruction of one's fortune, and is therefore equally unwelcome. All sentient beings are subject to and troubled by *Dukkha* and *Domanassa*. If these two could be eliminated, there would be perpetual happiness and peaceful lives, for all. Everybody would certainly wish to be liberated from *Dukkha* and *Domanassa*, and if one desires

such liberation, one only needs to follow the pathway of *Satipaṭṭhāna*. There is no other way.

Although the body is free from physical pain, there would still be suffering if the mind is disturbed or in a state of turmoil. If one's wishes or aspirations are not fulfilled, there is anxiety and mental suffering. Tidings of misfortune such as the death of a young son or daughter as the result of a road accident or of drowning, would immediately turn a carefree and happy state into one of grief and sorrow. Mental suffering brought about by the death of one's close relatives is termed *Ñāti vyaṣana*. Grief and anguish caused by loss of property and fortune as a result of natural disasters or robbery and theft, is *Bhoga vyaṣana*. Distress and mental suffering due to disease or illness which is prolonged by chronicity, or incurable because of malignancy, is *Roga vyaṣana*.

For those who set great store by moral rectitude and strict observance of *Sīla* (moral precepts) and especially for members of the *Saṅghā* (assembly of Buddhist priests), *Sīla vyaṣana* (breach of moral discipline) gives rise to remorse and much mental anguish. *Diṭṭhi vvaṣana* (destruction of right views) occurs when a person who had originally accepted the right view of *Kammaṣaṅkathā samvādiṭṭhi* and recognized the facts of

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Kamma (action) and its effect; and of rebirth after death, listens to and accepts false views that there is no precursor action nor its effect; nor any re-birth after death; and that there is nothing after death. While he continues to believe that these false views are correct, he would be satisfied and no scruple would assail him. He might even try to propagate the false views that he had newly embraced. Realization of his prodigious error would come when death impends, and dreadful *Gati nimittam* appear.

When reborn in the Peta realms (one of the four *Apāyas*) or when cast into *Niraya* (hell), he would realize his error in accepting false views. He would then know that it is wrong to believe that there is no precursor action and its corresponding effect and that there is no rebirth after death, because through his own experience he realizes that he has to suffer the miseries of *Apāya* as the result of his unwholesome or evil *Kamma* in his past existence. At this time he would rue his folly which had led him to forsake right views and accept false ones, and bitter remorse and mental distress would torment him.

During Buddha's ministry, two persons – one who lived and behaved like a dog and another who adopted the life-habits of cattle – were told

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by Buddha that following such animal practices would lead to rebirth in the canine or other animal world. They were greatly shocked and disturbed on discovering their mistaken views, and lamented and wailed over their folly. Similarly, one dancer had believed that as a result of her dance performances she would attain the happy existence of Devas in Pahāsa Deva realm. When Buddha explained to her that Pahāsa is not a Deva realm but hell and that dance performances can bring about relegation thereto, she also realized how she had been labouring under misapprehensions and false views and bitterly wept over her misfortune. These are also instances of mental suffering brought about by *Diṭṭhi vyaṣana* (destruction of right views). Here again, the only way by which such suffering may be avoided or overcome is the practice of *Satipaṭṭhāna*.

It must be noted also that *Satipaṭṭhāna* is the only pathway to be followed for the attainment of *Ariya magga* and realization of Nibbāna.

Attainment of *Magga* immediately brings its fruition, *Phala*. Therefore as is usually expressed in Burmese, the two can be combined together. Again, *Ariya magga* and its fruition, *Phala*, leads to realization of Nibbāna and thus the two resultants "*Ariya magga* and *Phala*"; and "Nibbāna" can be combined into a compound word.

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After every meritorious deed, Buddhists would invariably pray that performance thereof would redound to the attainment of "*Magga-Phala-Nibbāna*". For some people such prayer may be the expression of a genuine aspiration; for others it may just be an attempt to conform to examples set by teachers and elders; or a mere observance of traditional ritual. Any prayer which is said for convention's sake only, and is not prompted by serious interest and conviction, would certainly suffer from lack of potential for expeditious achievement of results. The important thing is to have essential knowledge about the evils of *Samsārā* and to pray for the attainment of Nibbāna with seriousness and determination. The evils of *Samsārā* comprise senility, disease, death, physical pain, grief, anxiety and mental suffering which afflict all sentient beings during each existence in their respective round of births. Moreover, when untoward circumstances facilitate activation of the resultants of accumulated *Akusala kamma* (sinful conduct, evil actions), relegation to the four *Apāyas* would occur, and intense suffering and misery would have to be undergone. Such dreadful suffering and misery would only end when one attains Nibbāna. Therefore, it is necessary to contemplate on and fully understand the evils and suffering inherent in *Samsārā*, and to pray and strive seriously for the attainment of Nibbāna whereby all suffering may be completely overcome.

THE DISCIPLINE OF SATIPAṬṬHĀNA

It may not be possible to attain Nibbāna right away during the present existence. But prayer for its attainment and efforts made to achieve this purpose would ensure rebirth in circumstances which are conducive to attainment of Nibbāna. Rebirth would be in the human world and during this life span there will be opportunities for hearing the Dhamma (Buddha's teaching) and practising it. Through such practice, "*Magga-phala-Nibbāna*" would be attained. For this attainment, the only pathway is the practice of *Satipaṭṭhāna*. If *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice is commenced now, one may attain "*Magga-phala-Nibbāna*" even in this life. Therefore those who wish to accomplish this attainment as soon as possible must not be content only with the saying of prayers therefor, but must indeed begin *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice right now.

That is why Buddha had stated that in order to divest oneself of *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*, one should make haste and begin efforts for practising mindfulness of each bodily movement or posture, each sensation or feeling; each thought or impression; and each *Dhamma* (condition, property or characteristic of natural phenomena) as they arise.

PRACTICE ACCORDING TO THE DISCIPLINE OF SATIPAṬṬHĀNA

For those who have attained *Jhānā samādhi*, practice of the four *Satipaṭṭhānas* may be initiated

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by going into the Jhānic state. Immediately on withdrawal therefrom, attention and mindfulness must be focussed on this past Jhānic citta as well as on concomitant *Citta*, such as *Vitakko* (reflection, argument, reasoning) if prominent. After this, mindfulness must also encompass all readily recognizable *Pakinnaka saṅkhāras* (miscellaneous conditioned things subject to change, sorrow, etc.,) such as tactile, auditory, visual perceptions etc. When fatigue from continuous application of mindfulness to *Pakinnaka saṅkhāras* sets in, the Yogī should re-enter the Jhānic state. When relief from fatigue is thus attained, the Yogī should come out of the Jhānic absorption, apply mindfulness to the immediately past *Jhānic citta* and thence to the *Pakinnakā saṅkhāras* as they arise. When fatigue recurs, relief will be sought again by returning to the Jhānic state, and this alternation of Jhānic state and mindful observation of the *Pakinnaka saṅkhāra* should be continued till *Jhāna sammādiṭṭhi* and *Jhāna samādhi* are progressively strengthened and fatigue is overcome. Henceforth, application of mindfulness to *Pakinnaka saṅkhāra* may be carried on without interruption of or recourse to Jhānic absorption.

VIPASSANĀ BHĀVANĀ FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NOT
ACHIEVED JHĀNA

How yogis who have not achieved *Jhāna* may begin *Vipassanā bhāvanā* by mindful observation

of the four *Dhātus* (principal elements) is described in the *Visuddhi magga*. In the *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta*, instructions are given on mindful observation of the movements and postures of the body, such as "*Gacchanto vā gacchāmīti pajānāti*" etc. This describes how *Vāyo dhātu* (air element) which is readily recognizable during the movements of walking, may be focussed on for mindful observation. Man can assume at any point in time, any one of the four *Iriyāpathas* (postures) namely, walking, standing, sitting, lying down. That is why Buddha had made the following statement:

"*Puna saparam bhikkhave bhikkhū gacchanto vā gacchāmīti pajānāti*"; which means "Yet another way of mindful observation, oh Bhikkhus, is to develop while walking (that is while making movements to take walking steps), mindfulness of the *Iriyāpatha* of walking." Thus, while walking, one must be mindful and fully aware that one is walking; while standing, one must be mindful of one's posture and be aware that one is standing; similarly, while sitting one must be aware that one is sitting; and while lying down, one must be aware that one is lying down. Buddha also added that mindfulness of each *Iriyāpatha* (posture) should be directed not to the type of *Iriyāpatha* alone, but also to the characteristic disposition of the component parts of the body when the particular *Iriyāpatha* e.g. sitting posture

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is struck. In such an instance, mindfulness will encompass the *Iriyāpatha* (the sitting posture); the disposition of the head e.g. sitting with head raised; or sitting with head hung low; and the state of the abdominal wall which is heaving and falling with respiratory movement.

PREPARATION FOR VIPASSANĀ BHĀVANĀ

In the beginning, most Yogīs take up the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* in the sitting position. Therefore, Buddha had directed that one should sit cross-legged for the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā*. There are three ways in which one may sit cross-legged (*Pallaṅkam ābhujati* = to sit cross legged) :

- (a) as portrayed in pictures or images of the Buddha
- (b) with the shanks placed one behind the other or one crossed over the other, while the bent knees are spread apart and
- (c) sitting on the shanks with thighs and bent knees held together—traditional sitting posture for Burmese women termed “sitting half cross-legged”.

Any of these three sitting postures may be taken according to one's preference. Women may also take any of these postures if they are among themselves. The important criterion

PREPARATION FOR VIPASSANĀ BHĀVANĀ

for choice is the assurance that the sitting posture adopted will permit prolonged sessions of *Vipassanā bhāvanā*. If it is possible to take up long sessions of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* without making movements and changing posture, *Samādhi* is likely to be established easily. Once *Samādhi* is established, *Vipassanā ñāṇa* can be developed. If *Vipassanā bhāvanā* is taken up only after *Jhāna samādhi* is established, *Vipassanā ñāṇa* can be attained more easily. For those who begin *Vipassanā bhāvanā* straight away, great effort would be needed for the establishment of *Samādhi*. That is why it is important to develop the ability to take up long sessions of *Vipassanā bhāvanā*.

Buddha also pointed out that after sitting cross-legged, one should hold the upper part of the body straight and erect. If the body is bent and slumped there will be laxity of physical energy and vigour which leads to difficulty in attaining *Sammādhī ñāṇa*. The upper part of the body must therefore be braced and held upright. This facilitates mindful observance. After the upper part of the body is held straight and upright, *Sati* (attention) must be directed to the object of mindful observation. In the case of those practising *Ānāpāna* (mindfulness of respiration), attention should be focussed on the nostrils to establish continuous awareness of the stream of air which flows in and out of them.

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THE PRACTICE OF KĀYĀNUPASSANĀ SATIPAṬṬHĀNAM

The yogī may start with mindful observation of a readily recognizable *Rūpa* in any part of the body. The body which is tensely braced for *Vipassanā bhāvanā* is seated cross-legged and one may recognize and develop full awareness of the sitting posture for as long as it is maintained. But prolonged mindful observance focussed on one single object, namely the sitting posture, does not require arduous concentration and may therefore lead to flagging of the vigour and strength of purpose. For this reason we have been instructing yogīs to be mindful of the state of the abdominal wall, registering awareness of its heaves and falls as they occur. Those who have followed these instructions in the practice of *Kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhānam* and gained true insight and wisdom according to the Buddha's dhamma are legion.

Therefore *Sati* (mindfulness) must be focussed on the abdominal wall. It will be seen that with every inhalation of breath, there is a heaving of the abdominal wall. This is due to increased tension and thrust in the abdominal cavity and is the manifestation of the characteristic of *Vāyo dhātu* (air element). With every exhalation of breath, there is a falling of the abdominal wall. This is the result of lowering of tension and relaxation of the abdominal wall which is again the manifestation of the

characteristic of *Vāyo dhātu* in its waning phase. Mindfulness of the state of the abdominal wall must be established. When there is heaving of the abdominal wall, one must be fully aware of the heaving movement and register its occurrence in one's mind. Similarly, when there is a falling of the abdominal wall, one must be fully aware of the falling movement and register its occurrence in one's mind. This interpretation is according to the way in which Buddha had given His instructions in connection with mindfulness of the *Iriyāpatha* of walking when one is making movements to take walking steps. In order to make it clear that the meaning of the colloquial word "walking" (used in explaining the practice of mindfulness of *Iriyāpatha*), includes the connotation that both the impulse to walk as well as the nature of *Vāyo dhātu* are clearly recognized through application of mindfulness, Buddha had said;

“*Gacchāmīti cittaṃ uppajjati, taṃ vāyaṃ janeti*”

which means “The impulse or intention to go arises in the mind first and this *cittaṃ* (mind, intention) brings about the manifestation of the characteristic of *Vāyo dhātu* (air element). Yogis who have taken up *Vipassanā bhāvanā* are deriving personal experiences of these facts exactly as they had been elucidated in the dhamma and are gaining knowledge thereby,

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Therefore when there is heaving of the abdominal wall, one must be mindful of the heaving movement and take note of its occurrence, and when there is falling of the abdominal wall, one must be mindful of the falling movement and take note of its occurrence. There is no need to put anything into words. One only needs to be mindful of what is being focussed on. The important thing is to recognize and be mindful of the nature of what has arisen. Thus, mindfulness of the heaving of the abdominal wall must start with its beginning and be continuously applied up to its end. Mindfulness of the falling of the abdominal wall must also start with its beginning and be applied continuously up to its end. As *Samādhi* gains strength, the characteristics of tension, thrust, relaxation and movement will, on their own, become clearly recognizable. When in a seated posture, undisturbed by movement, the heave and fall of the abdominal wall is most conspicuous and recognizable. Therefore the heaving and falling movements of the abdominal wall must be mindfully observed without interruption. When the movement of heaving ends, that of falling begins; and when the movement of falling ends, that of heaving begins. There should be no interruption in mindfulness. It has to be maintained continuously.

KĀYĀNUPASSANĀ SATIPAṬṬHĀNAM

When one is bowing one's head, one must fix one's attention on and be aware of the bowing movement. When raising the head also, one must fix one's attention on and be aware of the raising movement. If one's hands and feet are being moved or re-arranged, one must fix one's attention on and be aware of the re-arrangement, the bending, or the straightening as they occur. When standing up from a sitting posture, one must take mental note and be aware that one is standing up. Lightening of the body and its progressive elevation should be mindfully observed continuously from its start till the standing posture is established. When one has established oneself in a standing posture, one should take mental note and be aware that one has assumed a standing posture. One would then feel and know the tenseness of the body which is the manifestation of the characteristic of *Vāyo rūpas* (air elements in the elementary matter). When from a standing posture one begins to walk, one must mentally note that one is walking. Instead of this, one may focus mindfulness on the alternating steps being taken, mentally noting the stepping of the right foot and of the left foot as they each occur. Mindfulness must cover the whole period of the step, beginning with the raising of the foot and following its movement forward till the foot is set down after the step has been taken. When mindful

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observation of the process of walking has been developed properly, each step will be covered by three points of mental noting namely, (i) on raising the foot, (ii) on stepping forward and (iii) on putting the foot down at the end of the step. When *Samādhi* has been strongly established, the raising of the foot and its awareness, the stepping forward and its awareness and the setting down of the foot and its awareness would be recognized distinctly. This is knowledge which distinguishes *Rūpa* (form, physical characteristic, assemblage of material elements and properties) from *Nāma* (mental elements, mind).

With further growth in strength of *smādhi*, one will also be able to recognize and be aware of the impulse, mind or intention to move or go which is in accord with the Pali text "*Gacchāmīti cittaṃ uppajjati, taṃ vāyam janeti*" quoted previously. This knowledge is derived as direct personal experience in the course of *Kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ*; and therefore is not acquired at second hand as in the case of book-learning from the study of the scriptures. Those who have not taken up the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* will not have this knowledge. To prove this, one might try moving the index finger to see if impulse or intention to move the finger, which arises first in the mind, can be recognized. One may know that mental

impulse or intention which motivates the finger-movement arises first, but one would have no idea when and how this impulse has arisen. One may also know that the head is raised, lowered or moved because an impulse or intention for making such movement has arisen in the mind. But when and how this impulse has arisen would not be recognized. On the other hand, whenever a yogi, who has been continuously practising mindfulness, makes a movement or re-arrangement of body posture, he can clearly recognize the impulse to move or re-arrange body posture which first arises in the mind. Thus, direct personal knowledge is derived through actual experience that "intention to make a movement arises first and that this *Citta* (mental intention or impulse) brings about the tensing and body movement (*Vāyo rūpa*)."

In addition to this, progressive extension of direct experiential knowledge brings recognition of the diffusion of *Vāyo rūpa* stimuli throughout the body and movement under its impulsion either forwards or backwards according to the dictates of *Citta* impulse. When *Samādhi* insight grows stronger still, it will be seen that each impulse for, and actual involvement of various components in the execution of, a particular movement or change of posture does not move from one place to another but disappears with each completion of the specific movement or change. This clearly proves that

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all is impermanent, and that there is no individual "I" nor *Atta* principle which moves. One thus progressively derives direct experiential knowledge that this movement or change, of posture comprises coordinated responses of the various component *Rūpas* to a specific, *Citta* impulse or intention which desires such movement or change.

Prior to acquirement of such direct experiential knowledge, the assumption of the common man would ordinarily be "I go because I want to go; I stand because I want to stand; I sit because I want to sit; I bend because I want to bend; and I stretch because I want to stretch. It is I who wants to go, and also I who goes; it is I who wants to stand and also I who stands; it is I who wants to sit and also I who sits; it is I who wants to bend or stretch and also I who bends or stretches." There is thus an illusion of an individual "I" and also of permanence. After insight knowledge has been acquired through mindful observation of bodily movements and postures as they arise, it becomes clear while focussing mindfulness on the mental impulse (*Citta*) to go, and on the *Rūpas* involved in the physical movement of going, that the arising and cessation of these *Citta* and *Rūpa* take place in their respective time points in an unceasing continuum.

SANDIṬṬHIKA

SANDIṬṬHIKA ATTRIBUTE OF THE DHAMMA

Buddha had ascribed to His Dhamma the attribute of *Sandiṭṭhika* which refers to the fact that assiduous practice of its tenets would certainly bring about direct, experiential knowledge and insight. We are propagating this very Dhamma which, if practised, can be perceived through personal experience. In our discourses we aim at providing instructions on how *Vipassanā bhāvanā* may be practised. Those who accept the truth of the Dhamma and take up the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* come to realize on their own, through experiential knowledge, that there is only the aggregate of *Rūpa* and *Nāma* and that all life is *Anicca* (impermanence), *Dukkha* (sorrow, grief) and *Anatta* (devoid of living individual *Atta* or individual creature). When such knowledge is acquired, it will be realized as an illustration of the Dhamma's attribute of *Sandiṭṭhika* which ensures that practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* according to the Dhamma would inevitably lead to direct experiential knowledge and insight.

If adequate effort is put into the practice of *Vipassanā bhāvanā*, personal direct knowledge will accrue; but if no effort is made in this direction, there can be no such result. Nothing can be done for such non-achievement which stems from absence of effort in the first place. Only actual practice will be productive of desired

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results. Among the yogis who come to our meditation centre, those who faithfully carry out the practice of *Satipaṭṭhāna* according to the directions of the instructors achieve direct personal experiential knowledge. Those who do not follow instructions properly, however, will not achieve insight into the true Dhamma. A few of the latter yogis would mistakenly presume that because they cannot achieve true experiential knowledge, others would not be able to, either; and make undesirable statements about this matter. Such failure to achieve true experiential knowledge, can be ascribed to improper and inadequate practice. Nothing can be done for such failures which are due to improper practice.

Buddha Himself had stated that one must address *Sammappadhāna* (supreme efforts) to mindful observation; that Buddhas can only preach; and that whoever practises mindful observation will achieve liberation from *Kilesā* defilements and the bondage of *Samṣārā*. Those who take up *Vipassanā bhāvanā* will achieve direct knowledge and insight and be liberated from *Samṣārā*. For those who do not, even the Buddha cannot confer on them personal direct knowledge and liberation. Adequate information and discussion on *Kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ* have now been given. But before going on to *Vedanānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ*, we will deal with

CITTĀNUPASSANĀ SATIPAṬṬHĀNAM

Cittānupassanā satipaṭṭhānam which is closely connected with *Kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhānam*.

THE PRACTICE OF CITTĀNUPASSANĀ SATIPAṬṬHĀNAM

While engaged in mindful observance of body movements and postures such as the heaving and falling of the abdominal wall, the sitting posture which is being assumed, etc., it often happens that the observing mind strays to other areas. One cannot prevent this. Although one's physical presence is in a meditation centre, and one is focussing mindful attention on body movements and postures, the mind may wander and imagine meeting one person or another in one's community. Whenever such distraction occurs, one must take mental note of it. If the mind is occupied with some idea, this must be taken note of; if one is walking in one's imagination, one must also take note of it. If one imagines that one has arrived at a certain place, one must take mental note of this imaginary arrival; if one imagines that one meets someone, this imaginary meeting must be noted in the mind. If a wish or a desire arises in the mind, or if anger is aroused, these must also be noted. Whatever arises in the mind has to be noted. When such continuous observation is maintained, the characteristics of mental processes, thoughts and impressions will be seen and truly understood. In the beginning, one may not realize how the mind

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is subject to such vagrancy. One may come to know of this only after a number of ideas or speculations have already passed through the mind. Every time such activity is recognized, mental note should be made of its occurrence. When this is done, the recognized mental activity would cease at once without continuation. That is the time for mindful observation to be reverted to the movement of the abdominal wall. When *Sati* and *Samādhi* grow stronger, any idea or thought arising in the mind during the observation of the abdominal movements would be immediately recognized and mentally noted. Later on, the faculty of mindfulness will be developed to the extent that recognition of the mind's tendency to move away from the object of *Kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ* will take place as soon as this tendency has arisen, and its mental noting and observation will bring about cessation of the minds' inclination towards vagrancy. Attention to the movements of the abdominal wall must then be resumed. Mindful observation of the arising of each mental process of thought or impression is *Cittānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ*.

According to the *Satipaṭṭhāna suttaṃ*, Buddha had stated that any consciousness, thought or impression associated with lust must be recognized and mentally noted as such. One must recognize and be aware of *Citta* (consciousness,

VEDANĀNUPASSANĀ SATIPAṬṬHĀNAM

thought or impression) which is associated with or dissociated from (a) lust or craving; (b) anger or hatred; and (c) ignorance or delusion. One must recognize and be aware of *Citta* which is associated with sloth, as well as *Citta* which is associated with torpor. *Citta* associated with *Mahaggata jhāna* (sublime jhāna) must be recognized and mentally noted as well as *Citta* which is dissociated from such *Jhāna*; but the faculty for recognition and awareness of these two *Cittas* is an attribute of those who have attained *Jhāna*. One must also recognize and be aware of *Sa-uttara citta* (mundane or lowly thought, consciousness) as well as *Anuttara citta* (supramundane or lofty thought, consciousness), faculty for undertaking which is again an attribute of those who have attained *Jhāna*. Similarly, one must recognize and be aware of a calm and tranquil state as well as a distracted state of mind. It is also necessary to be able to recognize and be aware of mindful observance which brings release from the bondage of *Kilesā*, as well as non-application of mindful observance which fails to derive release from *Kilesā* bondage. These are the sixteen categories of *Citta* enumerated in the explanation of *Cittānupassanā satipaṭṭhānam*.

THE PRACTICE OF VEDANĀNUPASSANĀ SATIPAṬṬHĀNAM

When continuous *Satipaṭṭhāna* mindfulness has been maintained for a long time in the sitting

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posture, muscular fatigue, stiffness and pain would set in and give rise to unbearable physical discomfort. When this happens, mindfulness must be focussed on the most conspicuous *Vedanā* (sensation, pain, suffering). If there is muscular fatigue and strain, this must be mentally noted as such. Similarly, mental note must be taken of the sensation of heat, pain or itchiness etc., as they arise. While mindful observance is applied to these various sensations of pain and discomfort, they may increase in intensity. One may then wish to change the body posture, but this must not be done immediately. One must take mental note of this wish, bear with the pain and discomfort, and resume the *Satipaṭṭhāna* mindfulness. Such forbearance is termed *Khantisaṁvara*. Only when *Satipaṭṭhāna* mindfulness is continued with patience and endurance can *Samādhi* be developed, which would then lead to *Vipassanā ñāṇa*, *Ariyamagga ñāṇa*, etc. Nibbāna can also be attained. If patience is lacking and changes of body posture are made frequently, it would be difficult to develop *Samādhi*. If *Samādhi* is not developed *Vipassanā ñāṇa* will not ensue; thus excluding the possibility of attaining *Ariyamagga ñāṇa*, *Phala ñāṇa* and Nibbāna.

Therefore one must extend one's patience to the utmost and focus one's mindfulness on the *Dukkha vedanā*, (pain and suffering). When

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mindfulness and *Samādhi ñāṇa* have grown in strength, the *Dukkha vedanā* which has been very difficult to bear may disappear as if it has been suddenly taken away. A good number of people, whose illnesses have been pronounced incurable by their physicians and who have hardly any chance of survival, have taken up *Vipassanā bhāvanā* and recovered from their illnesses while they are practising *Vipassanā* mindfulness. One must therefore bear with the painful sensations and discomfort with all the patience one can muster, and continue mindfulness of these painful sensations. If the pain and discomfort have increased in intensity and become unbearable, one may take recourse to change of body posture. At this juncture also, mindfulness must be directed to the *Citta* impulse to move and change posture, and then follow the process of movement continuously. When this is completed, one must revert to mindfulness of the heave and fall of the abdominal wall.

When distress or anxiety assails the mind, this distress or anxiety must be recognized and mentally noted till it disappears. So also, any conspicuous pleasurable sensation arising out of pleasant physical contact must be recognized and mentally noted. Pleasurable feeling from joy and gladness that arises in the mind must also be recognized and noted as well as

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certain type of feeling which is neither pleasurable nor painful but somewhere in between. This last category of feeling is termed *Upekkhā vedanā* and is usually inconspicuous. Such *Upekkhā vedanā* becomes more easily apprehensible when *ñāṇa* has been developed to a very high level. These three categories of feelings must be recognized and mentally noted as they arise in the mind. Pleasurable feelings are termed *Sukha vedanā*, distressing feelings are termed *Dukkha vedanā* and those midway between the two foregoing feelings are termed *Upekkhā vedanā*. These do not arise concurrently, but one at a time. Each feeling as it arises has to be recognized and mentally noted.

THE PRACTICE OF DHAMMĀNUPASSANĀ SATIPAṬṬHĀNAM

Whatever arises that is neither concerned with (a) body movements and postures, nor with (b) consciousness and processes of thought or impression, nor with (c) *Vedanā* (feelings, sensations), is dhamma (conditions of existence, characteristics of phenomena). This is exemplified by such conditions or characteristics as the mere fact of the perception of sight or sound, etc. Thus, while one is focussing one's attention and mindfulness on the heave and fall of the abdominal wall, one must take mental note of (a) incidence of visual perception should one see an object; (b) incidence of auditory perception should one hear a sound;

(c) incidence of olfactory perception should one smell something. Similarly, if while eating, one gets the taste of what is being eaten, mental note must be made of the incidence of gustatory perception. When contact is felt, the incidence of tactile perception must be noted mentally; when a certain idea or thought arises, this idea or thought must be recognized and noted mentally. Such recognition and mindfulness is an accordance with statements like "*Cakkkhumāca pajānāti; rupeca pajānāti*" made in the *Āyatana dhammānupassanā* exegesis.

When a craving or desire for something arises, this condition or state of craving must be recognized and noted mentally. When one likes or feels attachment for a certain object, this condition or state of affection must be recognized and noted in the mind. This is a brief account of the method of establishing mindfulness of *Kāmacchanda*. When *Vyāpāda* (anger, malevolence, hatred) arises, this must also be recognized and noted in the mind. Similarly, one must take mental note of *Thinamiddha* (sloth and torpor), *Uddhacca* (restless state of mind, mental distraction, flurry), and *Kukkucca* (remorse), as they arise. If wrong views about Buddha and His teaching (Dhamma) arise, they must be mentally noted as wrong views. Sometimes one may mistakenly interpret the arising of such wrong views as an

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exercise of critical intellectual analysis. If, while observing mindfulness of the rising and falling movements of the abdominal wall, one contemplates about the methods applied to the practice of the Dhamma, one must take mental note of this contemplation. Such mindful observance is in accord with statements made in the *Nīvarana dhammānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna* exegesis.

If, while attention is being focussed on mindful observance of the heave and fall of the abdominal wall, any characteristic of the phenomena of visual or auditory perceptions, of craving and attachment, etc., should arise conspicuously, one must recognize and take note of the characteristic and be mindfully aware of it.

When such mindfulness is developed nothing should remain unknown. Whatever arises in the *Khandhā* aggregate would all come under mindful observance and awareness. All that needs to be recognized and covered by mindfulness has been dealt with. All body movements and postures should be noted as they are made or assumed; all forms of consciousness and processes of thought; and all sensations or feelings should be noted as they arise. Similarly, all conditions and characteristics of phenomena should also be noted as they arise conspicuously.

DISCERNMENT OF NĀMA AND RŪPA

This covers the practice of all four *Satipaṭṭhāna* disciplines.

There are some people who think that the method of practising *Satipaṭṭhāna* that is being described is concerned only with mindfulness of the heave and fall of the abdominal wall, and pass adverse criticism thereon. This is not true. Based on mindfulness of the heave and fall of the abdominal wall, every feeling, thought or phenomenon that arises is recognized and mentally noted. Instructions have been given to the effect that when *Bhanga ñāṇa* is attained, no basis is needed. The ambit of mindfulness is spread wide so that all body movement or posture; mental process; feeling or sensation; and phenomena, that arise or appear are brought under this mindfulness sequentially in the order of their respective conspicuousness, as each arises.

HOW NĀMA AND RŪPA MAY BE DISTINGUISHED AND COMPREHENDED

When one is just beginning *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice, one's mind is restless and in a flurry, its attention being divided in many directions. This mental distraction is called *Nīvarana citta*. It means that such *Citta* hinders or obstructs the development of *Samādhi*. Every time these hindrances arise they have to be recognized, mentally noted, and cast aside. When, after the *Nīvaranas*

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are thus discarded, and *Sati* (mindfulness, attentive-ness) and *Samādhi* (tranquility) grow strong, the mind would be free from distraction and restlessness. Mindful attention and noting would progress without interruption. The preceding *Citta* is one of mindful attention, as also the following *Citta* and the one next in line thereto. In this way, every *Citta* is focussed on mindful observance and kept pure. This is *Cittavisuddhi* (purity of the mind). Subsequent to establishment of *Cittavisuddhi*, a clear distinction becomes discernible between the object of mindful attention and the faculty of mindfulness. Previously, the impression has been that the body which is the object of mindfulness is one with the mental faculty of recognition and mindful observance in the same individual. Henceforth, this impression will disappear and the distinction between the two entities will be obvious and clear. The object of mindfulness such as the heave and fall of the abdominal wall is separately perceived as *Kāya* (body) aggregate, and distinguished from the faculty of recognition and mindfulness which is *Citta* or *Nāma* (mental *khandhā*). In the mindful observation of bending and stretching; movement and change of posture; standing and walking; raising the foot, stepping forward and putting it down, etc., the observed *Rūpa*; and the mental faculty which observes, *Citta* or *Nāma*, are entirely different entities. It is not even possible to mix or blend them

PERCEPTION OF 'ACTION' AND ITS 'RESULT'

together. This is *Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa* which can differentiate between and clearly comprehend *Rūpa* and *Nāma*. When the two separate entities, namely, the *Kāya* aggregate which is observed; and the mental *Khandhā* which apprehends are clearly perceived, the original *Attadiṭṭhi* which laboured under the misconception of a single person or an individual body, will be relinquished. Freedom from *Attadiṭṭhi* and attainment of clear perception of the two separate entities is termed *Diṭṭhi visuddhi*.

PERCEPTION AND CLEAR DISCRIMINATIVE KNOWLEDGE OF 'ACTION' AND ITS CORRESPONDING 'RESULT'

Muscular fatigue, sensation of heat, pain, etc., which arise while mindful attention of *Satipaṭṭhāna* is being given to the movement of the abdominal wall, to the sitting posture etc., have to be recognized and mindfully noted. Similarly, during *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice, when one wishes to change posture, to bend or stretch, etc., one has to recognize and take mental note of any such wish. Only after this recognition should postural change or movement of the body be made and its process closely followed and covered by mindful observation. In this way one will realize that postural change is made because a wish to change posture has arisen; and movement of bending or stretching is made because a wish to bend or stretch has arisen. It will become clear that the mental impulse or wish

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to change posture, to bend or to stretch is the cause which brings about postural change, bending or stretching; and that no *Atta* entity or individual "I" exists which undertakes this work. There is only *Citta* which is the cause, and *Rūpa* the resultant therefrom.

When walking also, during mindful observance of raising of the foot, its carriage forward and its setting down, each causal *Citta* (mental impulse) which wishes to walk; and motivates raising, carriage forward and setting down of the foot, will become conspicuously manifest. Thus it will be possible to recognize and be mindfully aware of the impulse or wish to walk, and the physical act of walking; the impulse to raise the foot, and the raising of the foot, etc. As a result of this mindful observation, one realizes that one walks because of the *Citta* (mental impulse) which wishes to walk; one raises one's foot because of the *Citta* which motivates the raising of the foot etc., thus conferring personal experiential knowledge that these are only manifestations of the cause and effect relationships. Moreover, while mindful attention is being focussed on perceptions, such as those of sight or hearing, one can clearly see the relationship between cause and effect which operates in the case of sight because of the presence of the eye and visible *Rūpa*; and in the case of hearing, because of the presence of the ear and audible

DEVELOPMENT OF ANICCA ÑĀṆA ETC.

vibrations of sound. According to one's level of *Ñāṇa* (intellect), one would perceive the chain of successive cause and effect relationships which begins with ignorance of the truth because one has failed to practise *Vipassanā bhāvanā*. Ignorance brings about complacency and attachment; complacency and attachment lead to craving; because of craving one speaks or takes action for the gratification of this craving. Good action would bring good (wholesome) effect, whereas evil or immoral action would bring bad (unwholesome) effect.

Clear perception brings firm conviction of the fact that there is only cause and its corresponding effect in the *Khandhā*, and that these are not the creation of anyone. This is *Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa*. When this *ñāṇa* (knowledge) grows stronger, one will realize that in the past existences also, the cause and effect relationships must have prevailed just as they would in future existences. This is *Kamikhāvitaraṇa visuddhi* which has overcome all doubts and misconceptions (such as of the question whether one had gone through existences in the past), and has been rendered pure and crystal clear.

DEVELOPMENT OF ANICCA ÑĀṆA, ETC.

When *Sati* and *Samādhi ñāṇa* gain strength and maturity, mindful observance of the heave and fall of the abdominal wall will begin to recognize the exact starting and ending points of

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both the heaving and falling movements. In the case of bending and stretching also, recognition of the exact starting and ending points of both the bending and stretching movements will similarly begin to occur. One will also begin to recognize the exact starting and ending points of each step taken while walking. During mindful observation of (a) raising the foot, (b) its carriage forward, and (c) its setting down, the exact starting and ending points of these three components of the walking movement will begin to be recognized. Such recognition that these various movements arise and cease thereafter, brings experiential knowledge which leads to the conclusion that they are impermanent.

When focussing mindfulness on the incidence of pain, the exact starting and ending points of *Vedanā* (pain, suffering) will be recognized. During mindful observation of the sensation of pain one will derive experiential knowledge of its gradual waning and final cessation. This knowledge enables one to come to the conclusion that because *Vedanā*, which is hard to bear, arises and later on ceases, it is not permanent. This is only a brief reference to realization of the arising and cessation of *Rūpa* and *Nāma* through *Santati* (extention, continuity) during the incidence of *Sammasana ñāṇa* (investigation of aggregates as composite).

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Later on, when *Udayabbaya ñāṇa* (knowledge of the arising and cessation of conditioned things) has arisen, neither the heave nor the fall of the abdominal wall is perceived as a single movement. The heave is perceived as a composite of three, four, five or six distinct heaving movements, just as the fall is also perceived as a composite of three, four, five or six distinct falling movements. Thereafter, a quick succession of rapidly disappearing, flickering movements are perceived. Realization of the characteristic of impermanence would then become more clear and firm.

When this stage is reached, during each bending or stretching movement, a rapid succession of innumerable component movements would be perceived distinctly. During mindfulness of pain also, the episode of pain would be perceived as a series of many separate incidences of pain each of which arises and then rapidly disappears. Likewise, during mindfulness of hearing, an episode of hearing a certain sound will be perceived as a series of component incidences of hearing this sound, each of which arises and then rapidly disappears, the disappearances being very conspicuously discernible. Concurrently, the observing mind also goes through a series of sound perceptions, each of which arises and very rapidly passes away. The remarkably rapid cessation of each sound perception is striking.

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Those who are endowed with high intelligence will readily recognize the extremely rapid cessation of each of the successively arising perceptions which are under mindful observation. They would also recognize distinctly and most exclusively the rapid disappearance, during mindfulness of whatever is being mindfully observed; and thus the characteristic of impermanence would be realized every time such recognition occurs. This is true *Aniccānupassanā ñāṇa*.

At the beginning of *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice, when one is focussing mindfulness on body postures and movements such as those of the abdominal wall, the appearance, shape and configuration of the abdomen, body, hands and feet, etc. would be clearly seen or visualized. But, as *Bhāvanā ñāṇa* gains maturity, such appearances are no longer seen or visualized. Only the flickering succession of disappearances or cessations would be perceived. Therefore the rapid disappearance or cessation of bodily movements and postures (such as heaves and falls, bendings and stretchings); feelings and sensations; consciousness and mental processes of thought, impression; conditions and characteristics of phenomena; as well as mindful observations and recognitions, would all be perceived, so that *Aniccānupassanā ñāṇa* which recognizes the characteristic of impermanence would arise during every mindful observance. When one recognizes the charac-

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teristic of impermanence, one will also realize that all is suffering, and that there is nothing which one should develop affection for, or which one could depend on; and that there is no "*Atta*" nor individual "I". Such progressive attainment of true knowledge is most joyful and satisfying. This is the state of knowledge at the level of attainment of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa* (knowledge of dissolution of conditioned things).

However, one should not rest content with the achievement made thus far. As one continues to recognize exclusively, during mindfulness, the rapid disappearance or cessation of successive perceptions which are under mindful observation, a sense of fear may arise. This is *Bhaya ñāṇa*. When one assumes that these conditioned things are frightful, then one would begin to view them as being riddled with faults, guilt and evil. This is *Ādinava ñāṇa*. When the faults and evils are recognized, one will feel displeasure and disgust. This is *Nibbida ñāṇa*. Displeasure and disgust would lead to a desire for escape or liberation from the burden of *Rūpa* and *Nāma*, which state of mind is the manifestation of *Muncitukamyata ñāṇa*. Because of this desire, one must revert to the practice of *Satipaṭṭhāna* in order to attain the required liberation. This is *Paṭisankha ñāṇa*. When the revived mindfulness gains in strength, special concern and effort are no longer necessary, and mindful-

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ness is steadily maintained without any flagging. Only the first five to ten incidences of mental noting need attention and effort, after which the objects of mindfulness appear and present themselves on their own; and the *Citta* faculty of mindful attention and recognition thereof also functions smoothly on its own. This facility in establishing mindfulness makes it seem that the yogi only needs to hold the sitting posture. As this even tenor of mindfulness is established, sensations of pleasure or feelings of attachment do not arise; nor any fear in recognizing the succession of rapidly disappearing perceptions. No fault or guilt would be ascribed to conditioned things either. There is only a series of perceptions which just crossed the threshold for recognition by the observing mind. This is *Samkhārupekkhā ñāṇa*, which confers complete indifference to all conditioned things. When *Samkhārupekkhā ñāṇa* is attained, one can maintain optimum mindfulness for one or two hours at a stretch. There would be no tenseness or numbness from muscular fatigue, nor any *Dukkha vedanā* (discomfort, pain, suffering). No unbearable discomfort or pain will occur, and one can go through such sessions in reasonable comfort, so much so that two or three hours of *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice may seem just a little while. These are the characteristics of the very subtle and excellent *Vipassanāñāṇa*.

NIBBĀNA

REALIZATION OF NIBBĀNA

As *Vipassanā ñāṇa* gains more maturity with continuing mindfulness and subtle recognitions, very rapid perceptions occur. At the same time, cessations of the more conspicuous phenomena are clearly recognized as they occur. Such specific cognizance is termed *Vuṭṭhāna gāminī vipassanā*. As mindful recognition of each of these rapid cessations continues, both the observed and the faculty of observation enter into a sphere of extinction and bliss. This is realization of Nibbāna through insight knowledge of *Ariyamagga* and *phala*. How Nibbāna is realized is explained in the *Milinda pañhā* as follows:

While the *Citta* (mind, consciousness) of the yogī mindfully recognizes and takes note of each of the succession of perceptions as they arise, it transcends the continuous current of arising *Rūpas* and *Nāmas* and reaches a state which is the direct opposite of the continuous current of arising *Rūpas* and *Nāmas*. One who has practised correctly, and attained a state where the continuous stream of arising *Rūpas* and *Nāmas* is extinguished, should be designated as one who has realized Nibbāna.

The yogī engaged in *Vipassanā* practice has to focus attention exclusively on the continuous arising and cessation of *Rūpas* and *Nāmas*, so that mindfulness has always been directed thereto.

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At the final moment, mindful observance finds itself focussed on a state where all arising and cessation of *Rūpas* and *Nāmas* are extinguished. This is blissful liberation resulting from the extinction of observed *Rūpas* and the *Nāmas* which observe. When no object for observation nor the mental faculty of observation arises, and no thought nor any other mental activity occurs, one recognizes their extinction, and this must be understood as realization of Nibbāna.

LIBERATION FROM SAKKĀYADIṬṬHI

Such realization of Nibbāna is the attainment of *Sotāpatti ariyamagga ñāṇa*. Whosoever attains this *Ñāṇa* would be completely disburdened of *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* and thus there would no longer be any interpretation of the *Rūpa* and *Nāṇa* aggregate as "*Atta*" or individual "I" who perceives visible objects and audible sounds, nor any attachment to this heresy of individuality.

Puthujjanas (common men, worldlings) hold the mistaken view, to which they are firmly attached, that it is the individual "I" who sees, and "I" who hears, just as it is "I" who stands and also "I" who sits. This is *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* which takes a wrong view or interpretation that the perceived, tangible *Rūpa* and *Nāma* aggregate is *Atta* or the individual "I". *Sotāpannas* (those who have attained *Sotāpattimaggā*), however, are free from wrong views and wrong interpretations of *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*. When *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* is completely

eliminated, no *Duccarita* (sinful conduct) or *Akusala kamma* (evil deed, sinful action) which leads to *Apāya* would be committed; nor would past *Akusala kammās* bring about the result of rebirth in *Apāya*. Complete liberation from the miseries of *Apāya* is thus achieved; that is, henceforth, there shall be no risk of being cast into *Niraya* (hell), nor of rebirth in the *Tiracchāna bhava* (animal existence), *Peta loka* (departed beings who are absolutely devoid of happiness) or *Asura loka* (those who do not sport nor shine). A *Sotāpanna* may only be reborn in the human or deva worlds to noble and wealthy lives. But rebirths would occur no more than seven times. During any of these seven existences, Arahantship would be attained and all suffering would come to an end. Thus, it is of the utmost importance to rid oneself completely of *Sakkāyadittīhi* just as Buddha had said in the *Satti Sutta*.

“*Sattiyā viya omaṭṭho, deshāmanova matthake,
Sakkāyadittīhippahānāya, sato bhikkhu paribbāje*”

which means—

“With the same urgency and despatch as someone whose breast has been impaled with a spear or whose head is on fire, would seek immediate relief from the affliction thereof, the Bhikkhu who is mindful of the perils of *Samsārā* (round of births) should make haste to free himself from *Sakkāyadittīhi* (the heresy of individuality).”

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APPLICATION OF VIPASSANĀ MAGGAṄGA PRACTICE FOR PERSONAL EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

Using the *Gāthā* (stanza) quoted above from the Satti sutta as the keynote of this evening's discourse, much of the subject of *Vipassanā* has been covered in the one and a half hours spent in its delivery. It is time, therefore, to stop the discourse in order that practical application of *Vipassanā bhāvanā* according to Buddha's advice and instruction can be conducted here and now. Change your present posture to relieve yourself of muscular strain and fatigue, and take a comfortable sitting posture. Because it is not necessary to look at anything, keep your eyes closed. Direct mindful attention to your abdominal wall. When there is a swelling up or heaving of the abdominal wall, take mental note that there is heaving; when there is falling of the abdominal wall, take mental note that there is falling. The heave and the fall, noted mentally, need not be expressed by word of mouth. The main thing is to be mindful and to recognize and mentally note these movements. Awareness of the heave must be maintained from its start to its end; so also must awareness of the fall be maintained from its start to its end. If during mindfulness of the movements of the abdominal wall the mind should wander elsewhere, make a note of the mind's vagrancy and revert to mindfulness of the abdominal wall movements. If bodily discomfort, muscular strain, heat or pain should grow in intensity and become

VIPASSANA MAGGAṄGA PRACTICE

unbearable, direct mindful attention to and take mental note of such discomfort, muscular strain, heat, pain, etc. After about five mental notings, revert to mindfulness of the abdominal-wall movements. If a sound is heard, take mental note of this perception and go back again to mindfulness of the abdominal-wall movements. This much instruction should suffice for the present. Let us now have a three-minute session of mindfulness.

Three minutes' time is up, now. During one minute, depending on the rate of respiration, anywhere between thirty to sixty mental notings of abdominal-wall movements may be made. In each noting, the eight *Maggaṅgas* (constituents of the noble path) are involved. Efforts made for mindfulness is *Sammā vāyāma* (right effort); mindfulness is *Sammā sati* (right mindfulness); the capacity to attach the mind to and maintain steadfast mindful attention on the object of observation is *Vipassanā khaṇika samādhi*. These are the three *Samādhi maggaṅgas*. To have the right knowledge of perceptions which have been mentally noted is *Sammā diṭṭhi* (right view). At the beginning of *Vipassanā* practice, before *Samādhi* has gained strength, right understanding or right view is not readily attainable. But some basic understanding of *Lakkhaṇam* (characteristic), *Rasa* (essence), *Paccupaṭṭhāna* (understanding, appearance, coming on) etc., of *Rūpas* and *Nāmas* would be progressively garnered. When *Samādhi* has grown in strength, differential

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knowledge between *Rūpas* and *Nāmas* would be acquired; clear discriminative knowledge of action and its corresponding result would also be attained. Arising and cessation; the characteristics of *Anicca* (impermanence), *Dukkha* (suffering) and *Anatta* (non-individuality), would be perceived very clearly, as if they are palpable objects. Such progressively developed understanding or knowledge is right understanding or right view. That is why it is termed *Sammā diṭṭhi* (right view). Just as *Samādhi* directs or focusses mindfulness on the observed object in order to help achieve right view, *Sammā sankappo* (right aspiration, or right resolve) channels the flow of and provides direction to the faculty of mindful attention. These last two are *Paññā maggaṅgas*. Added to the three *Samādhi maggaṅgas* we now have five *Maggaṅgas*. *Aṭṭhakathā* (commentaries) designated these five *Maggaṅgas*, as *Kāraka maggaṅgas* (worker *Maggaṅgas*). These five *Maggaṅgas* work together in unity and cooperation to bring about and sustain the process of mindfulness.

The three *Sīla maggaṅgas* namely, *Sammā vācā*, *Sammā kammanta* and *Sammā ājīva*, have been established at the time of taking the *Sikkhāpada* (precepts) and continuously maintained during the practice of mindfulness. Therefore, when these three *Maggaṅgas* are also enumerated, all eight *Maggaṅgas* would be involved in each and every mindful noting. *Maggaṅgas* are constituents of the noble path. When these constituents are

brought together, the noble path is complete. This noble path leads to Nibbāna. Thus, in the course of *Satipaṭṭhāna* which comprises the eight *Maggaṅgas*, each single mindful noting carries one nearer towards Nibbāna. Just as each step taken by someone who is walking carries him nearer to his destination, every mindful noting takes one nearer to Nibbāna.

On the assumption that approximately fifty mental notings can be made in one minute, about one hundred and fifty notings would have been taken during the 3-minute session of *Satipaṭṭhāna* that we have had a while ago. Should a certain person have the potential to realize Nibbāna on completion of one thousand mental notings, he/she would only need to make eight hundred and fifty more notings. If these outstanding mental notings are made to complete the total requirement, Nibbāna would be realized. Therefore, if it is not possible to go to a meditation centre to continue *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice, one can, in one's own home, continue this practice according to the method which has been demonstrated and actually applied this evening, and also within the limits of one's free time, whether it is one minute, five minutes or ten minutes, as available. Every time *Satipaṭṭhāna* mindful observance is practised, special merits and higher levels of perfection would accrue, for which no financial expense is required. If practice is continued assiduously, *Vipassanā ñāṇas* would be progressively attained as and when

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circumstances are favourable. Nibbāna would be realized through *Ariya magga ñāṇa*. When this realization takes place, *Sakkāya diṭṭhi* would be completely eliminated and there would be permanent liberation from the states of *Apāya*. *Arahatta magga* and *Phala* (the path and fruition of Arahantship, the fourth (final) emancipation) would be attained within seven rebirths and all suffering would be completely extinguished. Therefore, if one desires permanent liberation from relegation to *Apāya* states, or if one desires extinction of all suffering and a permanent state of bliss, one only needs to continue *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice according to the procedures which we have followed during the session we have had this evening. My discourse has taken nearly two hours to deliver; so let us end the discourse with the sharing of merits and good will.

May our parents; our relatives; all those who are gathered here, both men and devas; and all sentient beings share with us the good merits of *Dāna* (charity), *Sīla* (moral practice) *Bhāvanā* (meditation), *Veyyāvaccam* (service to superiors), *Dhammadesanā* (religious teaching), *Dhammasavana* (hearing or attending the preaching of a sermon) that we have performed this day; and may all sentient beings receive their due share of these merits and be blessed with peace and happiness both in body and mind.

ERRORS AND CORRECTIONS

Page

3 last line but one, para 2	<i>For</i> gathā <i>read</i> gāthā
6 line 2 of heading for last para	<i>For</i> DIFFERENCES <i>read</i> DIFFERENCE
6 line 2 of last para	<i>For</i> experinece <i>read</i> experience
7 line 3, para 2	<i>For</i> spirie- <i>read</i> spiri-
8 line 2, para 2	<i>For</i> then <i>read</i> than
9 line 10, para 2	<i>For</i> deligent <i>read</i> diligent
12 line 4, para 1	<i>For</i> Deva <i>read</i> Deva
13 line 2, last para	<i>For</i> misconcoived <i>read</i> misconceived
16 line 3 from top	<i>For</i> worlding <i>read</i> worldling
20 line 8, para 2	<i>For</i> prime <i>read</i> offending
20 line 9, para 2	<i>For</i> immediate <i>read</i> prime
20 line 3, last para	<i>For</i> sakkayaditthi <i>read</i> sakkāyadiṭṭhi
25 line 8, para 1	<i>For</i> phāla <i>read</i> phala
27 line 2, para 3	<i>For</i> punctuation mark at end of line <i>substitute comma for</i> <i>fullstop</i>

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27 line 4, para 3	<i>For</i> Ditthi <i>read</i> Diṭṭhi
28 line 6, para 1	<i>For</i> non <i>read</i> non-
28 line 8, para 1	<i>For</i> beremoved <i>read</i> be removed
34 line 6, para 1	<i>For</i> parenthetic bracket, <i>substitute</i> closed-bracket sign after the word koṭṭhāsa with an open- bracket sign.
34 line 9, para 2	<i>For</i> Vipā <i>read</i> Vipās-
36 line 18, para 2	<i>For</i> Pubbabhaṅga <i>read</i> Pubbabhāga
37 line 12, para 1	<i>For</i> physicsl <i>read</i> physical
40 line 1, para 1	<i>Far</i> punishments <i>read</i> punishment
40 line 4, para 2	<i>For</i> correspondind <i>read</i> corresponding
43 line 5, para 1	<i>For</i> somādhi <i>read</i> samādhi
46 line 2 of heading for last para	<i>For</i> SATIPATTHNA <i>read</i> SATIPAṬṬHĀNA
47 line 3 from top	<i>For</i> sokaparideve: <i>read</i> sokaparideve
50 line 12, para 1	<i>For</i> Savakas <i>read</i> Sāvakas
50 line 13, para 2	<i>For</i> Eakkāyadiṭṭhi <i>read</i> Sakkāyadiṭṭhi

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57 line 1, para 1	<i>For</i> Nihbāna <i>read</i> Nibbāna
57 line 2, of heading for last para	<i>For</i> SATIPATTĀNA <i>read</i> SATIPAṬṬHĀNA
59 line 9, para 1	<i>For</i> observ tion <i>read</i> observation
61 line 3, para 1	<i>For</i> bhāvana <i>read</i> bhāvanā
61 line 3, para 1	<i>For</i> possibie <i>read</i> possible
61 line 6, para 2	<i>For</i> Sammādhi <i>read</i> Samādhi
62 line 5, para 2	<i>For</i> end <i>read</i> and
62 line 7, para 2	<i>For</i> Withe <i>read</i> With
64 line 22	<i>For</i> conspscuous <i>read</i> conspicuous
66 line 11, para 1	<i>For</i> s <i>read</i> is
66 line 11, para 1	<i>For</i> RupaS <i>read</i> Rupa
66 line 1, para 2	<i>For</i> smādhi <i>read</i> samādhi
67 line 21	<i>For</i> Vayo <i>read</i> Vāyo
68 line 17, para 2	<i>For</i> impvlse <i>read</i> impulse
68 line 18, para 2	<i>For</i> Rupas <i>read</i> Rūpas
69 line 4, para 1	<i>For</i> konw. <i>read</i> know.

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69 line 17, para 1	<i>For</i> creatute <i>read</i> creature
71 heading of para 2	<i>For</i> Satipaṭṭhānam <i>read</i> Satipaṭṭhānam
72 line 20, para 1	<i>For</i> minds' <i>read</i> mind's
73 line 6, para 1	<i>For</i> assobiated <i>read</i> associated
73 line 7, para 1	<i>For</i> subime <i>read</i> sublime
77 line 10, para 1	<i>For</i> an <i>read</i> in
78 line 6, para 2	<i>For</i> thke <i>read</i> take
79 line 6, para 3	<i>For</i> dvelopment <i>read</i> development
86 last line, para 1	<i>For</i> Aniccānuppassanā <i>read</i> Aniccānupassanā
87 line 10, para 2	<i>For</i> punctuation mark after <i>evil</i> , substitute <i>full-</i> <i>stop</i> for <i>comma</i>

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