

A Manual of Insight Meditation Which Can Speedily Lead to Nibbāna

by
The Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw
Chaṭṭhasaṅgītipucchaka, Aggamahāpaṇḍita



Translated by
U Min Swe
(Min Kyaw Thu)

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Editor's Preface

I prepared this edition from the PDF files hosted on the [Saraniya Dhamma web site](#). It has been a significant undertaking due to the length of the work and the large number of Pāli quotations from the Tipiṭaka, the Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā), and Subcommentaries (Ṭīkā). The references have been changed to those of the Roman script editions, where available. The Visuddhimagga Mahāṭīka (VismṬ) references are to the CSCD Burmese Piṭaka.

My edition, as usual, aims to make these works by the great Burmese Sayādaws more accessible to those less familiar with the Pāli texts or Commentaries, let alone the Subcommentaries.

Inevitably, a manual of insight meditation dealing, as it does, with a profound subject, is not for the casual student of Buddhism. However, for the serious meditator who is striving to follow the practice of insight meditation as taught by the late Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw, this work will be a valuable resource to inform and encourage their practice.

That it has taken over seventy years for this work (the Burmese edition was published in 1945) to appear in an English edition is some measure of the size of the task. Wisdom Books will publish an edition by the [Metta Foundation Translation Committee](#). I don't doubt that their edition will be more thorough and accurate than mine, which is not yet fully polished. However, by making this edition available online as a free download and in a convenient PDF format, properly indexed and bookmarked, I hope it will prove a useful asset for the serious students of insight meditation.

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Benefits of Supramundane Refuge

“One gone for refuge to the Buddha,
The Dhamma and the Saṅgha, too,
Correctly sees with understanding,
Four Truths: The Truth of Suffering
It’s Origin, and then it’s ceasing,
And the Way leading to its ceasing,
Here is the refuge that is safe;
Here is the refuge without peer;
And he that to this refuge comes
Is liberated from all sufferings.”

Dhammapada vv 190-192

“To refrain from all evils,
To cultivate what is good,
To purify one’s mind,
This is the Teaching of all the Buddhas.”

Dhammapada v 183

Translator's Foreword

This Text of Dhamma entitled "A Manual of Insight Meditation, expounded and presented by the eminent Mahāthera, the Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, Chatṭhasaṅgītipucchaka, is the fundamental doctrine of the Buddha revealing the way to solve the mystery of the miserable rounds of existence (*samsāra*) from which total emancipation can be gained through insight by diligently practising insight meditation on the right lines towards the supreme goal, *nibbāna*, the extinction of all sufferings. When this Text of Dhamma was first written in 1944 (1306 M.E.), the Author, though still comparatively young, was quite proficient in both *Pariyatti* and *Paṭipatti*. With outstanding maturity and full confidence in his prime of life, he undertook the task of writing this Dhamma in response to the request of his lay devotees who had by then already engaged in the practical exercise of meditation under his noble guidance for the benefit and welfare of their posterity. The author was then residing at Mahāsi Yeikthā in Seikkhun village seven miles away from the historically famous town of Shwebo during the time of the Second World War. This absorbing book comprising two volumes was written within a brief period of seven months. It is a stupendous achievement as it embraces the promise of the author's genius with references to the Pāli texts, Commentaries (*Aṭṭhakathā*) and Subcommentaries (*Ṭīkā*) combined with the practical aspects of the Special Dhamma which he himself had personally attained.

Comprehensive and magnificently written, this text has fortunately survived the worst times of the disastrous war, the conflagration that had also ravaged the entire stretch of this Country, the Union of Myanmar. Immense gratitude not only goes to the talented author, an intellectual genius, for his religious fervour and unremitting effort, but also to the renowned Sayādawgyi Ashin Sundara, the Naing-ngandaw Ovādācariya, Aggamahāpaṇḍita Shwezedi Sayādawpayagyi of the famous Sagaing Hills, who was at that time in Ywathitgyi village monastery, Sagaing District. It is due to this Mahāthera's persevering nature and earnest devotion particularly to the *Paṭipatti Sāsana* that the first printing of Volume I of this treatise was possible even during those hazardous days when everything was scarce especially writing papers and printing materials. He willingly acted as a reliable and painstaking proof-reader of this text, and also immersed himself in the practice of insight meditation on

the guidelines contained in this glorious text and under close instructions of the author. The Second Volume, in the course of its printing, had been consumed by fire when the village of Ywathitgyi itself was badly hit and damaged by incendiary bombs during nocturnal air raids by the Allied Forces in the year 1307 M.E. (month of Pyatho, 1945 A.D.) However, as the original draft manuscript of that Text of Dhamma Volume II luckily remained intact in the hands of the cautious and thoughtful author — the Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw — at Seikkhun village, both the two precious volumes of this text found their way to the printing presses in Mandalay immediately after the War, the First Volume being reprinted at “Thukhavadi Press,” and the Second at “Hla Khin & Son Press” for the first time.

In the exposition of this Dhamma, it is clear that the author’s wish is to provide an opportunity to all monks and laymen to seek a way of life to get rid of the world of sufferings in their pursuit of worldly pleasures, wealth, honour, and fame. Those who wish to have no more rebirth and death are urged to resort to the practice of insight meditation assiduously. With this end in view, the right techniques for practising meditation have been vividly shown with full authenticity based upon Pāli texts, Commentaries, and Subcommentaries. Explanation is also given in this text describing in detail the stages of purification of the mind to gain progressive insight, the stages of proficiency in the attainment of the Path and Fruition, and how effort should be made for the achievement of the ultimate goal of nibbāna. It has given us to understand without the slightest doubt that nibbāna is within us, and that it is the only way to eradicate evils arising from the heart, and that until and unless one emancipates oneself, one will continue to face repeated rebirths as a victim of ignorance, the slave of insatiable desires of human passion. This Dhamma has taught us that nibbāna can be attained even in this very life, and if the achievement falls short of the target, at least the perfections (*pāramī*) will undoubtedly be accumulated by the cultivation of the practice to pave the way for reaching the ultimate goal in future existences.

Elucidation is made that nibbāna is the antidote to volitional formations (*saṅkhāra*) and is diametrically opposite to the endless cycle of existences (*saṃsāra*) comprehensible to those who have achieved the awakening consciousness of the Special Dhamma; and

that according to the Dhamma, apart from mentality and materiality (*nāma-rūpa*), which constitute the so-called 'being,' there is no such thing as an immortal soul (*atta*). Materiality (*rūpa*) is an agglomeration of essential elements (*dhātu*), which are subject to continual decay and destruction. Mentality (*nāma*) is essentially a stream of consciousness (thoughts, ideas, imaginations and radiation of currents of thoughts — the mental elements) that are in a state of flux just like the material elements of the physical body. There is, therefore, no such thing as "I" or a "being," or a "living entity." On analysis, the mind is made up of four mental aggregates, or mental and physical forces that are constantly changing, not remaining the same even for two consecutive moments. The true nature and characteristics of this process of psycho-physical phenomena appearing and disappearing, constantly changing, can only be perceived by insight knowledge. It is a process and not an identity. It is incessantly moving without any interval or rest. Restlessness, *e.g.* worry, anxiety, sorrow, dejection, lamentation, *etc.*, is craving (*taṇhā*) for all pleasurable things including selfish desires for existence. This craving stimulates the mind which, as a result manifests itself in action. This action or kamma is volition (*cetanā*), which is responsible for the creation of a sentient being binding the aggregates together.

Without craving, the whole process will have no way to occur, far less to function. Hence, craving is the chief builder of the house of five aggregates that is conventionally named as "I," a man, a woman, and so on. It is only when this fact is realised and the root-cause of craving is annihilated, that a being (the composition of the five aggregates), *i.e.*, the process of psycho-physical phenomenon will cease to occur. This highly profound concept has been made clearly understandably by the author in this treatise.

To realise this fact as stated, the method of meditation to be cultivated has been specifically prescribed and clearly shown. Methodical instructions are given herein for those who are interested to attain perfect knowledge and complete deliverance of the mind. A guarantee has been given by the Buddha himself that if a person is seriously devoted to meditation in a practical way, he or she would be able to solve the riddle of life. Realisation will then come making it possible to attain the ever-lasting peace of nibbāna. In this regard, clarification is also made of the Four Noble Truths:-

1. There is the Truth of Suffering,
2. There is the Cause of Suffering,
3. There is the Cessation or Cessation of Suffering,
4. There is the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering, or deliverance, through the method of the Eightfold Noble Path.

It is obvious that deliverance cannot be realised by wishful thinking, through book-knowledge, or by any practices of austerity, other than by cultivating insight meditation (*vipassanā*) exercises. The meditation phase is to be found at the end of the Eightfold Noble Path in Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration. Thereafter, the ennobling rewards — the joyous fruition (*phala*) can be reaped. These are vividly described step by step.

The main theme of this Dhamma treatise on insight meditation is unique. It would give an ordinary person of average intelligence, if there is no obsession, a clear understanding that insight wisdom endeavours to find out the real cause of all miseries as enumerated in the Four Noble Truths, and provides a remedy to cure the same under which we all are labouring. It will enhance our mental faculty to a high level of spiritual insight and to the Zone of Peace by uprooting human passions, the evil mentality of greed, anger, and craving, and by dispelling the wrong views that occur and thrive because of ignorance (*avijjā*) and delusion (*moha*).

In the course of meditating diligently and fervently based upon the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, as experience is gained, as mental development is augmented until it reaches a high level of wisdom where a meditator finds no peace in the midst of illusion and incessant changes succeeding to each other beyond one's control, and even feels no attachment to his or her own body any more. There will then be no more clinging to existence. This account has been given in explicit terms.

The sixteen stages of insight knowledge are also precisely and pithily enumerated and elucidated, beginning from analytical knowledge of body and mind (*nāmarūpapariccheda-ñāṇa*), then proceeding to the highest level of path knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) to visualize the bliss of nibbāna followed by fruition knowledge (*phala-ñāṇa*) realising the bliss of nibbāna after being freed from the desire of perplexity, anger, and sensual desire. It then continues to the stage of knowledge of reviewing (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*). The way

in which each stage has to be scrutinized, its significance, and how appreciation is made at each level are clearly described.

The description given by the author about the progress of insight one stage after another is so clear and precise that one would probably feel as if personally absorbed in meditation filled with joy and satisfaction even at the moment of reading this portion of Dhamma (Chapter V) with concentration. The essential qualities required of a person before meditation, such as observance of morality and the purification thereof, called purification of morality (*sīla-visuddhi*), for monks as well as laymen, has been treated separately. The differentiation between ultimate realities (*paramattha*) and concepts (*paññatti*), the philosophical aspect of purification of mind (*citta-visuddhi*), the way to control our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body in search of the truth, the efforts required to control the five senses, the manifestations of the human mind, the way of training the mind to gain tranquillity (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*), etc., have been very elaborately expounded to enable a meditator to gain a clear vision with contentment. Furthermore, clear presentation how the mind is made free from corruption and becomes purified is really interesting. Last, but not least, a comprehensive explanation is given in respect of the various stages of insight knowledge and contemplation.

The essence of the Dhamma conveyed in this treatise reveals Buddhism as a moral and philosophical system as taught by the Buddha. It is a course of doctrine and discipline through pure living and pure thinking to gain supreme wisdom and deliverance from all evils. What the Buddha expects from his disciples is not so much obeisance as the actual observance of his teaching. "He honours me best who practices my teaching best," is his admonition.

Nearly two years have elapsed at the time when this work of translation is completed from the date the Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw passed away (August 14th 1982). The eminent Venerable Sayādaw was a beacon of light that shone, illuminating the way on the Noble Path. The brilliant light of his teachings is still shining profusely and will continue to shine in future. His deep compassion, rare qualities of loving-kindness, and the characteristic perseverance and simplicity shown to every pupil who sought guidance relating to his meditation technique are unforgettable in the annals of the Buddha's dispensation (*sāsana*) of learning (*pariyatti*) and practice (*paṭipatti*).

The pious radiance of the aura shown upon his numerous pupils, disciples, and devotees, both Burmese and non-Burmese, and the majesty of his calm tranquility of mind revealed in unmistakable terms the depth of his unique spiritual attainment. He was indeed a great spiritual teacher, worthy of offerings (*pūjā*), worthy of gifts, and worthy of adoration and reverence with hardly a parallel in the present century.

May all those who have had to opportunity of being tutored by his noble admonishment and who have the benefit of his instructions as contained in this Dhamma treatise, be able to discover the reality of the Truth. May all those who are bent upon devoting themselves to the noble practice of insight meditation be able to practise without delay and deviation to gain real peace and happiness and the bliss of nibbāna.

Min Swe (Min Kyaw Thu)
Buddha Sāsana Nuggaha Organization
Rangoon
April 10, 1984

Author's Preface

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa

Aho Buddho! Aho Dhammo!

Aho Saṅgho Anuttaro!

Iti cittaṃ pahamsetvā,

Vipassitvā tadā gate.

Vipassanānayaṃ kassaṃ, sīghaṃ maggādipāpakaṃ.

Diṭṭhe dhammeva sādḥūnaṃ, yatthāvuttaṃ vipassatanti.

TRANSLATION: Oh, the Buddha, the Omniscient, the Most Exalted, the Unrivalled, being fully endowed with the noble attributes of Perfect Holiness and Supreme Enlightenment, the All-awakened One (**Buddho**) abounding in Wisdom of all the Dhamma with the knowledge of the Worlds, he is indeed (**aho**) the most marvellous and worthy of great reverence beyond possibility of description! The Noble Dhamma having the most outstanding qualities of the states of perfections in morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*), etc., with which the fires of greed (*lobha*), anger (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*) can be extinguished leading to the attainment of the four Paths (*magga*) and Fruits (*phala*), and nibbāna, and the supreme and exalted teaching (**Dhammo**), indeed (**aho**) is extremely wonderful beyond expression and of great reverence! Those (**Saṅgho**) who are diligently striving on the Path consisting of the four stages of enlightenment leading to nibbāna, and who have the attainment of knowledge of the four Paths (*magga*) and four Fruitions (*phala*), are really marvellous and venerable beyond description! By reflecting thus (**Iti**), let the mind (**citta**) be highly purified and rejoiced (**pahamsetvā**), and after contemplating and noting this clear, noble and rapturous mind at the moment of the arising, together with the phenomenal occurrences of materiality (*rūpa*), which bears it. As mentioned (**yatthāvuttaṃ**) in this Text of Dhamma, if by so contemplating and noting, those noble and virtuous persons who contemplate and note such phenomena with purity of mind, will even (**eva**) in the present existence (**diṭṭhe dhamme**) speedily (**sīghaṃ**) attain the path (**magga**), its fruition, and nibbāna within a period of one week, fifteen days, a month, or more. This is the text of Dhamma on

the Method of Insight Meditation, which guides the way to achieve nibbāna, that is now being presented to you by me in writing.

Summary of this Manual

This Manual of Insight Meditation will be written and presented in seven different chapters.

In Chapter I, preliminary words of advice about the Purification of Morality (*sīla-visuddhi*) will be given.

In Chapter II, the Purification of Mind (*citta-visuddhi*) will be explained.

In Chapter III, an explanation will be given relating to the distinction between ultimate realities (*paramattha*) and concepts (*paññatti*); the distinguishing features of the objects of insight meditation; and guidelines drawn from the method of contemplating and noting for one making tranquility as a vehicle (*samatha-yānika*).

In Chapter IV, the practical method of contemplating and noting, and how true realisation occurs will be described according to sequence in the teachings (*desanā*).

In Chapter V, an explanation will be offered relating to method of contemplation and noting, and how realisation comes through insight knowledge according to the practice of meditation in serial order.

In Chapter VI, it will be shown and commented on how insight knowledge is gained by the meditator, after comparing and consultation what is stated in the Pāli texts, and giving the decision that has been made thereafter.

In Chapter VII, the Eighteen kinds of Great Insight (*Mahā-Vipassanā*) will be explained.

Chapter I

Purification of Morality

A Word of Advice

The methods of insight meditation, which can bring about realisation and spiritual awareness of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*), the true characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and not-self (*anatta*), and the reality of the Four Noble Truths are the exhortations of the Buddha delivered by him personally, and thus these teachings constitute what he wished to bestow upon mankind. Hence, if these methods were rejected, it would amount to rejection of the Buddha's due admonition. This sort of rejection will also be tantamount to destroying the faith and desire of those who are bent upon practicing insight meditation with conviction. Moreover, it would cause such men of virtue to lose the benefit that they should have derived, or depart from the true path leading to their attainment of the path (*magga*) and its fruition (*phala*). Such being the case, the gravity of the fault one would have committed can be known and gauged from the context of the following verse:—

*“Yo sāsanaṃ arahataṃ, ariyānaṃ dhammajīvaṇaṃ.
Paṭikkosati dummedho, diṭṭhiṃ nissāya pāpikaṃ.
Phalāni kaṭṭhakaṣṣeva, attaghātāya phallati. (Dhp v 164)*

EXPLANATION: The above verse conveys the meaning that an unknowledgeable person, after accepting and relying upon the mean and false doctrine, prevents the teaching of the Buddhas who lead the life of holiness and are worthy of special reverence for having eradicated all human passions of defilements. Such an act of prevention and the acceptance of a false doctrine are similar to the fruits of a bamboo tree that kill its own life-plant on which reliance has to be made. Such a person who so deters is deemed to be one who bears the fruits of prevention and false-doctrine (*diṭṭhi*) thereby causing himself to produce the fruit of death, or rather, is tantamount to blossoming forth into a flower of death.

Golden Opportunity and the Precious Dhamma

At the present time, everybody who is reaping the benefits of the Truth of the Dhamma, the Teachings of the Buddha, may be said to

have had a golden opportunity. It is because after taking this great opportunity, if the essence can be extracted out of it, one can surely achieve the most precious path, fruition, and nibbāna. It is not always available. In any case, this great and rare opportunity will not be always available, simply because the life of a human being is likely to come to an end within a short period of time. Even though the full life-span may not be exhausted, nobody knows when one is going to die. Even if death does not occur, despite the fact that one may be keen to practise meditation effectively according to his own will and desire, he will be unable to do so when becoming old and decrepit, stricken with illness, or beset with any kind of danger, trouble, or annoyance, or because of any other unforeseen circumstances. It is imprudent to waste time. After carefully going through this Text of Dhamma, if an opportune moment has come your way, how could you make use of this precious opportunity? Will it be proper to be contented by merely teaching what you have studied and understood? Or, will it be proper to waste your time by worrying about the endless matters relating to sensual desires? Is it not true that in fact, the time is ripe for you to be accomplished with the Dhamma that is handy and reliable when you are on your deathbed instead of being helpless without anything to rely on? As such, constantly urge and remind others with the instructions given by the Buddha as cited below to be able to diligently strive on the path effectively well in time beforehand.

“Ajeva kiccamātappaṃ, ko jaññā maraṇaṃ suve.

Na hi no saṅgaraṃ tena, mahāsenena maccunā.” (M.iii.187)

How can one know whether one will still be alive or will meet with death the next day? (**sve jīvitam vā maraṇam vā ko jānāti** — is the exposition given in Aṭṭhakathā). Bearing it in mind, one should invariably and relentlessly practise vipassanā meditation exercises, which will burn up all human passions, even today, without postponing it to the next day or the day after. The reason for not being able to know when death will occur is because no date has been fixed with Māra, the King of Hell, who possesses a huge armed force equipped with the lethal weapons of water, fire, poison, weapons, disease, and so on. Neither has Māra the destroyer ever been bribed to postpone death, nor has one, as a living being, accumulated and raised any army that can defend against death. Hence, who can know

for certain whether he will be living or dead on the following day? It is not advantageous if one repents only after making a grave mistake.

If one fails to practise meditation at the time when an opportunity arises, it is likely that repentance will occur with regret: "Oh! What a great blunder for not having taken up the meditation exercise," when one gets sick or old or awaiting death just before passing away, or reaches the four lower realms (*apāya*). To avoid lamentation and repentance regarding one's own folly, may you all be able to pay attention to the following admonition given by the Buddhas.

*"Jhāyatha bhikkhave, mā pamādattha;
Mā pacchā vippaṭisārino ahuvattha.
Ayaṃ vo amhākaṃ anusāsani'ti."* (M.i.118)

TRANSLATION: The above Pāli passage means: "Monks (**bhikkhave**), do contemplate and note, and resort to the meditation practices of tranquillity (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*). Do not (**mā**) be heedless (**pamādattha**) and fail to contemplate and note. If you miss the opportunity as it comes, do not (**mā**) regret and afterwards (**pacchā**) repent (**vippaṭisārino**) that you have made a blunder for having failed to contemplate and note. This is our (**amhākaṃ**) admonition (**anusāsami**) to you [repeatedly exhorted by the Buddhas]."

Do You Understand Personally?

The Truth of the Dhamma benevolently taught by the Enlightened One is fully endowed with the noble attribute of well-taught (*svākkhāta*). The Dhamma has the attribute of being productive of immediate results attended with advantages even in the present existence (*sanditṭhika*). It is also capable of bringing about immediate benefits (*akālika*). It is really inviting, lending encouragement to one to come and see (*ehi-passika*) for oneself. Will you now be able to decide on your own personal knowledge and realisation?

Don't Be Disheartened

Don't lose courage or be disheartened even if you cannot yet achieve the goal to your satisfaction by practicing meditation on different guidelines. Just try to practise systematically under the methodical instructions of your spiritual teacher for seven days or fifteen days as prescribed in this Text of Dhamma. You will definitely

and clearly find yourself equipped with the Special Knowledge of the Dhamma to your entire satisfaction. You will then be able to decide with your own wisdom and with complete awareness that this Buddha's Dhamma is fully endowed with the noble attributes as has been stated.

Don't Take It Lightly

Please, therefore, pay serious attention to this Text of Dhamma by going through it thoroughly with the right devotion of the mind to fully grasp its primary intention and meanings of all supporting and underlying principles contained in the relevant Pāli texts, Commentaries, and Subcommentaries as illustrated by the author of this treatise.

Don't Get Frustrated

Please do not get frustrated when coming across Pāli words and their various shades of meaning that cannot be fully understood. If you cannot fully appreciate them just bear in mind that: "These have been mentioned for those who are more learned than me." If you wish to understand them properly, approach others who are more knowledgeable. No meaning is rendered to avoid this treatise from becoming unwieldy in respect of some of the Pāli phrases, so an explanation has not always been given. These writings are intended for the learned who will find them easy to comprehend.

Synthesis and Terminology of the Text

Some expressions are written in ordinary language to make them easily to understand. When the Buddha taught the Dhamma, the dialect spoken was not Sanskrit, which was then the language used in writing texts on parchment. The Buddha delivered his discourses in the Māgadha language commonly used by people in towns and villages. Hence, due regard should be given to common usages in those days. Do not underestimate it. Such expressions and usages will be found more specifically in Chapter V.

Meant for Less-learned People

More attention may be given to Chapters IV and V by a person lacking a good knowledge of the texts. Of these two, Chapter V is

fundamental. As such, by going through what is written in Chapter V, one will be able to practise vipassanā meditation on the right lines, leading to the attainment of the path, fruition, and nibbāna.

Purification of Morality Relating to Monks

Purification of Morality

The four kinds of morality (*sīla*), such as restraint according to the precepts prescribed in the Vinaya (*pātimokkha-saṃvara*), etc., which have the quality of holiness and purity according to what is stated in the Visuddhimagga as “*Sīlavissuddhināma suparisuddhaṃ pātimokkha saṃvarādi catubbidhaṃ sīlaṃ*,” are called Purification of Morality (*sīla-vissuddhi*). Though it might be ordinarily expressed as such, one should know that there are two different kinds, namely, Purification of Morality prescribed for the monks, and Purification of Morality relevant to laymen. Purification of Morality concerning monks is a collection of various precepts, a code of moral conduct that is extremely wide. Only a brief account to fulfil the needs of the Dhamma will be given in this treatise. Monks (*bhikkhus*) should all round observe with utmost purity the four kinds of sila, the rules of conduct or morality, such as, restraint by the Vinaya rules (*pātimokkhasaṃvara*), restraint of the sense faculties (*indriyasamvara*), purity of livelihood (*ājīvaṇṇasiddhi*), and reflection on the proper use of the requisites (*paccayasannissita*). Of these four, the Vinaya rules, the code of conduct for the monks as strictly prescribed by the Buddha to be observed to restrain oneself from committing anything physically and verbally is called morality of restraint by the Vinaya rules (*pātimokkhasaṃvara-sīla*). What is meant by this, is keeping intact the moral practices that help one to escape from all kinds of dangers and sufferings if one faithfully observes the rules of conduct of the Saṅgha.

To purify this morality, a monk should take care that the rules of conduct are not breached, bearing in mind that the contravention of even very minor offences of wrong-doing (*dukkata*), or wrong speech (*dubbhāsī*), requiring confession can not only endanger the achievement of the path and its fruition, but can also drag a monk down to the lower realms (*apāya*) in accordance with what has been stated as: “*Aṇumattesu vajjesu bhayadassāvī samādāya sikkhati sikkhāpadesu.*”

It means to guard against committing a sinful act. If the offence has been committed, this act of guilt should be immediately treated, just as “A young boy would quickly release his grasp of the burning charcoal that he has inadvertently picked up.” It means to cleanse oneself by confession all kinds of Saṅghādisesa offence by undergoing probation (*parivāsa*) and rehabilitation (*mānattaṃ*). In respect of offences requiring confession with forfeiture (*nissaggiya-pācittiya*), after abandoning any unlawfully acquired property. A monk who has truly confessed any kind of the breach of the rule, which he has contravened and sought absolution for in conformity with the Vinaya, and who thereafter continues to abstain from committing further offences, is said to be cleansed of all impurities by which the morality of restraint by the Vinaya rules become purified.

As regards the morality of sense-faculty restraint, since it covers a very wide range, an explanation about it will be given later.

To avoid a way of living by unlawful means in order to obtain robes, food, and other requisites for monks, and to maintain one’s own livelihood by lawful means with purity or propriety of conduct is called purity of livelihood (*ājīvaaparīsuddhi*). It means a morally purified way of livelihood from every aspect. If viewed from any other angle, it is an endeavour made with one’s own noble and lawful exertion to seek for the requisites in accordance with what is stated in the Visuddhimagga as the effort to seek requisites (*paccaya-pariyesanavāyāmo*). Unlawful or dishonest methods of acquiring properties pertaining to the monks have a wide scope. Reference may therefore be made in this connection to the Visuddhimagga. It is most probable that a monk, who seeks for any kind or monastic requisites contrary to the Vinaya rules, will be committing one of the offences of Pārājika, Saṅghādisesa, or Dukkaṭa. In most cases, he will have committed a monastic offence of wrong-doing (*dukkata*).

Making use of any property that has been unlawfully obtained, will also amount to committing an offence of wrong-doing. If guilty of such offences, the morality of Pātimokkha restraint is also broken. It would also amount to deterring the offender from reaching the higher celestial abodes, or from achieving the right Path. Only if confession and absolution are made as stated earlier, morality will be restored and purified. The offender will also be liberated from the aforesaid dangers called an obstruction to heaven (*saggantarāyo*), and

an obstruction to the Path (*maggantarāyo*). Hence, it will also definitely cause to cleanse the morality of livelihood.

The morality of reflection on the proper use of the requisites (*paccayasannissita-sīla*) means to reflect and truly realise the advantages accrued from the use of the requisites, such as, robes, meals, monastery, and medicine; and that by being able to wear the robes, one is prevented from suffering the unpleasant feeling of coldness. Reflection of the advantages should always be made every time the four requisites are made use of with a view to purify this morality. In fact, such reflective thoughts should be borne in mind at every moment of eating meals. If no such reflection is made, retrospection should be done before dawn of the following day. If no such retrospection could be done before dawn, it would amount to partaking of meals and possession of other requisites on loan (*inaṅgaparibhoga*) according to what is stated in the Aṭṭhakathā.

The Meaning of Indebtedness

What is meant by indebtedness (*inaṅgaparibhoga*) is not that any debt has been incurred to be repaid to the owner of the property, the benefactor. The term “*inaṅgaparibhoga*” is used because it is similar to taking the property on hire for consumption. The similarity may be explained thus: the offerings made to a monk who has complete purification of morality will bring full benefits due to the quality of accomplished moral purity by the recipient (*dakkhinā-visuddhi*), i.e. the purity of a gift on the receiver’s side. In the case of a monk who makes use of offerings without reflection, he falls short of the accomplishment of moral purity due to being deficient in the morality of reflection the proper use of the requisites. Such being the case, the full benefit cannot be derived from the gift offered to such a monk. Hence, the benefactor who donates is like someone who sells property with a hire-purchase agreement, who fails to derive the full benefits.

A monk who uses that offering without reflection, due to not enabling the donor to derive the full benefits is like someone making use things offered on hire-purchase. That is the why the Commentaries stated that it amounts to use as a debt (*inaṅgaparibhoga*).

Please see the following exposition of the Mahāṭīkā:-

*“Inavasena paribhogo inaparibhogo, paṭiggāhakato dakkhiṇā-visuddhiyā abhāvato inam gahetvā paribhogo viyāti attho.
(Vism.T.i.72)*

TRANSLATION: The above passage conveys the meaning that the gift of property that is received and made use of by the recipient, the receiver, not having been accomplished with the purity of *Sīla*, morality, is similar to making use of the gift, the donated property, on loan. If that is the case, how one should note and consider what is expressed in *Mahāṭikā* (1-74) as: “*Yathā ināyiko attano ruciyā icchitadesam gantum na labhati, evam inaparibhogayutto lokato nissaritum na labhati’ti?*” It should be noted thus: Since a monk who is used to making use of the property being always at fault with indebtedness, he is deep in his attachment to the gifts of property. Due to this attachment, he is liable to descend to the four lower realms (*duggati*), where sufferings and ill-conditions prevail, after his death. It should therefore be noted that the *Mahāṭikā* has stated with the objective as: “The monk who is in complicity with indebtedness is unable to get liberated from this miserable existences, and is deterred from gaining liberation.” The story of Venerable Tissa will bear witness to the fact that a monk is liable to reach lower realms due to such passionate attachment.

The Story of a Monk and a Louse

A monk by the name of Venerable Tissa, having great attachment to his robes, after his death became a louse in the very robes that he had received. When other monks were about to distribute the robes among themselves, since the property now belonged to the community (*saṅghika*), the louse raised a cry: “Oh! My property is being stolen.” The Buddha overheard this with his divine-ear, so he ordered that the redistribution of the robes be held in abeyance, realising that any decision made for the disposal of the robe would make Tissa the louse angry with the monks, which would send him to hell after his demise. On the seventh day, the louse died and was reborn in *Tusita*. The *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā* says that only after the demise of the louse, Tissa, the Buddha permitted that robe to be redistributed.

It Is Really Terrible

Considering the facts of this story that Tissa, the Louse, had reached Tusita after his death, it is obvious that the monk could have been reborn in the abode of devas after his demise if he had no attachment to his property. If the Buddha had not delayed the proceedings for the disposal of the robe, Tissa the louse, would have gone down to hell. The fault of attachment is indeed really grave. How dangerous and terrible it is! In connection with this incident, it has been taught in a verse as cited below:–

*“Ayaśāva malaṃ samuṭṭhitaṃ, tatutuṭṭhāya tameva khādati.
Evaṃ atidhona-cāriṇaṃ, sāni kammāni nayanti duggatiṃ.”
(Dhp v 240)*

“As rust sprung from iron eats itself away when arisen,
even so his own deeds lead the transgressor to states of woe.”

Just as the rust that is formed on solid iron, eats away the iron itself, a monk who makes use of property without due reflection, is liable to be carried away to the lower realms by the powerful current of attachment that has arisen within him.”

In this regard, some say that “If indebtedness occurs, since the debt has to be repaid to the owner of the property, the path and its fruition cannot be achieved.” This interpretation cannot be found even in the Aṭṭhakathā. Hence, it may be presumed that the commentators have no intention to render this meaning, which it is only for the Buddha to elucidate. Moreover, it will not be appropriate for the commentator to give such a meaning.

According to what is presumed by some commentators, indebtedness is a more serious offence than that of use as theft (*theyyaparibhoga*) after and offence of defeat (*pārājika*). The reason being that even those who have committed use as theft and have been guilty of an offence of defeat, by reverting to the status of an ordinary layman or a novice can attain the path and its fruition. The following is from the Aṅguttara Ekakanipāta Commentary:–

*“Imaṃ pana desanaṃ sutvā jātasamvegā ṭhānaṃ jahitvā
sāmaṇerabhūmiyaṃ ṭhitā dasa sīlāni pūretovā yoniso manasikāre
yuttappayuttā keci sotāpannā keci sakadāgāmino keci anāgāmino
ahesuṃ, keci devaloke nibbattiṃsu, evaṃ pārājikāpannānampi
saphalā ahoṣi.” (AA.i 69)*

TRANSLATION: The above Pāli passage says that sixty monks who had committed an offence of defeat under the Vinaya rules, having listened to the Aggikkhandhopama Sutta, became novices (*sāmaṇera*), and then by diligently practising meditation, some of them achieved Stream-winning, Once-returning, Non-returning, or reached the celestial realms. It was stated in the Commentary that the Buddha had purposely travelled with those monks to deliver this Sutta and had taught it after halting on the course of his journey, foreseeing with his divine-eye that those sixty monks had been guilty of the offence of defeat. It was therefore obvious that these monks remained as bhikkhus for a certain length of time even after committing the offence and they were not free from use as theft. Such being the case, since even those who had committed the offence of Pārājika and have become guilty of use as theft were able to achieve the path and its fruition, how could it be said that a monk who has purified morality of Pātimokkha restraint, will have no chance of attaining the path and its fruition just for committing an act of indebtedness (*inaṅgārahoga*)? In fact, there is no justification for saying so.

Furthermore, admonition to make use of requisites only after reflection is not a restriction under the Vinaya rules. It is only a teaching giving instructions by way of Suttanta desanā. As such, using property without due reflection does not amount to offending against a moral principle, *i.e.* transgression (*vītikkama*) of instructions. Nor, will it amount to committing one of the other offences. Hence, indebtedness cannot be regarded as being as serious as an offence of wrong-doing (*dukkata*). If it is stated as: “Because the Aṭṭhakathā has said that taking medicine without reflection will amount to an offence or transgression, is it not true that a breach of morality of reflection on the proper use of the requisites (*paccayasanniṣṣita-sīla*) is also an offence? It is not true at all. If it were so, how should the statement in the Aṭṭhakathā be construed? The answer is: “If there is a reason due to being sick, it is permissible to take medicine.” However, only if it is known to have justification, should medicine be taken. If medicine is taken without justification, it should be considered as having taken the medicine without sufficient reason, and only as food and for nourishment. As such, according to the Vinaya passage as stated below it would constitute an offence of wrong-doing (*dukkata*):-

“Yāmakālikaṃ sattāhakālikaṃ yāvajīvikaṃ āhāratthāya paṭiggaṇhāti, āpatti dukkaṭassa. Ajjhohāre ajjhohāre āpatti dukkaṭassa.” (V.iv.83)

The expressions “Known to have justification,” “being careful,” and “reflection,” convey the same sense in this regard. For example: if it is thought that it is not dawn although it is past dawn, or that it is past noon when it is not, if food is taken beyond the time limit prescribed for that purpose, since one is wilfully inclined to infringe the precepts that have been undertaken, it is just the same as committing an offence in accordance with what has been stated as “If it is the right time, but he thinks it’s the wrong time, it’s an offence of wrong-doing (*Kāle vikālasaññī āpatti dukkaṭassa*).”

For that reason, the statement “If no reflection is done when using medicine, it would be an offence,” refers only to the infringement of the Vinaya rule. The statement is not intended to refer to the breaking of morality connected with reflecting on the proper use of the four requisites. Hence, it has been prescribed in the Subcommentary as: “After eating or using requisites, if reflection is done before the break of dawn, the morality can still be cleansed and purified.”

Next, the presumption that some of the commentators have made as stated in the foregoing is also contrary to words of the elder cited hereunder, as contained in the Aṭṭhakathā.

Proclamation of Tipiṭaka Cūlanāga Thera

“Tipiṭakacūlanāgatthero panāha: ‘Pātimokkhasaṃvarova sīlaṃ, itarāni tīṇi silanti vuttaṭṭhānaṃ nāma natthī’ti. Vatvā taṃ anujānanto āha: ‘Indriyasaṃvaro nāma chadvāra rakkhaṇam-attameva, ājīvapārisuddhi dhammeneva samena paccayuppattim-attakaṃ, paccayasannissitaṃ paṭiladdhapaccaye idamatthan’ti paccavekkhitoā paribhuñjanamattakaṃ. Nippariyāyena pātimokkha-saṃvarova sīlaṃ. Yassa so bhinno, ayaṃ chinnaśiso viya puriso hatthapāde, sesāni rakkhissatīti na vattabbo. Yassa pana so arogo, ayaṃ acchinnaśiso viya puriso jīvitaṃ, sesāni puna pākatikāni katvā rakkhitumpi sakkotī’ti. (SA.3-230)

IT MEANS: “The Venerable Tipiṭaka Cūlanāga Thera said: ‘Only Pātimokkha restraint is morality. Nowhere is it said that the other three kinds of restraint are described as morality (**sīlaṃ**). In support of this statement, and to refute that these are morality, he continued

to elucidate: Sense-faculty restraint (**Indriyaṣaṃvaro**) only keeps guard of the six sense-doors (**chadvāra**). Purity of livelihood (**ājīvapārisuddhi**) only means to acquire property in a lawful way. Reflection on the use of requisites (**paccayasannissitam**) only means to make use of requisites that have been obtained for driving away cold, *etc.*, after reflecting on their advantageous effects. To be candid, only Pātimokkha restraint is genuine morality. A person who is morally corrupt, having desecrated the morality of Pātimokkha restraint, cannot be said to be capable of keeping intact the remaining three kinds of morality. Just as a man whose head has been cut off cannot be said to be capable of taking care of his hands and feet. One who is purified in the morality of Pātimokkha restraint is like a man who is free from diseases. Such a person can restore to a normal condition the rest of his moral conduct. It is like a man whose head has not being severed will still be able to protect his own life.

Tipiṭaka Cūḷanāga Thera lived in the distant past, a good many years before Venerable Buddhaghosa, the great commentator. This holy monk was well-versed in the Three Baskets of Buddhist Scriptures and could recite by rote the whole Tipiṭaka. Moreover, he was highly respected even by the most renowned and learned commentators. As such, the proclamation made by this great elder deserves serious attention and retention in memory.

According to this great elder's teaching, if the morality of Pātimokkha restraint is not destroyed, the remaining three can be repaired and restored to their normal state of purity, no matter how much they have been violated or have become corrupted. It has been stated that these three moralities could be restored to normality. Hence, when their original purity is restored, as morality becomes purified, there need be no doubt that the path and its fruition can be achieved. According to the opinion of some commentators, if one is guilty of a breach of indebtedness (*inaṅparibhoga*), the path and its fruition cannot be achieved. Such being the case, it would amount to saying that there is no remedy to be purified if the morality of reflection on the use of requisites is broken even once. Hence, it runs counter to the words of the elders.

Reflection (*paccavekkhaṇa*) shown in the Commentaries as morality of reflection on the use of requisites is taught in the Suttanta and

Abhidhamma. In the Sabbāsava Sutta¹ of the Mūlapaṇṇāsa and Aṅguttara Chakkanipāta, there are expositions of the practice of moderation in food (*bhojane mattaññutā*), however, no teaching says directly that it is morality (*sīla*). It was referred to as moderation in eating (*bhojane mattaññutā*), and as something that could dispel defilements (*paṭisevanā pahātabba āsavo*) that could harm the practice. This is why Venerable Tipiṭaka Cūlanāga Thera said that no Pāli texts ever referred to it as morality. Basically from the point of view of Dhamma, reflection, being only knowledge, is embraced in the training of wisdom (*paññā-sikkhā*). It should be remembered as not included in the noble practice of training in morality (*sīla-sikkhā*).

Furthermore, this reflection that has been stated in various Suttanta and Abhidhamma texts is not meant merely for recitation like chanting a formula (as a mantra or incantation). Nor is it meant as Vinaya procedure like making a resolution to keep the precepts, or assigning requisites for use (*vikappana*). In fact, it is meant to deter passionate desires (*āsava-kilesa*) connected with the four main requisites for monks. Hence, property such as robes should be made use of only after effectively reflecting wisely to derive due benefits.

Reflection Is Completed by Contemplating and Noting

In accordance with what is stated in the Visuddhimagga:-

“Paṭilābhakālepi hi dhātuvasena vā paṭikūlavasena vā paccavekkhitvā ṭhapitāni cīvarādīni tato uttari paribhuñjantassa anavajjova paribhogo, paribhogakālepi.” (Vism.i.43)

“Herein, reviewing is of two kinds: at the time of receiving requisites and at the time of using them. For use (*paribhoga*) is blameless in one who at the time of receiving robes, etc., reviews them either as [mere] elements or as repulsive, and puts them aside for later use, and in one who reviews them thus at the time of using them.” (Bhikkhu Ñānamoli)

Those who are contemplating and noting to develop insight are reflecting properly while receiving or using the requisites. Amplifi-

¹ *Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso piṇḍapātaṃ paṭisevati: Neva davāya, na madāya, na maṇḍanāya, na vibhūsanāya, yāvadeva imassa kāyassa ṭhitiyā yāpanāya, vihiṃsūparatiyā, brahmacariyānuggahāya, iti purāṇaṅca vedanaṃ paṭiharikhāmi navaṅca vedanaṃ na uppādessāmi, yātrā ca me bhavissati anavajjatā ca phāsuvihāro ca’ti.* (ed.)

cation relating to this subject will be found in the matter of morality concerning the laity. Therefore, either by reflecting on the advantages or by bringing to mind any kind of meditation object, a monk who is using the four requisites is said to be purified regarding the morality of reflection on the use of requisites.

Sense Faculty Restraint

In respect of the six sense-doors when respective objects arise and realisation comes with six kinds of consciousness (*viññāṇa*), the restraint effected by way of vigilance exercised by mindfulness through the act of noting to prevent defilements from arising is called morality of sense-faculty restraint (*indriyaśaṃvara-sīla*), i.e. the moral restraint relating to the control of the senses. The way of guarding and protecting for the purification of morality will be comprehensively shown when dealing with the matter of keeping the eye under restraint. Similarly, it may be known and realised in connection with the rest of the sense-doors.

In conformity with the Pāli which runs as: “**Cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā na nimittaggāhī hoti nānubyañjanaggāhī**, etc.” (*Vism.16*) on seeing a sight with the eye, the particulars of a man or a woman that might stir up passionate desires if the eye is left unguarded should not be borne in mind. In accordance with the words: “**Ditṭhamatteyeva sañṭhāti**,” the knowing mind should not be allowed to go beyond the object seen. Further exposition given in the Subcommentary (*Visuddhimagga Mahāṭīkā*) runs: “**Ditṭhe ditṭhamattaṃ bhavissati**,” and in accordance with this Pāli phrase, the mind should be permitted to occur merely seeing the visual object. The mind should not be allowed to proceed beyond that point towards mental cognition of how young and beautiful the object is, or how senile and ugly, which means that the characteristics of the sight, etc., should be prevented from creeping into awareness.

If the distinctive features of men or women, such as, faces, hands, feet, etc., are perceived and noted and repeatedly borne in mind, defilements such as lust are likely to arise. Therefore, distinguishing features such as face, eyebrows, eyes, nose, lips, breast, belly, hands, feet, and other limbs should be expelled from the mind. Neither should the gestures and the way of smiling, laughing, speaking, scowling, piercing glances, and other behaviours be brought to mind.

In accordance with what the Subcommentary says: “**Yaṃ tattha bhūtaṃ tadeva gaṇhāti,**” only the materiality (*rūpa*) of the person who is seen that are truly manifested, such as hairs on the head, hairs of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, veins, bones, and so on, should be brought to mind. Or what is apparently seen as a living being (*bhūta-rūpa*) and the present corporeal matter in existence (*upādā-rūpa*), dependent materiality, should be brought into the mind.

The way of occurrence of restraint and its dissolution according to what is mentioned in the Commentary, the distinguishing statement of the process of cognition (*vīthi*) will be presented. When the visible object (*rūpa*) is reflected in the eye-door (*cakkhu dvāra*), the advertent consciousness (*āvajjana citta*), which reflects what has been perceived, occurs and then dissolves. Thereafter, the eye-consciousness that sees the sight (*cakkhu-viññāṇa*), the mind that receives and is inclined towards the sense-object (*sampaṭicchana*), the mind that investigates, considers, and verifies (*santīraṇa citta*), the mind that can determine distinctly (*voṭṭhabbana citta*), occurs in sequence once each, and then dissolve. Latter, the mental impulses (*javana*), which are parts of the active cognitive process, occurs. If morality (*sīla*), mindfulness (*sati*), knowledge (*ñāṇa*), patience (*khantī*), and effort (*vīriya*) — the five factors of restraint (*saṃvara dhamma*) — occur on the occasion of the arising of this state of mind, it would result in restraining the eye faculty (*cakkhundriya*). Hence, the morality of eye-faculty restraint (*cakkhundriya-saṃvara sīla*) is purified. If, instead, the five factors of non-restraint (*asaṃvara dhamma*) — immorality (*dussīlya*), confused mindfulness (*mutṭhassacca*), ignorance (*aññāṇa*), impatience (*akkhanti*), and laziness (*kosajja*) — occur it will destroy the power of restraint of the eye-faculty. This amounts to defiling the morality of eye-faculty restraint. The Commentary has elucidated this accordingly.

The Meaning of Restraint

The meaning and characteristics of restraint and non-restraint should be understood in this way. Restraint of morality (*sīlasaṃvara*) means the morality of Pātimokkha restraint in accordance with what is stated in the Commentary as:² “**Iminā pātimokkhasaṃvarena upeto hoti samupetoti ayaṃ sīlasaṃvaro.**” What is meant by the

² MA.i.22

immorality of non-restraint (*dussīlya asaṃvara*) is the breach of the aforesaid morality of Pātimokkha restraint. It is an offence for having transgressed the precepts of morality, both physically, and verbally. In this regard, it should be remembered as stated in the Mūlaṭīkā and Mahāṭīkā that the immorality of non-restraint does not occur at the five sense-doors being a thought of human passion (*vītikkaṃma kilesa*), and only occurs at the mind-door (*mano-dvāra*). The remaining four kinds of non-restraint occur at the six sense-doors.”

The restraint of mindfulness (*satisaṃvara*) is the genuine morality of sense-faculty restraint in line with what is stated in the Commentary as “**Rakkhati cakkhundriyaṃ cakkhundriye saṃvaram āpajjati’ti ayaṃ satisaṃvaro.**” According to the essence of the Dhamma, it is reflection with mindfulness and mental factors guarding against the arising of mental defilements at the six sense-doors.

Confused mindfulness (*mutṭhassaṃvara*) means to forget or be unmindful, and failure to note whenever coming into contact with the six sense-objects. Purely from the point of view of Dhamma, it is the manifestation of covetousness (*abhijjhā*), and sorrow (*domanassa*) in consonance with the context of Pāli: “**Cakkhundriyaṃ asaṃvutaṃ viharantaṃ abhijjhādomanassā pāpakā akusalā dhammā anvāssaveyyuṃ.**” The Subcommentaries mention that delusion (*moha*) is also included.

The restraint by knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṃvara*) means the knowledge of the Noble Path, which can eradicate or obstruct the stream of unwholesome states such as craving (*taṇhā*), wrong-view (*ditṭhi*), misconduct (*duccarita*), and ignorance (*avijjā*), according to what is stated in Commentary as “**Sotānaṃ saṃvaram brūmi, paññāyete pidhiyareti ayaṃ ñāṇasaṃvaro.**” (It is quoted also with reference to Cūlaniddesa Pāli and Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā). The Visuddhimagga has stated that the morality of reflection on the use of requisites is also imbibed in this restraint by knowledge. Moreover, insight knowledge should also be embraced in it. The reason being that it will be safer to block the streams of defilements by insight, which has the faculty of momentarily abandoning feelings arising from contact with the sense-objects (*ārammaṇānusaya*), and other evil thoughts, rather than by reflection (*paccavekkhaṇā*). As critically commented upon and expounded in the Cūlaniddesa as: “**Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā’ti jānato passato paññāyete sotā pidhiyanti,**” etc., it can be said that reference

is also made to insight. These are evidently justifiable for acceptance of the view that it means to refer to restraint by insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*). Therefore, it should be remembered that morality of reflection on the use of requisites, insight knowledge, and path knowledge, are restraint by knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṃvara*).

Ignorance of restraint (*aññāṇa-saṃvara*) simply means delusion (*moha*) which is contrary to these three kinds of knowledge.

It is self-restraint with patience (*khantī saṃvara*) when restraint is exercised by controlling anger if either unbearable painful sensations are felt under the conditions of intense coldness, heat, *etc.*, or when unpleasant sounds of very rude and abusive words, curses, and profane language are heard, in conformity with what is mentioned in the Commentary as: “**Khamo hoti sītassa uñhassāti ayam khantisamvaro.**” Purely from the point of view of Dhamma, it is the mental state of non-anger (*adosa-cetasikā*). Anger without patience means non-restraint due to impatience (*akkhantī asaṃvara*).

Practice with an endeavour to reject initial application to thoughts of sense desire (*kāma vitakka*) in accordance with the Commentary as: “**Uppannaṃ kāma vitakkaṃ nādhivāsetī’ti ayam vīriya samvaro,**” is called restraint by effort (*vīriya-saṃvara*). However, from the aspect of the Dhamma, it is right exertion (*sammappadhāna-vīriya*) according to the teaching: “**Anuppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ anuppādāya chandaṃ janeti vāyamaṭi,**” *etc.*, The Visuddhimagga says that morality of livelihood purification (*ājīva pārisuddhi sīla*) is also embraced in this restraint by effort. The arising of unwholesome thoughts (*akusala cittuppāda*) that occur having the characteristics of sloth and torpor (*thīnamiddha*), which do not wish to make an effort to reject sensual thoughts, *etc.*, is called the non-restraint of laziness (*kosajja-asaṃvara*).

Among the five kinds of morality of restraint just mentioned, morality restraint is distinct from Pātimokkha restraint. The morality of reflection on the use of requisites included in restraint by knowledge, and the morality of livelihood purification included in restraint by effort, are also different from other kinds of morality. As such, in the matter of purification of morality, these three kinds of morality should not be included in the category of sense-faculty restraint. If included, it would have only one kind of morality without distinguishing the four separate kinds. Hence, the way in which

morality of sense-faculty restraint is purified can only be realised through the remaining four kinds of restraint. Also, among the said four kinds, restraint by knowledge being insight knowledge, it cannot be achieved before practising meditation. Only three kinds of restraint — mindfulness, patience, and effort will be able to occur.

Preparing for Meditation

Before taking up meditation practice, if one wishes to purify sense-faculty restraint, the three kinds of restraint, namely, mindfulness, patience, and effort should be nurtured and refined. The method of bringing about purification can be known by depending on the *Aṭṭhasālinī*, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī Aṭṭhakathā* (DhsA.75): “**Tassa iminā niyamitavasena pariṇāmitavasena samudācāravasena ābhujitavasena ca kusalaṃ nāma jātaṃ hoti.**”

Keep the Mind within Bounds

Restrain the mind, keeping it within bounds, with a resolve to think, talk, and do things that will bring virtue. That virtuous mind should be brought to guard the six sense doors, and care should always be taken to cultivate merits, exercise patience, without harbouring hatred or anger about anything, and to avoid evil thoughts. One who completely keeps the mind in check is likely to avoid unwholesome objects and thoughts to accomplish the objective. Even if one unavoidably encounters such objects and thoughts, one is unlikely to pay heed to them to the extent of committing unwholesome deeds. One becomes accustomed to dwelling only on matters connected with wholesome deeds. For example, a person who is extremely keen on giving charity will, if any valuable property is gained, first think to give it away in charity rather than thinking to make use of it for personal consumption or enjoyment. A meditator has a natural tendency to remain patient without inviting anger due to the original resolution even if encountering undesirable sense-objects. This is the gist of the way of bringing about purification by means of self-restraint.

Transforming the Mind

If unwholesome thoughts occur at all, channel this unprofitable mind into wholesome thoughts. For instance, if lust or sensual desires occur at the sight of a woman, let your mind be transformed into a

feeling of genuine loving-kindness (*mettā*) or compassion (*karuṇā*), wishing her happiness, foreseeing her misery, and considering her as your own mother, if she is about your mother's age, or as your own sister if she is young, or as your own close relative. Another method may be thus: develop the perception of foulness (*asubha*) by focusing your thoughts on the repulsive elements in a human body such as tears, snot, sputum, mucus, phlegm, faeces, urine, etc.

Another method is to erase the arising perception of the shape of this woman, and to reflect on the Dhamma questioning, teaching, studying, reciting, and performing meritorious deeds, and services; and by so doing, the mind can be diverted to wholesome thoughts. Furthermore, give up all evil thoughts, and amend one's mind through the method of discrimination reflecting analytically on the aggregates, faculties, or elements; or reflecting as if meeting a stranger momentarily (*tāvakālika*) through the method of discernment or exact knowledge, or as prescribed in Satipaṭṭhāna Aṭṭhakathā. This, in brief, is the method of transformation (*pariṇāmita*).

Strive Relentlessly

It is essential to perform wholesome kamma or merits, such as learning the texts, teaching others, studying, observing, imagining, reciting, religious services, listening to teaching, taking instructions, and observing the ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*), and also reflecting on what has just been stated, with the exact knowledge (*pariññā*) of the correct view. One who strives relentlessly will give no opportunity for the occurrence of unwholesome thoughts, and will generally have a wholesome state of mind relating to sense-objects arising at the six sense-doors. This, in brief, is habit (*samudācāra*) of abstaining from lusts that might arise.

Devote the Mind to Systematic Attention

Every time contact is made with the six sense-objects, systematic attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*) should be aroused. It means to pay attention appropriately to gain merits.

For instance, if subjected to rebuke through no fault of one's own, it should be borne in mind: "The other has chided me not knowing the full facts." To make sweeping remarks impetuously is the nature of a person who lacks self-restraint. If that person really knew the

truth of the matter, he or she will probably regret for reproaching me. Or, one could reflect: "Having discredited others who had no fault at some time in the past, I have now been unjustly rebuked in retribution, and as such, I should not feel hurt." One should ponder in whatever way is appropriate.

Blame and defamation is a worldly condition (*lokadhamma*) that affects everybody in this world. Even the Buddha could not avoid it, so how could I avoid it? Allowing the mind to become perverted due to meeting such conditions is common among mankind. Patience is an attribute of the noble-minded. One should follow the path shown by the virtuous and noble. What the Buddha taught is that one should not even feel hatred for a robber who cuts one with a saw. If one gets angry, it would amount to disobeying the Buddha's admonition. One should consider that being reproached is much easier to tolerate than having the limbs severed with a saw. Why should I be unable to obey the Buddha's instructions and admonition? One should ponder thus as may be considered proper.

The person who rebukes is just the arising of mentality (*cittuppāda*) and materiality originating from consciousness (*cittajarūpa*). It is merely the five aggregates of a being. There is no distinct individual who is in the habit of reproaching. These materiality and mentality have also ceased and dissolved, even during the course of reproving. In fact, there is nothing still present with which one should be angry. If anger continues to flare up after the dissolution of the rebuking mental and material phenomena, it would have effect only on the fresh mental and material phenomena that follow in succession continuously after the preceding mental and material phenomena. If anger occurs now, it would be like holding a grudge and wreaking vengeance against the children and grandchildren of the dead parents who were hated after they are dead and gone. You who have been rebuked are also an assembly of five aggregates. These mental and material phenomena just dissolved and disappeared. If you are quarrelling and angry with the mental and material phenomena that have occurred afresh, it would be like taking revenge on the children, grandchildren, and other descendants of the parents against whom you were incapable of causing harm while they were alive.

You should ponder like this in whatever way is appropriate. These are merely examples. The way of bringing a thing into one's mind

is very wide to make a good coverage. In respect of all such mental actions borne in mind as considered appropriate, these are to be regarded as merely systematic attention. An exposition will be given in Chapter IV in respect of contemplation of the hindrances. This is the way of purification through reflection (*ābhujita*) in brief.

According to these restraints (*niyamita*), morality of sense-faculty restraint needs be purified by causing a mental disposition for achieving wholesome deeds at the six sense-doors. A person who is accordingly practising meditation is, in most cases, likely to gain wholesome mindfulness every time he comes into contact with the six sense-objects. This is the restraint of mindfulness (*sati-saṃvara*). If at times, evil thoughts arise, one must resolve not to entertain such thoughts, and the mind should be kept under control. With this undertaking, morality of sense-faculty restraint becomes purified.

To cite an example, it is just like the defiled mind that has become purified by teaching the Dhamma. Generally, one is likely to be patient if undesirable or unpleasant sense-objects or conditions are encountered. This is the restraint of forbearance of patience (*khantī-saṃvara*). Practices done to prevent sensual thoughts, or expelling the thoughts that have already arisen, are known as restraint by effort (*vīriya-saṃvara*).

The methods stated in the foregoing are excellent. By taking a casual glance, they would appear to be easy. However, when taking up the training in a practical way, it will be found to be much more difficult than was originally thought. The reason is that an untrained mind, which is not accustomed to being subdued, is very boisterous, rude, and unrefined. The mind will find an outlet and force its way to flit towards sense-objects that have been discarded, as preconceived, in the way of a sprinter competing in a running event. Not remaining tranquil where it is made to dwell and flitting away as it pleases, and becoming unruly, is the inherent nature of a mind that has not been tamed by mental development. Some are of the opinion that meditation can be practised only after all the four attributes of morality have been thoroughly polished and purified, or that the morality of sense-faculty restraint cannot be completely purified without practising meditation. If such thoughts come into play, serious reflection is made as: "Let the mind be made to remain fixed merely on the consciousness of seeing, *etc.*, and to absolutely deter

the arising of defilements from the six senses in accordance with what is strictly stated in the Commentary and Subcommentary. Who could manage to prevent, without the practice of meditation, the upsurge of defilements at every occurrence of the six kinds of consciousness arising from the six sense-objects at the six sense-doors?

Considering that since even a person endowed with strong insight cannot yet be free from defilements, it should be noted that no one is able to manage or control the mind. The reason for being unable to keep vigilance on or control of the mind is because defilements that should be dispelled by restraining the senses are not moral transgressions (*vīṭikkama*) through physical and verbal actions. These are only arisen (*pariyuṭṭhāna*) and latent (*anusaya*) defilements that can only be rejected by concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*). Sense-faculty restraint is only synonymous with morality. It is not the real genuine morality like the morality of Pātimokkha-restraint." Mindfulness, knowledge, patience, and effort, which are the main essence of that morality, are embraced in the training of concentration and wisdom. Therefore, they fall within the bounds of mental development. In this respect, special attention may be given to the Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā and the Cūlaniddesa, which offer an exposition that what is stated as restraint by knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṃvara*) is nothing but Path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*). For these reasons, the morality of sense-faculty restraint cannot possibly be managed and kept under control without the practice of meditation.

The mind that has been trained by mental development is extremely refined, subtle, and cultured. It can be put in the heart properly and correctly for anything that is desired. The mind has so become highly cultured, and refined, and stays where it is put, because of its inherent nature for having been properly trained through the practice. Such being the case, sense-faculty restraint can be fully purified by means of meditation. The more meditation become strengthened, the more purified morality becomes. When meditation is strong and mature enough, it becomes entirely purified, as stated in the Commentary and Subcommentary. That is why the Visuddhimagga said that one should bear in mind as was done by Mahā Tissa Thera.

This elder having become fully accomplished with contemplation on foulness (*asubha-bhāvanā*), was able to successfully subdue the mind though he had seen a smiling woman, and by thus being able

to control his mind, he could bring forth the perception of foulness when he saw the bones of her teeth. Then, through the process of contemplation, he attained the first jhāna. Thereafter, by developing insight based on that jhāna, he achieved Arahantship. The following ancient verse (*porāṇa-gāthā*) was quoted in the Visuddhimagga:—

“Tāssā dantaṭṭhikaṃ disvā, pubbasaññaṃ anussari.

Tattheva so ṭhito thero, arahattaṃ apāpuṇī’ti.” (Vism.i.21)

EXPLANATION: The words “**pubbasaññaṃ anussari**” in this verse indicate the perfect ability of that elder due to having cultivated the practice of bone as meditation subject (*atthika kammaṭṭhāna*) for a long time. Hence, if desirous of gaining mindfulness with constant awareness, it would be essential to be well-endowed with effective meditation practice just like that elder. A person who is lacking in meditation practice will not be able to efficiently control the mind in the same way as a person who is presently meditating. If at all, he could exercise mindfulness if endowed with special perfections (*pāramī*) despite the fact that he is totally deficient in meditation by virtue of the perfections. Mindfulness that has occurred being merely through mental development, it cannot be said that sense-faculty restraint will have the full capability to bring about purification without meditation. As such, the strict instructions given in the Commentary and Subcommentary to the effect that: “Absolutely no defilements should be permitted to arise at all the doors of the six senses,” must be construed as referring to the need for cultivating the practice of meditation.

Hence, if one wishes to purify sense-faculty restraint before practising meditation, it is necessary to cultivate and keep watch to the best of one’s own ability, following the methods already stated in the foregoing. If however, full purification is desired, practice of meditation should invariably be carried out. No time should be wasted with doubts whether it is right and proper to practise meditation without being absolutely purified in sense-faculty restraint. When meditating, the aforesaid morality will undoubtedly become fully purified with the manifestations of all restraint in the arising of consciousness relating to meditation.

Summary

All monks should, from the very outset, observe and keep intact morality of Pātimokkha restraint and morality of livelihood purifica-

tion in all aspects. This is because breaching these two kinds of morality will amount to committing an offence and transgression of monastic rules (*āṇāṇvītikkama*), which can be really dangerous. Of these two kinds of morality, only morality of Pātimokkha restraint is essential. The reason being that if this morality is purified, one's livelihood will also be purified. If livelihood is destroyed, being guilty of an offence, it will also cause a breach in morality of Pātimokkha restraint. If one wishes to fully purify morality of Pātimokkha restraint, all wrong livelihood (*micchā-ājīva*) that can cause an offence should be avoided. Only requisites that have been acquired lawfully should be made use of. If so, the moral conduct of right livelihood will also be purified. The morality of sense-faculty restraint and the morality of reflection on the requisites should also be fully purified from the very beginning if possible. This is because these two kinds of morality, if purified, will also ensure the absence of regret (*avippaṭṭisāra*)

The impurity of these two kinds of morality in the past can bring no harm. As such, there should be no delay in taking up meditation practice on the grounds of non-accomplishment of these two kinds of morality. It is proper to carry out the practice of meditation commencing from the time of the purification of these two kinds of morality mentioned before. I exhort you to meditate. As and when meditating, arising of meditation consciousness and all the four kinds of morality will be fully purified and accomplished in every respect. Purification in the way as stated will be found particularly obvious in the concluding part of the subject relating to morality concerning laymen. The exposition now rendered relates to the way of achieving purification of morality (*sīla-visuddhi*) for monks.

End of Purification of Morality Relating to Monks

Purification of Morality Relating to Laymen

Purification of morality in respect of laymen is not so comprehensive nor as difficult as that concerning the monks. Purity of morality on the part of laymen will be easily accomplished either by undertaking the observance of the five precepts (*pañca-sīla*), or the eight precepts with right-livelihood as the eighth (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*). Why are these two types of morality similar in the matter of accomplishing purification of morality despite the fact that the five precepts and the eight precepts are different in respect of some precepts? They are

similar because of their quality being alike in the observance of restraint and abstinence.

In the case of a person who wishes to fully observe the five precepts, it is not only essential to observe the obvious five rules of moral conduct, but also three other verbal actions included in wrong speech (*musāvāda*). Besides the offence of lying, slander or back-biting (*pisuṇavācā*), using harsh, abusive language and swearing (*pharusa-vācā*), and frivolous talk (*samphappalāpa*), *i.e.* futile, imaginary, or invented narration should also be avoided. Only one who is fully endowed with the three kinds of morality: bodily action (*kāya-kamma*) and all four verbal actions (*vacī-kamma*) will be free from wrong livelihood (*micchā-ājīva*). The five precepts are therefore similar to eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth.

Moreover, a person who thoroughly observe eight precepts with right livelihood should also refrain from committing taking intoxicants, which is included in sensual misconduct (*kāmesu-micchācārā*), due to being an improper act regarding the strands of sensual pleasures (*kāmaguṇa*) in that it has also the quality of enjoying the pleasurable sense of taste, *etc.* Therefore, the eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth are similar to the five precepts. Due to having this similarity in the observance and abstinence, if either of the two kinds of morality is undertaken and observed, purity of moral conduct will be accomplished.

The avoidance of three kinds of immoral actions, physical and verbal, which have no relevance to the means of livelihood in the observance of five and eight precepts is the moral practice concerning the restraint of precepts. However, abstinence from three kinds of bodily kamma and four kinds of and verbal kamma pertaining to one's means of livelihood is the morality of livelihood purification. In the matter of livelihood, morality concerning laymen should not be treated the same as that for monks. In the case of monks, while committing actions that are wrong livelihood, or while using requisites received from such actions, since it amounts to transgressing the authority of the Buddha, they are guilty of a monastic offence. It also results in the destruction of morality of livelihood. As for laymen, morality is corrupted only in the course of committing immoral actions, physically, and verbally for the purpose of their livelihood. When making use of the property acquired by wrongful

means morality is not destroyed, because while using it no physical and verbal acts of killing, *etc.*, are taking place. Unlike monks, they have not transgressed the orders laid down by the Buddha in the Vinaya. Such being the case, it is not necessary for laymen to discard properties that has been acquired through wrongful means of livelihood. Though the property has not been abandoned, if no further immoral actions, physical or verbal, are committed again for the sake of livelihood, morality of livelihood purification is not corrupted, but remains pure.

It has been stated that there is difficulty even for monks to be accomplished in the morality of sense-faculty restraint before practising meditation. Hence, there is nothing to be said in regard to laymen. Also morality of reflection on the use of requisites only concerns the monks since it does not amount to indebtedness in the case of laymen consuming their own property without reflection. Nevertheless, there is hardly any doubt that if laymen could use their property with due reflection, it will develop wholesome states, and will minimise demerits, in as much as it is a matter concerning the teachings in the Suttanta. However, in the course of practising meditation, the four kinds of morality get fully purified with the arising of meditation consciousness. This will be quite obvious.

Some people hold the view that it is proper to practise meditation after purifying morality for a considerable length of time and that only by doing so, concentration and wisdom can be achieved. This is mere wishful thinking because of the absence of instructions in the Tipiṭaka, Aṭṭhakathā, and Tīkā, to the effect that: “The practice of meditation shall only be undertaken after purifying morality for a certain length of time.” To be more clearly understood, it may be stated that in regard to monks, if the morality of Pātimokkha restraint is breached, it would cause an obstruction due to transgression of the Buddha’s instruction (*āṇāvātikkaṃ*), which is harmful as it goes against his command. Hence, morality has to be purified beforehand.

Nevertheless, nothing is mentioned in the Tipiṭaka, Aṭṭhakathā, or Tīkā as to how long it is required to purify morality before practising meditation. Hence, it is permissible for monks to meditate from the time that morality of Pātimokkha restraint becomes purified. Nothing needs to be said regarding laymen in this connection. If fully endowed with the perfections (*pāramī*), one can undoubtedly

be achieved concentration, insight, and the path and its fruition, from the time of taking up the practice of meditation, as and when morality become purified. The five precepts, which ought to be undertaken and observed, are always available during the time of the Buddha's dispensation, or even outside of it. If there is any breach of the noble quality of this *Sīla*, it would constitute an offence. If fully accomplished and observed, it surely brings merits.

Destruction or accomplishment of the morality of the five precepts is not attributable to the command of the Buddha to cause guilt or for the derivation of benefit. It happens according to its own nature or the natural disposition of a person. As such, the corruption of morality in the past by laymen will not definitely cause an obstacle to the attainment of the path and its fruition, unless the destruction is due to the five obstructive actions (*pañcānantariya-kamma*), the defiling of a nun (*bhikkhuṇḍūsana-kamma*), or insulting a Noble One (*ariyūpavāda-kamma*). If these actions are committed, a person will fail to achieve the path and its fruition in this existence irrespective of whether he is a laymen or a monk. In this connection, the five impediments will be explained.

The Five Impediments

1) The Impediment of Kamma

1. Matricide (*mātughāta*),
2. Patricide (*pitughāta*),
3. Murdering an Arahant (*Arahattaghāta*),
4. Shedding the blood of a Buddha (*lohituppāda*),
5. Causing a schism in the Order (*Saṅghabheda*).

As these five actions will definitely cause the perpetrator to go down to hell in the next existence they are known as actions with definite results (*anantariya-kamma*), *i.e.* that cannot be prevented. These five embrace both an impediment to heaven (*saggantarāyo*) and an impediment to the path (*maggantarāyo*), *i.e.* they are an obstacle to reaching the celestial realms and to attaining the path.

To rape a bhikkhuṇī who is accomplished with morality, is known as the defiling of a nun (*bhikkhuṇḍūsana-kamma*). This will also amount to creating an obstruction to the path. All six immoral actions are obstructions caused by kamma (*kammāntarāya*).

2) The Impediment of Defilements

There are three heretical views (*niyata-micchā-dit̥ṭhi*):-

1. The wrong view of non-action (*akiriya-dit̥ṭhi*), which holds the firm view that there is no such thing as evil and virtue, and even if any act is done, it does not amount to doing good or evil, and neither good nor evil results can be derived from them;
2. Annihilationism (*natthika-dit̥ṭhi*), which holds a firm view that when a living being dies, its existence terminates with death, and death is the annihilation of existence, and there is no such thing as beneficial or bad results from good or evil acts;
3. No-cause (*ahetuka-dit̥ṭhi*) is a firm view that there are no good or evil actions, no law of cause and effect, and both happiness and misery occur without any cause.

These three kinds of heretical views, if not discarded, will definitely cause one to land in hell after death, and are accordingly known as fixed wrong views (*niyata-micchā-dit̥ṭhi*), i.e. having a definite result. These cause an obstruction to heaven and the path, and are called impediments caused by defilements (*kilesāntarāya*).

Of these three kinds of heretical views, cause is rejected by the first view, the second rejects the effect. The third rejects both the cause and the effect. However, rejection of cause also amounts to rejecting the effect; and if the effect is rejected, it is tantamount to rejection of the cause. Hence, all three of these heretical views can be summarised as the assumption that there is no wholesome (*kusala*) or unwholesome (*akusala*) action (*kamma*), and that these actions produce neither good nor bad effects (*vipāka*).

3) The Impediment of Results

Rebirth with rootless (*ahetuka*) conditions that occurs as an animal, and a person conceived with only two wholesome root conditions (*dvoihetuka*) are called an impediment caused by results (*vipākantarāya*). It is merely an impediment to the path; it cannot possibly be an impediment to heaven. One who is reborn lacking the third wholesome rebirth condition of wisdom (*amoha*) cannot hope to attain the path and its fruition. However, due to wholesome kamma, he or she can be reborn as a human being or a deity.

4) The Impediment of Insulting a Noble One

Defaming or insulting a Noble One, either knowingly or unknowingly, to defame his or her morality, is known as the impediment of insulting a Noble One (*ariyūpavādantarāya*). This offence will cause both an impediment to heaven and to the path. However, the impediment can be removed by asking for forgiveness and paying due respects to the person concerned.

5) The Impediment of Transgression

In the case of a monk, if any of seven grades of Vinaya offences are knowingly committed, it is called transgressing the Buddha's instructions (*āṇāvītikkamantarāyo*). This also amounts to an impediment to heaven and to attaining the path. However, if the offence has been cured by way of confession and absolution in accordance with the Vinaya rules, he will be free from the offence.

"Tepi yāva bhikkhubhāvaṃ vā patijānāti, na vuttthāti vā, na deseti vā, tāvadeva, na tato paraṃ." (MA.ii.102)

The gist of the above is that although a person remains as a monk for a certain period after committing an offence involving defeat (*pārājika*), yet fails to purify himself from this serious guilt, or even if he fails to confess a light or minor offence, actions constituting an offence are also likely to be impediments to reaching heaven or to attaining the path and its fruition for that period only. After the expiry of that period, when by confession he has become a novice or a layman (due to excommunication), or after undergoing penance (*parivāsa*) for a curable offence, no impediment will remain.

If verification were made comparing with the five impediments stated above, it is obvious that the ordinary corruption of morality by a layman will be found not to be included in impediments that obstruct the achievement of the path and its fruition. That is why Santati, a minister of state, a pickpocket named "Ariya," and a Sākyan lay disciple named Saraṇāni, as also such other persons, had achieved the path and its fruition.

How a Minister Became an Arahant

Having won a battle, the minister Santati was honoured and rewarded by King Kosala to officiate as the ruling monarch in his

place for a period of seven days. The Minister lived in luxury and enjoyed royal life, drinking liquor all the time, indulging himself in merry-making and seeking sensual pleasures for the entire period of seven days. On the seventh day, when he made his way along with his royal retinue to the beach to have a bath, he came across the Buddha. From his sitting posture on the elephant, he paid his reverence to the Buddha bowing his head. At that moment, the Enlightened One made a passing remark as: "This minister will attain Arahantship today after listening to a discourse delivered by me in the form of a verse, and then while in his plain mufti, he will attain final cessation (*parinibbāna*)." On hearing the Buddha's prediction, the adherents of an heretical sect uttered in derision, "How could such a person reeling drunk attain *parinibbāna* while wearing ordinary lay clothes, after hearing a discourse on the same day? We will have a chance to discredit Gotama today for speaking falsehood." In the evening on that day, one of the minister's favourite dancers passed away suddenly while amusing and entertaining him. Being unbearably stricken with grief and greatly dejected, he went to the Buddha to seek consolation. The Buddha taught him the following verse:—

*"Yaṃ pubbe taṃ visosehi, pacchā te māhu kiñcanaṃ;
Majjhe ce no gahessasi, upasanto carissasi."* (Sn.184)

"Let there be nothing behind you, leave the future to one side, do not clutch at what is left in the middle; then you will become a wanderer and calm." (trans. H. Saddhātissa)

The above Pāli stanza conveys the meaning that in mind, matter, and mental formations that have long since ceased to exist, moral defilements can arise. Let those defilements that are bound to arise depending on conditions that existed in the past, be dried up. Do not be anxious or cling to passionate desires that are going to occur in future. If mind, matter, and mental formations that arise in the present are not clung to with craving (*taṇhā*) and wrong view (*ditṭhi*), and if mindfulness is developed as stated, inasmuch as the burning fires of defilements have been extinguished, you will be calm. This is in accordance with the explanation in the Mahāniddeśa (Nd1.ii.233).

Having heard this verse, the minister Santati became an Arahant, and with the intention to eradicate the sceptical doubts that lay in the hearts of some in the audience, he rose up into the air to a height

of seven palm trees by exercising his newly acquired supernormal powers, and attained final cessation while still in the garb of an ordinary layman, as instructed by the Buddha.

This statement is as mentioned in the Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā, etc. However, do not run away with the *idea* that the path and its fruition can be attained merely by listening to the Dhamma without contemplating and noting the phenomena of mind and matter. In this account or in any similar statements that Arahantship was attained after merely hearing the teachings, it should be borne in mind that only after contemplating and noting mind and matter during the course of listening to the discourse that Arahantship was achieved by passing through the stages of Stream-winning, Once-returning, and Non-returning in the process of progressive insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) and path and fruition knowledge. Hence, in the Commentary on the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, an exposition has been given as follows:—

“Yasmā pana kāyavedanācittadhammesu kañci dhammaṃ anāmasitvā bhāvanā nāma natthi, tasmā tepi imināva maggena sokapariḍeva samatikkantā’ti veditabbā.” (DA.iii.747)

TRANSLATION: Although (**pana**) [the path and its fruition has been reached on hearing the verse], contemplation of body, feeling, consciousness, and mental states (**kāyavedanācittadhammesu**), if any (**kañci**) of the phenomena (**dhammaṃ**), is not contemplated and noted (**anāmasitvā**), what is called (**nāma**) mental development (**bhāvanā**) for that purpose (**Yasmā**), will not be derived (**natthi**), therefore (**tasmā**), they too (**tepi**) — the aforementioned minister Santati and Paṭācārā — by this (**iminā**) very (**eva**) path (**maggena**) [of the four foundations of mindfulness], grief (**soka**) and lamentation (**parideva**), transcended (**samatikkantā’ti**); it should be understood (**veditabbā**).

EXPLANATION: Having heard the teachings conveyed in the verse, the minister Santati became an Arahant, and Paṭācārā became a Stream-winner. Nothing can be called mental development (*bhāvanā*) without contemplating on any one of the four kinds, namely the body, feelings, consciousness, and mental states, and without developing insight knowledge and path knowledge. It is therefore to be understood that the aforesaid Santati and Paṭācārā reached the fruition of

Arahantship and Stream-winning respectively, and then transcended grief and lamentation only through the path of Satipaṭṭhāna after noting with mindfulness on phenomena of body (*kāya*), feelings (*vedanā*), consciousness (*citta*) and mental states (*dhamma*).

In the story cited above as it is stated: “For the entire period of seven days until the time of listening to the discourse, the minister was intoxicated and reeling drunk,” it is obvious that the path and its fruition had been reached without purification of morality (*sīla-visuddhi*) being accomplished in the past. Nor could this attainment be said to have been achieved because it was his final existence (*pacchimabhavika*) before attaining *parinibbāna*. The reason being that though it was his final existence, if he had been a monk, the path and its fruition could not have been achieved since the impurity of morality in the past would amount to an impediment to attaining the path. The meaning of this statement will be known from the way of admonishing the monk by the name of Uttiya, who was in the final existence.

How Venerable Uttiya Was Admonished

“Tasmā tiha tvam, Uttiya, ādimeva visodhehi kusalesu dhammesu. Ko cādi kusalanam dhammanam? Sīlanca suvisuddham, ditṭhi ca ujukā. Yato ca kho te, Uttiya, sīlanca suvisuddham bhavissati, ditṭhi ca ujukā, tato tvam, Uttiya, sīlam nissāya sīle patitṭhāya cattāro satipaṭṭhāne bhāveyyāsi.” (S.v.166)

EXPLANATION: The above passage may be explained thus: “Uttiya! If you entreat me to teach wishing to take up the practice of meditation, you should, in the first instance, purify wholesome states. Those wholesome states to be purified at the initial stage are: the right view that there is what is called the absolute purity of Pātimokkha restraint; the right view that results will be reaped according to kamma. If you have done so, morality will become purified and right view will ensure straightforward progress. When this is achieved, you should develop the four foundations of mindfulness based on purified morality.

Although it is ordinarily stated in the foregoing passage as morality the meaning is given as morality of Pātimokkha restraint in accordance with the exposition made in the Jhānavibhaṅga and new

Kaṅkhā-ṭikā. In this instruction, admonition has been given that only when morality of Pātimokkha restraint has become purified, contemplation and development of meditation on the four foundations of mindfulness should be carried out. No instruction or advice has been given for how long morality should be kept purified before taking up meditation practice. This point should be given serious attention. Moreover, without intending to instruct that any one of the four foundations of mindfulness should be contemplated and developed, since it has been instructed that all four kinds should be contemplated, it must be understood that developing of all four foundations of mindfulness together is actually what has been duly instructed by the Buddha himself.

In that Pāli passage, it was stated that the Venerable Uttiya became an Arahant not long after he had practised meditation according to the admonition mentioned above. As such, it was his final existence. However, admonition was given to first purify morality since impurity of morality concerning the monks can be an obstacle to his final attainment. Also, he was admonished to correct and keep himself entirely free from wrong views that will surely produce a miserable destination (*niyata-micchā-diṭṭhi*). If the way of admonition given to this elder is compared to the story of Santati, it will be clear that even in the final existence the corruption of morality of Pātimokkha restraint could endanger the realisation of the path and its fruition, but for laymen the destruction of morality will not cause an impediment to the attainment of the path and its fruition. Such being the case, there is no justification to say that the path and its fruition can be attained even without the purification of morality in the past since it happened to be the final existence (*pacchimabhavika*).

How a Fisherman Achieved Distinction

One day, perceiving with his supreme wisdom the destiny of a fisherman by the name of Ariya, who had the sufficing condition for attaining awakening, the Buddha returned along the route where the fisherman was, together with the monks, after going on alms-round in a village near the northern gate of Sāvattī. At that time, Ariya who was fishing with a hook and line. Seeing the Buddha and the monks coming along, stood and waited after putting away his fishing-rod. When Buddha arrived, he asked him what his name was. He replied

that his name was "Ariya." On hearing his reply, the Buddha remarked, "A man like you, who is cruelly ill-treating and killing, does not deserve the name of Ariya. An Ariya (Noble One) never harms or kills others." The Buddha then continued, by teaching him the following verse:-

*"Na tena ariyo hoti, yena Pāṇāni hiṃsati.
Ahiṃsā sabbapāṇānaṃ, ariyoti pavuccati." (Dhp v 270)*

EXPLANATION: The gist of the above verse may be stated thus: It is because of factors such as anger that living beings are harmed and killed. For having these vicious factors such as anger, one cannot be called an Ariya. Only when one abstains from hurting or killing others with a feeling of humanity or compassion, does one deserve to be called an Ariya (a Noble One). At the close of this teaching, the fisherman named Ariya became a Stream-winner. This story is referred to in Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā (DhA.iii.397)

Gaṇṭhibhedaka the Pick-pocket

At one time, while the Buddha was delivering a discourse at Jetavana monastery, two pick-pockets were also present among the listening audience. Of these two, one became a Stream-winner after having listened attentively to the discourse with great reverence. The other stole five small coins. On their arrival back home, the thief made fun of his friend saying, "Since you were too wise, you failed to get enough money to buy a dish of rice." The man who had already become a Stream-winner, reflected, "What a pity! This fellow thinks of himself as being clever, though, in fact, he is really ignorant," and later, respectfully put the matter to the Buddha. Then the Buddha delivered his teachings in the form of the verse quoted below:-

*"Yo bālo maññati bālyam, paṇḍito vāpi tena so.
Bālo va paṇḍitamānī, sa ve 'bālo'ti vuccati" (Dhp v 63)*

The above passage conveys the sense that the fool who knows his own folly has a chance of becoming wise. If, in spite of being foolish, one who regards himself as a man of wisdom, and who thinks highly of himself as intelligent may rightly be called a fool.

In spite of the fact that a person is foolish and unknowledgeable, yet if he realises himself as: "I am foolish and uneducated," that is a mitigating factor. If he takes the advice of a person who has a better

knowledge of things than himself, he can hope to become wise. On the other hand, despite being unknowledgeable, unwise, and foolish, if he is egotistical, thinking, "I am a very knowledgeable person and I know everything," he is indeed a fool. He might imagine himself to be extremely knowledgeable and wise, and would refuse to take instructions from any other person of intellect. He will therefore be at a dead-end and will forever be incorrigible. This means that such a person should be called a "real fool."

Saraṇāni, a Lay Devotee

At the time of the death of the Sākyan Saraṇāni, the Buddha pronounced that he had become a Stream-winner and escaped from the danger of falling into the lower realms. Hearing this pronouncement, Mahānāma the Sākyan expressed his disapproval of the statement. This reproach is stated in the Saṃyuttanikāya thus.–

‘Acchariyaṃ vata bho! Abbhutaṃ vata bho! Ettha dāni ko na sotāpanno bhavissati! Yatra hi nāma Saraṇāni sakko kālaṅkato; so Bhāgavatā byākato: ‘Sotāpanno avinipātadhammo niyato sambodhiparāyaṇo’ti. Saraṇāni sakko sikkhādubbalyamāpādi, majjapānaṃ apāyī’ti.’ (S.v.375)

Another significant phrase is:–

“Saraṇāni sakko sikkhāya aparipūrakārī ahoṣī’ti.” (S.v.378)

IT MEANS: "Friends, How wonderful! How marvellous! Among us who will fail to achieve Stream-winning? It is because in respect of Saraṇāni who had died, the Buddha has said: "Saraṇāni is a great Stream-enterer who will never fall into the lower realms, and as the gates of hell are closed for him, he is firmly established on the path. He will also undoubtedly attain the higher stages of the path. Saraṇāni was lacking in his practice of morality (*sīla sikkhā*). He was addicted to alcoholic drinks. He was not used to making efforts to accomplish himself with the qualities of high moral conduct. Yet, friends, he has become a Stream-winner!"

When this was put to the Buddha by Mahānāma, the Buddha exhorted him in an analytical way with his great compassion that there are different kinds of people with different moral attributes. (For details, refer to the Saṃyuttanikāya, S.v.374-380)

“Furthermore, just as decayed or rotten seeds sown in an unfertile and barren ground full of stumps and pebbles, cannot germinate and develop, the path, its fruition, and nibbāna cannot be attained through the training and practice of meditation by pursuing a wrong method; and just as the fresh seeds sown in the most fertile land will sprout, thrive and develop, the path, its fruition, and nibbāna can be definitely achieved by diligently practising meditation according to what has been taught by the Fully Enlightened Buddha. Why should not Saraṇāni, the lay devotee, who has sincerely engaged in the correct practice of meditation, be able to become a Stream-winner?” After exhorting as stated, the Buddha concluded his teachings with the following statement.

“Kimaṅgaṃ pana Saraṇāniṃ sakkamaṃ. Saraṇāni, mahānāma, sakko maraṇakāle sikkhāya paripūrakārī ahoṣī’ti.” (S.v.380)

EXPLANATION: “Why shouldn’t the lay devotee Saraṇāni the Sākyan attain Stream-winning? Mahānāma, Saraṇāni the Sākyan fully observed the moral precepts and practised meditation on the eve of his death.” This discourse stands witness to the fact that Saraṇāni, the lay devotee, though not purified in his morality in the past, became a Stream-winner fully accomplished with the training in morality on the verge of his death.

The aforementioned fisherman Ariya, the pick-pocket, and Saraṇāni being only Stream-winners, were not in their final existence. Therefore, there is hardly any reason to say that the path and its fruition can be achieved without the purification of morality in the past by one in their final existence. Yet, some have stated: “Noble Arahants, *etc.*, being highly intelligent, and quick-witted,³ can attain the path and its fruition. However, in regard to trainable individuals who attain the path and its fruition by practising according to the usual right method (*neyya*), it was also said that they could attain the path only if morality has been purified for a considerable length of time in the past. This is merely conjecture since no such statement is found in the Pāḷi, Aṭṭhakathā, or Tīkā. The way of practice by a trainable individual is found in this quotation:–

³ One who can attain the path by listening to the Dhamma taught in brief (*ugghaṭṭitaññū*), and a diffuse-learner (*vipaṇcitaññū*) who can attain the path by listening to the Dhamma taught in detail.

“Katamo ca puggalo neyyo? Yassa puggalassa uddesato paripucchato yoniso manasikaroto kalyānamitte sevato bhajato payirupāsato evaṃ anupubbena dhammābhisamayo hoti ayaṃ vuccati puggalo neyyo.” (Pug.41)

EXPLANATION: A trainable individual is one who learns the texts relating to meditation subjects (*kammaṭṭhāna*) with proper attention, and who relies on good friends capable of teaching him, after approaching and showing them due respect. If he has done so promptly and methodically, realisation of the Four Noble Truths will come to him. Such a person is called trainable individual (*neyya*).

TRANSLATION: According to this Pāḷi passage, the method of meditation learned in any language is called teaching or exposition (**uddesato**). If any ambiguous statement that is not easy to understand is asked to be explained, it is called questioning (**paripucchato**). If diligently practised with attentiveness, it is wise attention (**yoniso manasikārato**). By devotedly (**bhajana**) following (**sevana**), paying homage to (**payirupāsana**), interrogating and learning from a competent spiritual teacher or good friend (**kalyānamitte**), to dispel sceptical doubts when they occur while meditating; to develop and boost diligence, faith, and enthusiasm when they slacken; and to gain other such advantages, a person who achieves the path and its fruition by meditating according to the process as stated is called a trainable individual (**neyyo**). Only that much has been stated. No mention, however, has been made how long morality should be purified before taking up meditation practice.

“Tattha ugghaṭitaññussa samatha pubbaṅgamā vipassanā sappāyā. Neyyassa vipassanā pubbaṅgamo samatho, vipaṅcitaññussa samathavipassanā yuganaddhā. ... Ugghaṭitaññussa adhipaññāsikkhā, vipaṅcitaññussa adhicittasikkhā ca adhipaññāsikkhā ca, neyyassa adhisīlasikkhā ca adhicittasikkhā ca adhipaññāsikkhā ca.” (Netti.A.212-213)

TRANSLATION: Therein (**tattha**), insight (**vipassanā**) preceded by (**pubbaṅgamā**) tranquillity (**samatha**) is appropriate (**sappāyā**) for an intelligent and quick-witted person (**ugghaṭitaññussa**). For a trainable individual (**neyyassa**), tranquillity preceded by insight is suitable. For a diffuse learner (**vipaṅcitaññussa**), tranquillity and insight in tandem (**yuganaddhā**) is suitable. For a quick-witted

person, training in higher wisdom (**adhipaññāsikkhā**) is suitable. For a diffuse learner training in higher consciousness (**adhicittāsikkhā**) and higher wisdom are suitable. For a trainable individual, training in higher morality (**adhisīlasikkhā**), training in higher consciousness, and training in higher wisdom are suitable.

In this Commentary, the main intention is to mention about profitability or suitability. It is not intended to make it known that the appropriate training must be accomplished without fail. Hence, what is contained in the statement “All three kinds of training are suitable for a trainable individual” should not be construed as: “Every trainable individual must definitely be accomplished with morality and training in higher consciousness (*i.e. samatha jhāna*) prior to taking up meditation.” If it is construed thus, every diffuse learner and trainable individual will have to be stated as “Having achieved *jhāna* in the past.” It is, however, absurd. Moreover, in regard to the quick-witted and diffuse learner, as it is not stated that training in higher morality is suitable and profitable, any offence committed by a monk who is quick-witted or a diffuse learner may be stated as: “Not constituting an impediment due to transgression of the Buddha’s instructions.” Nevertheless, every offence committed by a monk’s own wilful intention is likely to be an impediment. Hence, it should be invariably interpreted to mean that “If a trainable individual is accomplished with both morality and tranquillity in the past, as this attribute would bring special benefits to the development of insight and path knowledge, it has been stated that all three kinds of training are considered to be suitable and profitable.

To an intelligent and quick-witted person who has very quick comprehension, insight and path knowledge can occur with great rapidity. Such an individual will therefore have no chance to repeatedly absorb into *jhāna*. Nor will it be necessary to enhance the development of insight by repeated absorption. Since insight and path knowledge will occur while listening to a discourse, neither a quick-witted individual nor a diffuse learner need to boost the strength of their meditation by reflecting on their morality. Reverence and devotion to the teacher and the discourse delivered, will make them keen and eager by developing delight (*pāmojja*), rapture (*pīti*), *etc.*, as such, in respect of these individuals it cannot be stated that morality and tranquillity, or morality, will be suitable and of great

benefit. As regards a trainable individual, since he or she has to practise meditation for a long period, he or she may reflect at times on his or her morality. If he or she finds it faulty and defective, he or she would become unhappy. Some who are especially prone to remorse, though they have the purification of morality at the moment, might become morose and anxious through recollection of what they have done in the past. If they cannot dispel this negativity, progress in insight may be hindered through sorrow, anxiety, or worry. If he or she finds that morality was purified for a very long time, or from the taking up of the practice of meditation, happiness and joy will occur. He or she may become very delighted and rapturous, serenity (*passaddhi*) will ensue. Bliss (*sukha*) is also likely. Being blissful, tranquillity and insight will be invigorated and strengthened. For these reasons, morality that has been purified long ago, or at least since first taking up the meditation practice, is of really great benefit for a trainable individual.

Beneficial Results of Tranquillity

“Yassa hi samādhipi taruṇo, vipassanāpi, tassa vipassanaṃ paṭṭhapetoṃ aticiraṃ nisinnassa kāyo kilamati, anto aggī viya uṭṭhahati, kacchehi sedā muccanti, matthakato usumavaṭṭi viya uṭṭhahati, cittaṃ haññati vihaññati vipphandati. So puna samāpattiṃ samāpajjitvā taṃ paridametoṃ mudukaṃ katvā samassāsetvā puna vipassanaṃ paṭṭhapeti. Tassa puna aticiraṃ nisinnassa tatheva hoti. So puna samāpattiṃ samāpajjitvā tatheva karoti. Vipassanāya hi bahūpakārā samāpatti.” (MA.ii.83)

TRANSLATION: “A meditator whose concentration and insight are still immature will get tired if sitting for a very long time to invoke insight by contemplating and noting in the course of meditation. They might feel heat in the body as if a fire is raging (*i.e.* sensations of intense heat will pervade the entire body as if being burnt). Sweat may ooze from the armpits, or perspiration may cover the entire body. It might feel as if the head was steaming. The mind is likely to be weary and agitated beyond control. When such things happen, the meditator shall again absorb into *jhāna* to relieve the weariness and recover tranquillity, before resuming contemplation. If continuing to contemplate and note for a long time in a sitting posture,

weariness will occur again as before. In that case, one should repeat the same process by entering into *jhāna*. Thus, absorption is of great benefit to insight meditation.”

As stated in this Commentary, a trainable individual who has already achieved *samatha-jhāna* in the past, should absorb into *jhāna* to get respite every time physical and mental weariness is felt due to contemplating and noting for a considerable length of time. Only then should one resumes contemplating and noting. It is required to develop and enhance insight, concentration, and wisdom by so contemplating and noting. When concentration and wisdom get strengthened, both physical and mental weariness will disappear. Then one is able to continue contemplating and noting without a break even for a whole day and night. Therefore, absorption will be of great benefit to a trainable individual.

At the present time, meditators practising meditation through the method of insight (*vipassanā yānika*) are generally found to have physical and mental weariness as stated above. When becoming weary due to not being endowed with *jhāna*, efforts should be made to contemplate and note as usual with diligence according to the sequence in the process of meditation to lessen the weariness and then to make Vipassanā become strengthened and vigorous.

Hence, it is stated in the *Netti Aṭṭhakathā* that all three kinds of training are suitable for a trainable individual since morality and tranquillity are greatly beneficial, as has been mentioned in the foregoing. It should therefore be firmly remembered that it has never been stated that morality must necessarily be fully accomplished for a considerable length of time in the past. Moreover, *Saraṇāni*, the lay devotee, about whom mention has been made, should be regarded as a trainable individual who became a Stream-winner by arduously meditating with mindfulness on the eve of his death.

Since no mention has been made in *Pāḷi* and Commentary as becoming a Stream-winner after listening to the Dhamma, and as to who had taught that Dhamma, there is no justification to regard *Saraṇāni* as quick-witted or a diffuse learner. Such being the case, the statement: “Trainable individuals could achieve the path and fruition only if their morality is purified for a very long time in the past,” is mere conjecture or a statement of opinion. Even a person who cannot reach the stage of the path and its fruition in the present

existence, can still acquire the full knowledge of insight without having purified morality in the past. This fact can be clearly known from the story of Tambadāṭhika.

Tambadāṭhika the Executioner

In the city of Rājagaha, the king appointed Tambadāṭhika as an executioner offering him the rank of a major. He was so called because of his copper-coloured moustache. He had to do the killing of all robbers, thieves, and criminals who had been sentenced to death for being caught red-handed in the act of committing crimes. In the role of an executioner in the service of the king, he had to serve for a period of fifty-five years continuously killing one, two, three or more condemned criminals everyday. At the end of his fifty-five years of unbroken term of office, he had to relinquish his duties. On the day of his retirement, wishing to consume the things and food which, in his previous capacity as a major in charge of executing the criminals, he had not been permitted to enjoy and eat, he asked his family at home to prepare a dish of rice-gruel mixed with cow's milk. He anointed himself with liquid perfume of the scented woods and dressed his hairs putting on red star flowers (*ipomaea coccinea*), and brand-new clothes. After thus decorating himself, he sat down to take the milk-rice gruel. At that time, the Venerable Sāriputta, with his feeling of compassion, purposely came to his residence seeking for almsfood. Tambadāṭhika rejoiced greatly at seeing the great elder and requested him to be seated. He then offered to the elder, with great reverence, the rice-gruel that he had been about to take with great relish. After eating the rice-gruel, the Venerable Sāriputta blessed him with thanksgiving (*anumodana*) expressing his satisfaction. Tambadāṭhika, reflecting on his past evil deeds of fifty-five years continuously, became greatly depressed and restless.

Knowing what had happened to Tambadāṭhika. Venerable Sāriputta asked him, "Did you do those misdeeds of your own accord and free will, or did you carry them out on the order of others? He replied, "I performed these evil deeds on the orders of His Majesty the king." Venerable Sāriputta further questioned him, "Would they then be evil deeds done on your own volition?" Thereupon, Tambadāṭhika replied, "These are all the evil deeds of His Majesty the king." Reflecting thus, and assuming that no fault had been

committed by him of his own will, his mind became calm, which enabled him to concentrate his attention on the teachings delivered by the Venerable Sāriputta. Being able to listen to the Dhamma with peace of mind and devotion, he attained the knowledge of equanimity about formations (*sañkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*) called patience of adaptation (*anulomikakhanti*)."

"So there anumodanaṃ karonte ekaggacitto hutvā dhammaṃ suṇanto sotāpattimaggassa orato anulomikaṃ khantiṃ nibbattesi." (DhA.ii.207)

EXPLANATION: The above passage says that while the Venerable Sāriputta was teaching the thanksgiving, Tambadāṭhika having a tranquil mind in the course of his listening to the Dhamma so taught, knowledge of equanimity about formations occurred to him by virtue of adaptation knowledge (*anuloma-ñāṇa*), which is proximate to the path of Stream-winning. Ordinarily, insight knowledge can be called patience of adaptation (*anulomikakhanti*). However, in this regards, as it is stated as ascending to the path of Stream-winning (**sotāpattimaggassa orato**), it should be construed as knowledge of equanimity about formations, which is in close proximity to the path.

Later, Tambadāṭhika escorted the Venerable Sāriputta back to his monastery, and on his return, he was gored to death by a cow which was impersonated by a female ogre who had an animosity against him in his past existence. After his death, he was reborn in Tusita. At that time, bhikkhus attending in the assembly hall were discussing the said incident: "Tambadāṭhika resorted to extremely cruel acts throughout a period of fifty-five years. Only today he escaped from this calamitous situation. On that very day, he offered almsfood to the Venerable Sāriputta, and then passed away. Where would he be destined to in the fresh existence, we do not know." Relating to this topic of discussion, the Buddha had taught the following verse.

*"Subhāsitaṃ suṇitvāna, nagare coraghātaḥ;
Anulomakhantiṃ laddhāna, modatī tidivaṃ gato'ti."* (DhA.i.407)

EXPLANATION: The above Pāli conveys: "It brings us delight and satisfaction that the great executioner Tambadāṭhika of Rājagaha, having heard the noble teachings of the Venerable Sāriputta has achieved knowledge of equanimity about formations, which can lead to adaptation knowledge (the faculty by which one can perceive the

arising and dissolution of the psycho-physical phenomena that manifest in a person with the realisation of the three characteristics) and has reached the celestial realm." On hearing this statement, the monks through dissatisfaction inquired of the Buddha, "Venerable sir! The immoral acts done by him were really grave. The thanksgiving teaching does not have enough strength to overcome his serious guilt. How could the awakening consciousness of special dhamma occur by the strength and quality of such an insignificant Dhamma?"

To this query, the Buddha stated in reply, "Monks! The virtues of my Dhamma should not be weighed and assessed as being great or trivial, and as bountiful or scanty. Even one word if spoken benevolently to bring beneficial results, must be regarded as being worthy and precious." Following this statement, the Buddha delivered his teachings as stated below:—

"Sahassamapi ce vācā, anatthapadasamhitā.

Ekam atthapadam seyyo, yaṃ sutvā upasammati. " (Dhp v 100)

THIS MEANS: "Speech that is not beneficial, however much it might be adorned with thousands of expressions, must be considered as worthless. If by hearing a single word or phrase, the fires of defilements are extinguished, such a speech though it may constitute a single expression, brings benefit by throwing a shining light on the aggregates, sense-faculties, elements, foundations of mindfulness, etc., is much more noble and profitable."

The executioner Tambadāthika, not having achieved the path and its fruition in the present existence, cannot even be called a trainable individual, much less quick-witted or of diffuse learning, yet it gives us food for thought why knowledge of equanimity about formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*), which is close to purification by knowledge and vision of the course of practice (*paṭipadā ñāṇadassana visuddhi*), occurred to Tambadāthika despite the fact that he had not been able to purify his morality for a considerable length of time in the past? Is it not because the destruction of morality in the past concerning laymen does not prove to be an impediment? There are two reasons for non-attainment of the path and its fruition in the present existence. Among these two, one is evil friendship (*pāpamitta*). Having fallen into bad company, King Ajātasattu failed to achieve the path and its fruition due to having committed patricide (*pitughāta-kammantarāya*)

after taking bad advice from Devadatta. Persons who have committed such an offence, who have this impediment to the path, will not even gain insight knowledges such as knowledge of arising and passing away (*udayabbaya-nāṇa*).

Non-achievement Due to Lack of Practice or Guidance

There are cases in which the path and its fruition are not achieved due to being slack in practice and in listening to the teaching. As mentioned in the Kandaraka Sutta of the Majjhimapaṇṇāsa, a person by the name of Pessa for being negligent in his practice of mindfulness had failed to achieve the path and its fruition. This man suffered a great loss in that he had not even reached the stage of the path and its fruition in the process of his meditation as he left the place where teaching was done, before the end of the discourse. If he had stayed until the discourse was complete, he would have attained Stream-winning by listening to the Dhamma delivered elaborately relating to the four kinds of individuals: one who oppresses himself (*attantapo*) by self-mortification, one who oppresses others (*parantapo*), etc. At the present time, among those who ordinarily deserve to attain the path and its fruition, there are some like Pessa who lose the opportunity of gaining benefit during this existence due to being negligent. It is because they either entirely fail to practise meditation in spite of the fact that they have received the right method of meditation, or because they cannot give enough time to practice.

Furthermore, in the case of Dhanañjāni Brahmin, on the eve of his death, the Venerable Sāriputta only taught him tranquillity meditation instead of insight meditation. For this reason, the Brahmin having developed only *samatha-jhāna* reached the Brahma realm on his demise. If the Brahmin had been taught the method of insight meditation, the path and its fruition would have been achieved even during his existence as a human being. Hence, failure to attain the path and its fruition by Dhanañjāni was due to a shortcoming in the method of teaching. For this very reason, the Buddha reprimanded Venerable Sāriputta who was ordered to visit the Brahma realm and give his teachings to Dhanañjāni. The Venerable Sāriputta had to proceed to the Brahma realm immediately and deliver another discourse. From that time onwards, Venerable Sāriputta made it a point never to teach without embracing the Four Noble Truths.

In the present day, those who have wasted their present existence and lived in vain without reward or fruit, without any benefits for not being able to tread on the right path relating to insight even though they have the chance to acquire the path and its fruition, resemble Dhanañjāni merely due to being deficient in the matter of teaching and practice (*kiriya-parihāni*).

The main reason for Tambadāṭhika's non-achievement of the path and its fruition was merely attributable to his slackness in the practice of meditation with mindfulness, *i.e.* (*kiriya-parihāni*). It should, therefore, be known that there is neither deficiency in the matter of teaching, nor an impediment connected with evil companionship, considering the fact that the knowledge of equanimity about formation had been reached.

With these instances so far cited, whether a person is or is not in their final existence, quick-witted, or of diffuse learning is not the real criteria. The real cause or justification that leads to making a right and firm determination is the significant point of fact that impurity of morality in the past only concerns the monks for whom impediments will stand in the way, and that it is not at all relevant to laymen on whom obstacles or dangers would befall.

Nevertheless, since insight knowledge and path knowledge will not arise in the absence of purification of morality (*sīla-visuddhi*) the way of developing and gaining purification of morality in the case of the minister Santati and others, should be carefully noted. It should also be noted that if determination is made with one's own will that no immoral actions will be done that were usually done before, prior to listening to the discourse or while listening to the discourse, it would amount to the accomplishment of purification of morality. If there is no will and determination as stated, it is left only to say that purification of morality will have been accomplished by the arising of insight consciousness following the practice of meditation.

How Purification of Morality Is Achieved

“Ñāṇena avijjāya aniccanupassanāya niccasaññāya pahānaṃ sīlaṃ, veramaṇi sīlaṃ, cetanā sīlaṃ, saṃvaro sīlaṃ, avitikkamo sīlaṃ, evarūpāni sīlāni cittassa avippatīsārāya saṃvattanti, pāmujjāya, pīṭiyā, passadhiyā, somanassāya saṃvattanti. Ekanta nibbidāya virāgāya nirodhāya upasamāya abhiññāya sambodhāya nibbānāya

saṃvattanti. Yo tattha saṃvaraṭṭho, ayaṃ adhisīlasikkhā. Yo tattha avikkhepaṭṭho, ayaṃ adhicitta sikkhā. Yo tattha dassanaṭṭho, ayaṃ adhipaññāsikkhā. (Pts.i.47)

TRANSLATION: What is that the abandoning (**pahānaṃ**) of the perception of permanence (**niccasaññā**) by the contemplation of impermanence (**aniccānupassanāya**) at a brief moment of the occurrence of knowledge of comprehension (*sammāsana-ñāṇa*), which reflects and investigates mind and matter as impermanent, suffering, and not-self; by the analytical knowledge of body and mind (*nāmarūpapariccheda-ñāṇa*); and knowledge by discerning conditionality (*paccayapariggaha-ñāṇa*), which are diametrically opposed to delusion (*moha*) or ignorance (*avijjā*), is know as morality (**sīlaṃ**). Abstinence (**veramaṇi**) is morality, volition (**cetanā**) is morality, the exercise of restraint (**saṃvaro**) is morality, non-transgression (**avītikkamo**) is morality. All such practices of morality lead to (**saṃvattanti**) non-remorse (**avippaṭisārāya**), delight (**pāmujjāya**), rapture (**pīti**), tranquillity of mind and body (**passadhiyā**) and happiness (**somanassāya**). It paves the way for the achievement of special knowledge, which would dispel attachment with disgust and disenchantment towards the ultimate realisation of nibbāna, the cessation of all suffering and extinction of defilements.

The innate nature of the arising of insight consciousness (*vipassanā cittuppāda*) is such that it has the power and nature of restraint and that it is nothing but the training in higher morality (*adhisīla-sikkhā*). The nature of this consciousness has the attribute of non-wandering of thoughts. This stability of the mind in itself is the training in higher consciousness (*adhicitta-sikkhā*). Moreover, the nature of knowledge or the faculty of seeing the truth inherent in it is the training in higher wisdom (*adhipaññā-sikkhā*).

The expression “Morality of abandonment (*pahāna-sīla*)” means the removal of the erroneous view of an individual as a living being, with the knowledge that it is only a composite of mentality and materiality. It also removes ignorance (*avijjā*), the mistaken view that a being automatically comes into existence as an individual and a living entity, through insight knowledge. This realises that there is only cause and effect. In the same way it rejects the wrong view that living beings are created by God, the Almighty, Brahma, or Sakka. Also, by the knowledge that knows the characteristic of imperma-

nence, it removes defilements that wrongly conceive mind and matter as permanent. The word “abandonment (*pahāna*)” conveys the meaning that because of the occurrence of awareness of the truth, just as light dispels darkness, it causes defilements led by ignorance to become extinct, to have no opportunity to arise, and which ought not to occur. Having no such opportunity for defilements to arise, only wholesome deeds such as, insight meditation are likely to occur in the future. Hence, the arising of wholesome deeds at a later period is based on abandonment, which does not afford an opportunity for the defilements to arise by virtue of insight achieved earlier. Because of this abandonment only merits will surely be derived without mingling with demerits in the future. As such, the said abandonment serves as a reflection (*upadhāraṇa*) on which future merits will rest. It also constitutes fixing (*samādhāna*), which will cause merits to become firmly established. It is because of the sustenance or arising of reflection and fixing that this very abandonment has been expounded as morality of abandonment. The non-arising of defilements due to insight is in itself called morality. In the matter of keeping the morality pure by abstaining from evil deeds, it should also be similarly realised and understood as morality merely because both reflection and fixing are included in them.

Morality of Refraining

The consensus of all Commentaries and Subcommentaries is that the mental factors of abstinence (*virati-cetasikā*) do not occur in insight consciousness (*vipassanā cittuppāda*). However, since it is contrary to all kinds of misconduct (*duccarita*) and wrong livelihood (*durājjīva*), total abstinence can be done according to the nature of momentary abandonment (*tadaṅga-pahāna*), which means the removal of wrong views and mental defilements. How it happens is this: the refraining of the path (*magga-virati*) bends its consciousness only towards nibbāna. At that moment there is no bearing in mind of any object that should be refrained from (*viramitabba vatthu*) nor any will or intention to avoid it. Nevertheless, it achieves its objective to abstain from misdeeds wrong livelihood, which have been removed by the abandonment of defilements by cutting off (*samucchedapahāna*).

When analytical knowledge of body and mind occurs, defilements should not have arisen relating to the sense-objects as being an

individual, a living entity, a living being that has come into existence, or, it is permanent, happy, it is 'I' or a self. This is nothing but getting liberated from the defilements latent in objects (*ārammaṇānusaya*). Since there is no reason for defilements to arise, no thought or imagination will occur at all such as: "This is an individual or a living being," etc. As it will not be conceived or imagined as such, no killing or any other evil deeds will be committed, and will be avoided. Since defilements beginning from latent defilements to actual transgression cannot possibly arise, abstaining from defilements will automatically be achieved every time analytical knowledge of body and mind occurs. Hence, it has been taught as morality of refraining (*veramaṇi sīlaṃ*).

Morality of Volition

Volition or intention, which urges and impels one to complete the process of contemplating and noting plays its function at every moment of contemplating and noting. This volition speedily incites an ordinary worldlying who is lacking in the power of self-restraint, to commit evil deeds. When meditators become deficient in faith, will, and effort, the strength of impulsion becomes feeble. It is not obvious though. However, when faith, willingness, and effort are strong and vigorous, impulsion becomes prominent. Volition that stirs up to make an exertion brings success in the matter of contemplation and noting. Hence, volition being a reflection (*upadhāraṇa*) and fixing (*samādhāna*), the proximate and supporting factors of wholesome things, are said to be morality of volition (*cetanā-sīla*).

Morality of Restraint

In the matter of sense-faculty restraint the five-fold restraint as already stated, means the morality of restraint (*saṃvara sīla*). A person who is practising insight meditation may be said to be protecting and blocking the arising of non-restraint by means of these five kinds of restraint, which are embraced in meditation consciousness at every moment of contemplation. However, in particular, only the restraint by mindfulness (*sati*), the restraint by knowledge (*ñāṇa*), the restraint by patience (*khantī*), and the restraint by effort (*vīriya*) are to be regarded as the morality of restraint (*saṃvara sīla*).

Morality of Non-transgression

Since the mind that realises the truth by contemplating and noting does not give delusion (*moha*), the mistaken view, the opportunity to arise, it means that the delusion, *etc.*, has not been transgressed. More vividly described: if a volition to commit an act of killing (*pāṇātipāta*) occurs, it should be considered as amounting to committing an offence of killing. If the intention is to avoid or refrain from killing, it may be regarded as not having committed the offence of killing, nor even reached the stage of killing. Similarly, the mind that does not contemplate having afforded opportunity for the occurrence of latent, arisen, and transgressive defilements, it amounts to committing transgressions in respect of these defilements. However, the mind that contemplates not giving opportunity to these defilements to arise, will not amount to transgression. As such the arising of the contemplating consciousness is stated to be the practice of morality by non-transgression (*avītikkama-sīla*).

Out of this five types of morality, the morality of volition and restraint are the fundamental things to be distinguished and preserved. Morality of abandonment only dispels defilements, prevents defilements from arising, gives no chance for defilements to arise, and extirpates defilements. As regards morality of refraining and morality of non-transgression, in conformity with what is stated in the Visuddhimagga as: “*Veramaṇivasena ... avītikkamantassa avītikkamanavasena ca cetaso pavattisabbhāvaṃ sandhāya vuttā,*” it is only insight consciousness (*vipassanā cittuppāda*), fundamentally from the viewpoint of Dhamma. However, only the remaining arising consciousness (*cittuppāda*) apart from the morality of volition and restraint, which are quite distinct, should be regarded as morality of refraining and non-transgression. In distinguishing them as such, although they are similar in essence of the Dhamma, it has been stated as morality of refraining due to being able to avoid latent, arisen, and transgressive defilements. Due to not giving them a chance to arise the defilements have not been committed, so it is stated to be morality of non-transgression. This distinctive feature should also be noted.

The meaning of the statement “**Yo tattha saṃvaraṭṭho**” *etc.*, is that the four kinds of morality, abandonment, refraining, volition, and non-transgression should be considered as morality of restraint.

The mindfulness that seems as if it rushes into the objects of mind and matter that are contemplated is called restraint of mindfulness (*sati-saṃvara*). The knowledge that understands is called restraint by knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṃvara*). Non-hatred (*adosa*), which is the antithesis of wrong doing, and which is not likely to cause an offence to consciousness every time it arises is called the restraint of patience (*khantī-saṃvara*). Exertion is the restraint of effort (*vīriya-saṃvara*). The nature of the fivefold restraint supports the meditation consciousness to be fully accomplished. These fivefold restraints are called the training in higher morality (*adhisiḷa-sikkhā*), which becomes fulfilled every time insight consciousness arises.

Saying that knowledge, mindfulness, and effort are morality is only an artifice. In reality, knowledge is in the group of wisdom. Mindfulness and effort fall within the group of concentration. Furthermore, the way of accomplishment of all four kinds of morality in the matter of meditation consciousness should also be known and understood as herein after stated. Morality of Pātimokkha restraint and morality of livelihood purification are fully accomplished with the fulfilment of the morality of abandonment, refraining, volition, and non-transgression, which have been mentioned as the morality of restraint. It is because no transgression can possibly be committed physically and mentally since none of the latent, arisen, or transgressive defilements have any opportunity to occur.

Mindfulness, knowledge, patience, and effort are merely the morality of sense-faculty restraint. Of these four kinds of restraint, the knowledge of restraint that occurs by contemplating and noting at the time of using the monastic requisites, accomplish morality of reflection on the use of requisites. The Buddha's instruction to use requisites only after reflection is aimed at preventing defilements from arising. Arisen (*pariyuṭṭhāna*), and transgressive (*vītikāma*) defilements can only be removed by reflection.

Latent defilements cannot be rejected. On the other hand, latent defilements that are liable to occur in connection with the requisites can be expelled by insight knowledge. So it should be firmly noted that morality of reflection the requisites will become fully purified by restraint by knowledge.

Accomplishment through Meditation

In matters relating to mental development, since it has been traditionally neglected, reflection in using the four requisites is wrongly conceived as being more important and noble than meditation. Because of this misconception, some might not have believed in what has been cited with a few concrete examples that by making meditation as a vehicle, reflection can be fully complete. In fact, tranquillity and insight are incomparably superior and more noble than reflection. For this outstanding quality, the Buddha personally taught that indulging in one of the modes of meditation with attentiveness even for a finger-snap will accomplish the morality of reflection on the requisites. A few instances cited in Pāḷi will be quoted from the Aṅguttaranikāya. This only concerns the monks.

“Accharāsaṅghātamattampi ce, bhikkhave, bhikkhu mettācittaṃ āsevati; ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave ‘Bhikkhu arittajjhāno viharati satthusāsanakaro ovādatikaro, amoghaṃ ratthapiṇḍaṃ bhuñjati.’ Ko pana vādo ye naṃ bahulīkarontī’ti!” (A.i.10)

“Accharāsaṅghātamattampi ce bhikkhave bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati, vedanāsu vedanānupassī, citte cittānupassī, dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhā domanassaṃ. Ayaṃ vuccati bhikkhave ‘Bhikkhu arittajjhāno viharati, satthu sāsana-karo, ovādatikaro, amoghaṃ ratthapiṇḍaṃ bhuñjati. Ko pana vādo, ye naṃ bahulīkarontī!” (A.i.38)

TRANSLATION: “Monks! A monk who abides cultivating loving-kindness towards all living beings even for a finger-snap, may be said to be a monk who complies with the teaching and admonition of the Buddha. He is deemed to partake of almsfood generously offered by the general public not in vain and brings benefit to the donors. So what can be said in respect of a monk who makes much of the practice?”

The meaning of the second sutta is, of course, obvious.

The expression “loving-kindness” in the first Sutta means: **“Mettāya sabbapubbabhāgo nāma neva appanā, na upacāro, sattānaṃ hitapharaṇamattameva,”** or **“Idha pana mettāpubba-bhāgena hitapharaṇappavattanamatteneva āsevatīti veditabbo,”** as stated in the Commentary (AA.i.70). However, it does not amount

to access (*upacāra*) or absorption (*appanā*). It is merely loving-kindness that can be inculcated by ordinary people. Hence, the meaning intended by these Suttas is that a monk developing loving-kindness or of any kind of tranquillity or insight meditation, such as contemplation of the body, only for a finger-snap, is regarded as one under training (*sekkhā*), due to complying with the Buddha's teaching and admonition. A monk who is endowed with such attributes when taking almsfood donated by his benefactors should be regarded as reaping immense advantages and as being free from debt (*ānañya-paribhoga*) in regard to the food consumed as inherited property (*dāyajja-paribhoga*) that is his own (*sāmi-paribhoga*). What it really means is that such being the case there is hardly anything to be said in respect of a person who is continually practising insight meditation. The Commentary has therefore elucidated as follows:-

“Paribhuñjatīti cattāro paribhogā theyyaparibhogo iṇaparibhogo dāyajjaparibhogo sāmiparibhogoti. Tāttha ... imassa bhikkhuno ayaṃ raṭṭhapinḍaparibhogo doṃhi kāraṇehi amogho hoti. Accharāsaṅghāta mattampi mettācittaṃ āsevanto bhikkhu raṭṭhapinḍassa sāmiko hutvā, aṇaṇo hutvā, dāyādo hutvā paribhuñjatītipissa amogho raṭṭhapinḍaparibhogo. Accharāsaṅghāta mattampi mettāṃ āsevantaṃsa bhikkhuno dinnadānaṃ mahaṭṭhiyaṃ hoti mahapphalaṃ mahānisamsaṃ mahājutikaṃ mahāvippahāraṇti pissa amogho raṭṭhapinḍaparibhogo. Ko pana vādo ye naṃ bahulīkarontīti ye pana imaṃ mettācittaṃ bahulaṃ āsevanti bhāventi punappunaṃ karonti, te amoghaṃ raṭṭhapinḍaṃ paribhuñjantīti ettha vattabbameva kiṃ? Evarūpā hi bhikkhū raṭṭhapinḍassa sāmīno aṇaṇā dāyādā hutvā paribhuñjantīti.” (AA.i.54)

EXPLANATION: It may be said that partaking of a meal by a monk while cultivating loving-kindness towards all, even for a finger-snap, is not in vain (**amogha paribhoga**) because it brings much benefit both to himself and his benefactors, the donors of the almsfood.

The advantages accrued to him may be explained thus: partaking of almsfood while developing loving-kindness, amounts to partaking of almsfood as an owner of the food (*sāmi-paribhoga*), while free from debt (*ānañya-paribhoga*), and as an inheritor of the food so offered (*dāyajja-paribhoga*). Hence, it will not become use as debt (*iṇaparibhoga*) even if done without due reflection (*paccavekkhaṇā*).

(Please note the words **añño hutvā**). Moreover, in connection with this partaking of almsfood merit will be gained due to meditation on loving-kindness. These are the advantages gained by the monk. The advantages that will accrue to the donor are that, by mental development the monk will achieve the status of an individual of the eighth class (*aṭṭhamaka-dakkhiṇeyya*) due to having striven to meditate with a view to achieving Stream-winning. A supporter (*dāyaka*) who donates food to such a monk will therefore reap immense benefit for his almsgiving. This is the benefit derived by the donors. Due to giving benefits to both the donor and the recipient, it is called “Use that is not in vain (*amogha-paribhoga*).” No mention need therefore be made about the advantages derived by monks who are continually developing loving-kindness. It means that monks such as these are deemed to be partaking the food as the real owners of the food and as lawful inheritors without any debt or encumbrances. It should not however, be taken for granted that only loving-kindness can bring these benefits on the grounds that the Commentary has made an exposition only of loving-kindness.

In the Pāli texts similar statements have been made in respect of all kinds of tranquillity meditation, attainment of absorption, insight meditation such as contemplation of the body, and so forth. It should therefore be born in mind that all kinds of meditation will undoubtedly bring such advantages. The reason for not mentioning (the benefits of) other kinds of meditation in the Commentary is simply because the method has already been disclosed at the very beginning of this Metta Sutta. As such, it should be noted, without doubt, that this is the prescribed method on which reliance can be made that the morality of reflection on the use of requisites (*paccayasannissita-sīla*) will be fully accomplished by insight knowledge.

With these statements mentioned in sequence, it will be obvious that purification of morality consisting of all four kinds of morality is accomplished in all aspects by means of the arising of insight consciousness (*vipassanā-cittuppāda*) irrespective of whether people have observed the precepts for a long time in the past. Nevertheless, as regards a person who is asked to develop concentration and insight after accomplishing purity of morality only through meditation, a question may arise as to what kind of morality, or as to how it may be developed in accordance with the teaching: “**Sīle patitṭhāya naro**

sapañño, cittaṃ paññañca bhāvayaṃ." (S.i.13) This will be explained as follows:–

How Morality Is Developed by Observance

The development of concentration and wisdom by all meditators is on decisive supporting condition (*upanissaya paccaya*) and (sufficing condition) by depending upon morality practised in the past (*pubbabhāga-sīla*) according to decisive supporting condition and coexistence condition (*sahajāta paccaya*), morality that is the condition or faculty required of dependence (*nissaya*). Further elucidation may be given thus.

Decisive Support (Upanissaya-patitṭhā)

To a person who is endowed with morality, which ought to be observed, since long time past or just prior to practising meditation, this morality affords a condition of what is stated as providing a strong support (*pakatūpanissaya*) on which reliance will have to be made by insight-concentration and wisdom; path-concentration and wisdom, which are going to manifest by themselves. Whether one is equipped with morality or not, that needs be observed, or morality that is practised in the past, insight consciousness (*vipassanā cittuppāda*) and the path and its fruition consciousness, will become a condition of strong support to be relied upon by insight-concentration and wisdom; path-concentration and wisdom, which would arise later.

Dependence Support (Nissaya-patitṭhā)

Morality, which is included in each and every insight and path consciousness, is a coexistence condition induced at the beginning on which reliance is made by concentration and wisdom embraced in the said respective types of consciousness. Hence, an individual who has accomplished purification of morality since the past, would amount to developing concentration and wisdom based on the two kinds of morality: *upanissaya-sīla* and *nissaya-sīla*. A person who has achieved purification of morality only through insight will remain equipped with coexisting morality in arising consciousness that is initially contemplated and noted, and may be regarded as developing concentration and wisdom. In arising consciousness that is contem-

plated and noted subsequently, both types of morality: *upanissaya-patitthā* and dependence support (*nissaya-patitthā*) will be established, and this will amount to developing insight-concentration and wisdom, path-concentration and wisdom based on these two types of morality. Hence, the Mahāṭīkā goes on to say as follows:-

“Patitthāyāti duvidhā patitthā nissayūpanissaya bhedato. Tāttha upanissayapatitthā lokiyā, itarā lokuttarā abhinditvā gahaṇe. Bhinditvā pana gahaṇe yathā lokiyacittuppādesu sahaṇātānaṃ, purimacchimānaṃca vasena nissayūpanissayapatitthā sambhavati, evaṃ lokuttāresu hetthemamaggaphalasīlavasena upanissaya-patitthāpi sambhavati. “Patitthāyā”ti ca padassa yadā upanissaya-patitthā adhippetā, tadā “Saddham upanissāyā”ti ādisu viya purimakālakiriyāvasena attho veditabbo. Tenāha “Pubbeva kho panassa kāyakammaṃ vacīkammaṃ ājīvo suparisuddho hoti”ti. Yadā pana nissayapatitthā adhippetā, tadā “Cakkhuṇca paṭiccā”ti ādisu viya samānakālakiriyā vasena attho veditabbo. (Vism.T.i.13)

TRANSLATION: What is stated as support (**patitthāyo**) means that the basis is of two different kinds, support condition (**nissaya**) and decisive support condition (**upanissaya**). Among these two, if the four kinds of path, concentration and wisdom are taken into account altogether without separating them, mundane morality (**lokiyā**) is decisive support (**upanissayapatitthā**), and supramundane morality (**lokuttarā**) is dependence support (**nissayapatitthā**). If the four paths are taken separately, then on account of morality, concentration, and wisdom that occur together in mundane insight consciousness, or, according to morality that has been acquired earlier, and concentration and wisdom that are achieved later, just as dependence support and decisive support, both of which ought to have occurred, in the matter of supramundane morality, according to the morality of the path and its fruitions achieved at later stages, decisive support also should have taken place. (It means to say that morality of the path and its fruition in the lower stages being the strong and dependable condition of the higher path, concentration, and wisdom, could still be decisive support). Over and above that, if it is meant to refer to decisive support as in the case of decisive support for faith (**saddham upanissāya**), etc., the meaning of the word “support (**patitthāya**)” should be known and understood as indicated by the use of the

expression past participle (**purimakālakiriya**). The meaning of supported by morality (**sīle patitthāya**) should be rendered as such since it has been well founded on morality. Hence, it has been stated as “This monk’s morality or conduct, physical, verbal, and livelihood have been cleansed since long time before.” If it is really meant to refer to dependence support as in the case of “Dependent on the eye and forms (**Cakkhuñca paṭiccā**), *etc.*, the meaning shall be known according to what is intended by the expression present participle (**samānakālakiriya**). It means to say that the interpretation must be given as: “Supported by morality (**sīle patitthāya**), morality is being observed in the course of abiding.”

Particularly Worth Remembering

The reason for giving a comprehensive account to the effect that purity of morality could be fully accomplished even by practising meditation is to prevent credulous people from committing evils, who might have spoken through conjecture and to prevent causing annoyances and wrong to others by claiming: “Morality should be observed for a long period to get purified if one wishes to practise meditation, and only afterwards would it be proper to practise, and that it is wrong to practise meditation immediately after the undertaking of morality.” This has been mentioned as stated in the foregoing, not to belittle the attributes of morality, but to prevent those people from committing unwholesome deeds by disparagement that is not justifiable, or to create an obstacle to meditation.

Morality is Worthy of Great Esteem

Morality is worthy of great esteem and reverence. Among the denizens of the four lower realms who are in extreme misery and suffering, at least ninety-nine percent have arrived there due to a breach of morality. Also among those who are enjoying happy lives in the human and celestial realms, not less than fifty percent have become human beings and devas for being purified in their morality. Among persons who have attained the path and its fruition, the majority of them have probably achieved the path and its fruition thanks to being endowed with moral purity in the past. There could be only a few like the minister Santati who have attained the path and its fruition without purification of morality in the past.

Such being the case, everybody should practise and try to keep morality intact as one would guard and protect one's own life. It should not be treated lightly with an intention that morality could be observed properly only at some future date. The reason being that if it were so lightly held without paying it due attention, it is really frightful that one might probably go down to the lower realms if death occurs suddenly at a time when morality is destroyed. In respect of those who are engaging in meditation, no further comment is necessary. All such persons should invariably be keen on strict observance of morality and keep it free from all impurities in every respect, seeing the essential need to observe morality with the highest esteem even more than one would protect one's own life.

Hence, a person who wishes to practise meditation, though always free from moral impurities, should first of all undertake either eight precepts with right livelihood as eighth (*āṣṭaṅgamaṅgala-sīla*), or the five precepts (*pañca-sīla*) expecting that purification of morality would assist in achieving concentration and wisdom. If wishing to meditate for seven days or more, day and night, without a break after cutting off all impediments to the holy life, eight or ten precepts should be strictly adhered to and observed as a moral duty.

Beneficial Results

During the time of meditation, if morality that ought to have been observed is kept purified, happiness and joy will be felt as: "My morality is highly purified," every time recollection is made. One will feel somewhat satisfied and elated. Tranquillity and peace of mind will pervade the entire body. There will be ecstasy, and the mind will remain serene. The characteristics of mind and matter will become obvious and prominent through contemplation and noting, and the knowledge of things as they really are (*yathābhūta-ñāṇa*), will occur. This is how purification of morality concerning laymen occurs.

Here Ends the Purity of Morality Concerning Laymen

Chapter II

Purification of Mind

Purification of mind (*citta-visuddhi*) is a term based on the term mind (*citta*), in fact, however, when tranquillity and insight concentration become keen and vigorous, the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) cannot find a gap in between the moment of thought that may arise. Only the serene and penetrating concentration will occur continuously on the objects of tranquillity and insight with utmost purity. Only such concentration can certainly be called genuine purification of mind. With the faculty of this concentration, the accompanying consciousness and mental factors will become purified of hindrances.

Three Kinds of Concentration

This concentration, which is called purification of mind, is of three kinds: neighbourhood or access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*), absorption concentration (*appanā-samādhi*), and momentary concentration (*khaṇika-samādhi*). Of these three, access concentration means concentration of the sense sphere (*kāmvācāra-samādhi*) that arises either from reflection on the extremely pure and noble attributes of the Buddha, or the counterpart sign (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*), when no hindrances arise during the course of contemplation and noting by those practising tranquillity meditation (*samatha-bhāvanā*). It is concentration that occurs just before absorption (*appanā-jhāna*).

Among these forms of concentration, only that which occurs in the case of meditation devices (*kaṣiṇa*), repulsive aspects of the body (*asubha*), mindfulness of the body (*kāyagatāsati*), mindfulness of respiration (*ānāpānasati*), the four sublime abidings (*brahmavihāra*), or on formless meditation objects (*arūpa kammaṭṭhāna*), is genuine access concentration. On the other hand, concentration gained by means of the eight kinds of recollection (*anussati*) the perception of repulsiveness in nutriment (*āhārepaṭikulasaññā*), and the analysis of the four elements (*dhātuvaṅvathāna*) that do not occur in close proximity to absorption, it obviously cannot be called access concentration. However, since genuine access concentration and the way of getting free from the hindrances are similar, it is called access concentration. According to the method of counting the absorptions as of four or five kinds, the various kinds of form sphere (*rūpavācāra*) and formless sphere (*arūpavācāra*) absorption, each of four kinds,

constituting the eight attainments (*samāpatti*) induced by absorption meditation — altogether nine kinds — are called absorption. It means the tranquil state of concentration firmly fixed as if the mind is wholly absorbed in one object of meditation.

Purification of the mind occurs continuously to a person engaged in the practice of insight meditation consecutively in combination only with contemplating and noting when his faith (*saddhā*), effort (*vīriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and insight wisdom (*paññā*) become keen and strengthened in a state of equilibrium. Imagination and thoughts that are hindrances will not even occur during the intervening period in the course of contemplation and noting. During that period every time contemplating and noting is carried on, concentration that concentrates sharply on the arising of mind and matter becomes highly developed, ardent, and obvious. This concentration is called momentary concentration (*khaṇika-samādhi*). It is fixed concentration occurring only for a brief moment of the arising consciousness that contemplates and notes.

Purification of Mind for One Whose Vehicle Is Tranquillity

One who practises insight after having established either access concentration of absorption, out of the said three kinds of concentration, is called one whose vehicle is tranquillity (*samatha-yānika*), *i.e.* one who travels to nibbāna using tranquillity as a vehicle. In other words, this meditator is said to one who is bound for the attainment of the path, its fruition, and nibbāna using tranquillity as a vehicle. Hence, access concentration and absorption are the purification of mind on which such an individual has to depend.

Purification of Mind for One Whose Vehicle Is Insight

A person who exclusively cultivates insight without depending on access concentration or absorption is called one whose vehicle is insight (*suddhavipassanā-yānika*). It means one who develops the path of insight exclusively without mingling with tranquillity, travelling to the path, its fruition, and nibbāna by means of insight. Hence, only momentary concentration is purification of mind that is relied on by such an individual. All statements mentioned above are in accordance with the Commentaries, Subcommentaries, and Pāli texts, which will be cited below.

“Cittavisuddhi nāma sa-upacārā atṭha samāpattiyo.”

“Access concentration together with the eight attainments are called purification of mind.” (Vism.ii.587)

Although momentary concentration is not referred to in this Commentary, it is quite conspicuous in the Commentaries, Subcommentaries, and Pāli Texts that will now be presented. Therefore, in this connection, it is to be remembered as hereinafter stated. The fundamental intention being to show the manner of practising by those whose vehicle is tranquillity and to described only purification of mind, which has been particularly practised in the past; and since momentary concentration is embraced only in the arising insight consciousness (*vipassanā-cittuppāda*) without occurring in the past, and also since it is desirous of showing that this momentary concentration for insight, which is analogous to access concentration due to being free from hindrances, should be included in access concentration according to what is stated in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta Commentary as: **“Sesāni dvādasāpi upacārakammaṭṭhānāneva,”** it should be noted that momentary concentration is purposely omitted for the reasons already given in this regard, by setting it aside without mention. Only when it is interpreted as such, it would be in conformity with all of the texts. Please peruse and note carefully the following which is cited as a concrete example.

“Samathova yānaṃ samathayānaṃ, taṃ etassa atthīti samatha yāniko, jhāne jhānūpacāre vā patitṭhāya vipassanaṃ anuyuñjantassetamaṃ nāmaṃ ... Samatha yānikassa samathamukhena vipassanābhiniवेशo. Vipassanāyānikassa pana samathamaṃ anissāyāti āha: ‘Suddhavipassanāyāniko’ti, samathabhāvanāya amissita vipassanāyānavāti attho.” (Mahāṭṭhāka: ii.350, 351)

Tranquillity (**samatha**) is the vehicle that serves as a mode of conveyance. Such a person owns that vehicle of tranquillity. Hence, this kind of person is known as one whose vehicle is tranquillity (**samathayāniko**). This name is the term applied to an individual who is practising insight (**vipassanaṃ**) for abiding in absorption (**jhāne**) or in access concentration (**jhānūpacāre**).

One whose vehicle is tranquillity, as a precursor inclines the mind first towards insight. However (**pana**), in so far as one whose vehicle

is insight (**vipassanāyānikassa**) does not rely on (**anissāyāti**) tranquillity (**samatham**), but starts keeping the mind on insight, the commentator gives the name: “**Suddhavipassanāyāniko**.” This word conveys the meaning “One who owns a vehicle of insight seeking liberation without mingling with tranquillity meditation.”

One who practises insight meditation making access concentration and absorption as precedent conditions to work on is known as one whose vehicle is tranquillity. One who attempts to gain insight having no reliance upon these two kinds of concentration, is known as a “One whose vehicle is insight.”

This is obviously the direct exposition of the meaning as indicated in the statement of the above-mentioned Subcommentary. Just as it could have been known as: “Devadatta was eating at night time,” though it was put in a different light or expression as: “Devadatta had put on weight and become plump without taking food in the day time,” it can be clearly known that “Reliance is made on momentary concentration in view of the statement that says: insight can be achieved without relying on the two kinds of concentration out of the three, *viz.*, access concentration and insight.” Likewise, the meaning has also been rendered by the method of Atthāpanna stating that “Contemplation by one whose vehicle is insight is done relying solely on momentary concentration.” In the Mahāṭṭhārikā this meaning has been directly explained as follows:—

“Samathayānikassa hi upacārappanāppabhedam samādhiṃ itarassa khaṇikasamādhiṃ, ubhayesampi vimokkhamukhattayaṃ vinā na kadācīpi lokuttarādhigamo sambhavati. Tenāha ‘Samādhiñceva vipassanañca bhāvayamāno’ti.” (Mahāṭṭhārikā.i.15)

No supramundane states will be attained (**lokuttarādhigamo**) at any time whatsoever by one whose vehicle is tranquillity (**samathayānikassa**) apart from the two different kinds of access and absorption (**upacārappanābhedaṃ**). Neither will any supramundane states be achieved at any time whatsoever by one whose vehicle is insight, apart from momentary concentration (**khaṇikasamādhiṃ**). In the case of both (**ubhayesampi**), there will be no achievement of supramundane states at any time whatsoever, with the exception of the three kinds of openings to liberation (**vimokkhamukha**), namely, contemplation of impermanence, suffering, and not-self. Hence, it

has been expounded in the Commentary as “Develops concentration and insight (**Samadhiñceva vipassanañca bhāvayamāno’ti.**) The way of exposition given in the Commentary will be explained first to clearly understand the basic meaning of this paragraph.

*“Sīle patitthāya naro sapañño, cittaṃ paññañca bhāvayaṃ;
Ātāpī nipako bhikkhu, so imaṃ vijaṭaye jaṭaṃ.” (S.i.13)*

The connection between the two phrases in this verse: “**Cittaṃ paññañca bhāvayaṃ,**” and “**So imaṃ vijaṭaye jaṭaṃ,**” and an explanation of the meaning of the last paragraph will be given.

An individual who develops concentration and insight will be able to disentangle the tangle of craving. If it is merely stated as “Such an individual will be able to disentangle this tangle,” it cannot be known how to practice meditation to find a solution. Hence, wishing to elucidate how to strive and disentangle craving, it has been taught as: “Develops the mind and wisdom (**cittaṃ paññañca bhāvayaṃ.**)”

To clarify this phrase it would be explained as: “Let the mind be developed.” It conveys the meaning that a solution can be found if the mind and wisdom are developed. Emphasis has been laid on the mind by using the word “**cittaṃ.**” It has been expounded in the Commentary as “**Samādhiñceva vipassanañca bhāvayamāno**” to make it clear that the use of the said expression shall be taken to refer only to concentration (*samādhi*), and by the use of the expression: “**paññañca,**” no other kind of wisdom should be taken except for insight knowledge. What it means is that if concentration and insight are developed, the tangle of craving can be disentangled, and Arahantship, which is liberation from craving, can be attained.

In the Commentary cited above, it is not yet quite convincing as to who should develop it, or what kind of concentration should be developed. Nor, is it quite clear yet as to why these two kinds of concentration and insight are to be developed. Hence, to clarify this point, a further statement has to be rendered again in the Subcommentary as: “**Samathayānikassa hi,**” etc.

The meaning of that paragraph from the Subcommentary is: -

In the case of one whose vehicle is tranquillity, only if one of the two kinds of concentration, *viz.*, access concentration or absorption, are developed; the path and its fruition can be achieved. If this is not done, it can never be achieved. If a person happens to be one whose

vehicle is insight, the path and its fruition can be attained only by developing momentary concentration, otherwise, it can never be achieved.

Both types of individual can only achieve the path and its fruition by developing the three kinds of contemplation called the doors to liberation (*vimokkhamukha*), otherwise, it can never be achieved. Only a person who makes an exertion to develop, as may be appropriate, the three kinds of insight and the three kinds of concentration, can achieve the path and its fruition and thereby disentangle the tangle of craving. If concentration and insight are not developed, since the path and its fruition can never be attained and the tangle of craving cannot be disentangled, the explanation has been given by the commentator with reference to the *Visuddhimagga* wherein it is stated as: “**Samādhīnceva vipassanañca bhāvayamāno,**” i.e. the tangle of craving can be disentangled if concentration and insight are developed.

In view of the aforementioned statement in the *Mahāṭīkā*, the meaning of: “One whose vehicle is insight will not need to develop access concentration and absorption, it is only necessary to develop momentary concentration; and by this means, purity of mind will occur and the path and its fruition can be achieved,” is obvious enough and free from ambiguity. However, since only if it is in conformity with the Commentary, would it be worthy of note and believable, an exposition will be given of the two methods of mental development (*bhāvanā*) as contained in the Commentary on the *Dhammadāyāda Sutta* of the *Mūlapaṇṇāsa*, for the purpose of consideration and consultation.

Two Methods of Developing the Path

“Bhāvanānayoti koci samathapubbaṅgamaṃ vipassanaṃ bhāveti, koci vipassanāpubbaṅgamaṃ samathaṃ. Kathaṃ? Idhekacco paṭhamaṃ upacārasamādhiṃ vā appanāsamādhiṃ vā uppādeti, ayaṃ samatho; so tañca taṃ sampayutte ca dhamme aniccādīhi vipassati, ayaṃ vipassanā. Iti paṭhamaṃ samatho, pacchā vipassanā. Tena vuccati ‘Samathapubbaṅgamaṃ vipassanaṃ bhāvetī’ti. Tassa samathapubbaṅgamaṃ vipassanaṃ bhāvayato maggo sañjāyati. (MA.i.108)

The above passage conveys the following meaning:—

The way of developing the noble path is that some develop insight preceded by tranquillity, while some develop tranquillity preceded by insight. The method of development may be stated thus: “In this dispensation, before contemplating for insight, some gain access concentration or absorption. This concentration symbolizes tranquillity. One who has developed tranquillity, contemplates the characteristics of impermanence, *etc.*, in that consciousness and its mental factors. The wisdom that contemplates is insight. When developed in this way, tranquillity occurs first and insight only occurs afterwards. Hence, one whose vehicle is tranquillity is said to develop insight preceded by tranquillity. The noble path will certainly be achieved by such a person.

This method of meditation preceded by tranquillity is the development of the noble path practised by one whose vehicle is tranquillity in accordance with the exposition made in the Dhammadāyāda Sutta Subcommentary⁴ as “**Paṭhamo samathayānikassa vasena vutto.**” Just firmly preserve in heart the words “Contemplation for insight is made on concentration and its associated mental states.” It means that for one whose vehicle is tranquillity, contemplation is generally carried out in this way. Moreover, the meaning that will not be particularly mentioned should be carefully noted. In the Commentary, it is just stated as “After developing tranquillity, the characteristics of impermanence, *etc.*, are contemplated. It does not say that analytical knowledge of body and mind and knowledge by discerning conditionality have been developed. In stating this, it is also not feasible to interpret that these two kinds of insight knowledge have been gained at the initial stage by means of tranquillity. Nor should it be taken that insight into the characteristics of impermanence, *etc.*, have been gained apart from the two aforesaid kinds of insight knowledge. Hence, it should be interpreted to mean: “After tranquillity has been developed, contemplation is done with the aforesaid two kinds of insight knowledge. Only afterwards, is contemplation on the characteristics of impermanence, *etc.*, done.”

This interpretation is possible because the expression “Contemplating impermanence, *etc.*,”⁵ (**aniccādīhi vipassati**)” should in fact be considered in view of a method that describes only the essential

⁴ MṬ.i.204, Myanmar.

⁵ MA.i.108.

point. This method being prescribed directly, intended to point out that it has not been prescribed, is called the fundamental method. Since it is directly stated to refer to the prescribed contemplation of impermanence, *etc.*, it must be noted that the commentator wishes the two kinds of knowledge, which are not prescribed, to be known. For instance, it will be like knowing that a large retinue naturally follows when a king makes a royal tour. If it is not interpreted in the way stated, but if it is taken to mean that it occurs from the beginning of contemplation of impermanence, it will not fall in line with what has been stated in all the texts that explain the method of insight meditation. This is the special interpretation, which needs to be noted with careful attention.

“Idha panekacco vuttappakāraṃ samathaṃ anuppādetvāva pañcupādānakkhandhe aniccādīhi vipassati, ayaṃ vipassanā. Tassa vipassanāpāripūriyā tattha jātānaṃ dhammānaṃ vossaggāramanato uppajjati cittassa ekaggatā, ayaṃ samatho. Iti paṭhamaṃ vipassanā pacchā samatho. Tena vuccati “vipassanāpubbaṅgamaṃ samathaṃ bhāveti”ti. Tassa vipassanāpubbaṅgamaṃ samathaṃ bhāvayato maggo sañjāyati, so taṃ maggaṃ āsevati bhāveti bahulīkaroti, tassa taṃ maggaṃ āsevato bhāvayato bahulīkaroto saṃyojanāni pahīyanti, anusayā byantī honti.” (MA.i.109)

The method of practising meditation preceded by insight may be explained thus. Some individuals in this dispensation, not wishing to achieve tranquillity concentration comprising access concentration and absorption, as stated in the method of meditation preceded by tranquillity, contemplate the five aggregates of attachment, noting the characteristics of impermanence, *etc.* This contemplative wisdom is nothing but insight. One who contemplates in this way, when becoming accomplished with very keen insight knowledge, is deemed to have relinquished all external sense-objects and sensations arising out of the thoughts and mental factors occurring in the arising insight consciousness (*vipassanā cittuppāda*). In other words, since the thoughts rush towards the sense-object of insight (*gocarajjhatta*), the mind arises with one-pointedness fixed on only one object, which is tranquillity. First insight occurs followed thereafter by Samatha.

Therefore, it may be said that one whose vehicle is insight develops tranquillity preceded by insight. To such a meditator who

develops tranquillity, the Noble Path is also developed. [This is based on Aṅguttaranikāya Commentary (AA.iii.142), which says: “**Maggo sañjāyati’ti paṭhamo lokuttaramaggo nibbattati.**” In the Subcommentary, however, it is explained as the path of insight.]

One who has thus achieved the path of Stream-winning, associates with that path, develops and enhances it repeatedly leading to the path of Once-returning, etc.⁶

One who associates with, develops and enhances the path of Stream-winning several times will be able to abandon the fetters of human passions, and latent defilements will also be totally removed. This method of meditation preceded by insight is the cultivation of the noble path practised by one whose vehicle is insight in accordance with the Subcommentary exposition: “Dutiyo vipassanāyānikassa (vasena vutto).”

In view of the statement mentioned relating to this method “**Vuttappakāraṃ samathaṃ asampādetvā,**” it is clear that insight is initially developed without cultivating the two kinds of access concentration and absorption beforehand. The usage of the significant words “**Aniccādihi vipassati**” also indicates that contemplation is by way of noting the characteristics of impermanence and so on, after first achieving the two kinds of knowledges: analytical knowledge of body and mind and knowledge of conditionality, which are not significant. By the use of the words “**Tassa vipassanāpāripūriyā ... cittassa ekaggatā,**” it is clear that concentration has been achieved when insight becomes fully strengthened. The Subcommentary mentions that it is insight leading to emergence (*vuṭṭhānagāminī vipassanā*) for being fully accomplished with insight and that it is path concentration (*magga samādhi*) by virtue of concentration.

Although it is stated as such, the Aṅguttaranikāya Commentary passage that says: “**Vipassanaṃ pubbaṅgamaṃ purecārikaṃ katvā samathaṃ bhāveti, pakatiyā vipassanālābhī vipassanāya thatvā samādhiṃ uppādeti’ti atho**” simply means that concentration has been made to arise based on insight. It is not intended to refer to path concentration. Moreover, it has been expounded in that very Commentary that “Initially the supramundane path arises in one who has developed the aforesaid concentration.”

⁶ This refers to the statement made in the Aṅguttaranikāya Commentary wherein it says: “**So taṃ magganti ekacittakkhaṇikamaggassa āsevanādīni nāma natthi, dutiyamaggādayo pana uppādentō tameva āsevati bhāveti bahulikarotīti vuccati.**”

With reference to the way of this exposition, if it is assumed that the path has arisen in one who develops path concentration, it would probably be like an old proverb: "If gold is heated by a blow-pipe by means of alchemy, it will be only turned into gold." It is because path concentration, being one of the path factors, is nothing but the path. Furthermore, in the method of insight preceded by tranquillity, just as both the preceding tranquillity and the following insight are mundane phenomena, both the preceding insight and the tranquillity that follows should also be mundane phenomena in respect of this method of tranquillity preceded by insight. For these reasons, it is proper and feasible to take the meaning of momentary concentration that goes in conjunction with insight from the viewpoint of tranquillity. The vigorous and fully accomplished insight that is accompanied with the said concentration is also classified into three grades as superior, mediocre, and inferior. The way of classification is: "Insight knowledge should be regarded as fully accomplished with vigour from the time of achieving knowledge of dissolution."

From that time onwards, momentary concentration of the superior grade has arisen. This statement falls in line with the Paṭisambhidāmagga, the Visuddhimagga, etc., which indicate the characteristic of disappearance and unity of mind (*vayalakkhaṇūpaṭṭhānekatta*) and knowledge of dissolution (*bhaṅga-ñāṇa*). It will become clear at the end of this chapter and in the matter of knowledge of dissolution.

Mediocre Insight and Concentration

It shall be noted that mediocre insight will be accomplished beginning from the time of achieving the knowledge of arising and passing away (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*). From then onwards, the mediocre form of momentary concentration occurs. This statement accords with the Visuddhimagga, which says "The knowledge of arising and passing away is the first tender insight (*taruṇa vipassanā*) and one who is accomplished with this knowledge is an ardent meditator (*āradha-vipassaka*)." This is also in conformity with the Pāli text "**Udayabbayanupassī**, etc.," which say that this knowledge is a factor of striving (*padhāniyaṅga*) endowed with the faculty of practising meditation leading to the attainment of the path and its fruition. The reason being that it is to be known from various Pāli texts and Commentaries that this knowledge of arising and passing away is

described as the first insight among the fully accomplished insight knowledges.

Inferior Insight and Concentration

It should be noted that insight has been fully accomplished from the time of achieving analytical knowledge of body and mind (*nāmarūpapariccheda-ñāṇa*) firmly in respect of the inferior type. From the time onwards the inferior form of momentary concentration will occur. By virtue of that concentration, no hindrances will arise in the course of contemplation and noting. The contemplative mind that notes is cleansed of hindrances. Hence, this knowledge, which realises the true characteristics of mind and matter, can occur. Because of the purification from hindrances, this momentary concentration, which resembles access concentration, will invariably occur from that time onwards. If it does not, the true nature of body and mind cannot possibly be known. Those who are meditating at the present time will also gain this kind of concentration commencing from the said moment. This kind of momentary concentration in itself is known as purity of mind (*citta-visuddhi*), which lends support to the realisation of analytical knowledge, etc. Moreover, the statement relating to this inferior type of concentration is in conformity with Patisambhidāmagga, which says: “**Yo tattha avikkhepaṭṭho, ayam adhiccittasikkhā.**” When combined with the expression “**Ñānena avijjāya pahānaṃ sīlaṃ**” and so on, this Pāli statement may be interpreted as follows:—

Tattha: In the arising insight consciousness (*vipassanā cittuppāda*), which is accompanied by *nāmarūpapariccheda-ñāṇa* and *paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*; **Yo avikkhepaṭṭho:** the nature of tranquillity; **atthi:** is significant. This nature of non-distraction (tranquillity) is known as the training in higher consciousness (**adhiccittasikkhā**).

The reason for naming the aforesaid two knowledges as insight is as follows:—

“*Tathā yaṃ nāmarūpaparicchedādīsu vipassanāñāṇesu paṭipakkhabhāvato dīpālokeneva tamassa, tena tena vipassanāñāṇena tassa tassa anātthassa pahānaṃ. Seyyathidaṃ, nāmarūpavavathānena sakkāyaditṭhiyā, paccayapariggahena ahetu visamahetuditṭhīnaṃ ... gotrabhunā saṅkhāranimittaggāhassa pahānaṃ, etaṃ tadanṅa-pahānaṃ nāma.*” (M.A.i.23, DhA.351, SA.ii.253)

From the time this momentary concentration becomes keen and strong, though the sense-objects of mind and matter that should be contemplated and noted are changing afresh, the way of penetration and calmness of the contemplating and noting mind is continuous. Just as the mind that first contemplates and notes is penetrating and tranquil, the second and third contemplating and noting mind are also penetrating and tranquil. At that moment, it might also remain like in absorption. In particular, the object of absorption is single and remaining fixed. No perception has arisen even as mere mind and matter, nor as being transient in nature incessantly arising and dissolving. The object of insight concentration is, however, constantly in a state of flux and that is occurring afresh at every moment. It is perceived and cognised merely as mental and physical phenomena. When insight knowledge becomes mature, the arising and dissolution of mind and matter are obvious. This is the only difference. The way of penetration and tranquillity is nevertheless the same. Hence, it has been stated in the Mahāṭikā as follows:

“Khaṇikacittakaggatā’ti khaṇamattaṭṭhitiko samādhi. Sopi hi ārammaṇe nirantaram ekākārena pavattamāno paṭipakkhena anabhibhūto appito viya cittaṃ niccalaṃ ṭhabeti.” (Mahāṭikā.i.342)

Khaṇikacittakaggatā’ti: momentary one-pointed concentration means: **khaṇamattaṭṭhitito:** the concentration that arises and remains for the brief moment of the occurrence of insight consciousness. **Hi:** it is indeed true. **Sopi:** this momentary insight concentration, **ekākārena:** also with its single characteristic of calmness, **ārammaṇe:** in the object (or the matter and mind that ought to be contemplated and noted), **pavattamāno:** when it occurs, **nirantaram:** continually without any break, **paṭipakkhena anabhibhūto:** not being subject to harm by opposing hindrances, **cittaṃ:** the insight consciousness, **ṭhabeti:** can be developed and maintained, **niccalaṃ:** stably without any flitting or agitation, **appito viya:** just like absorption concentration, which is absorbed in the object.

This Subcommentary supports the Commentary in which the exposition has been made that “Insight-consciousness can be maintained with stability by means of momentary concentration,” as stated in the Ānāpānassatikathā⁷ using the expression **samādahaṃ cittaṃ.**

⁷ Vism.i.267.

It conveys the meaning: "It is not the case that only access concentration and absorption are capable of stabilising the mind, but that the mind can also be stabilised by momentary concentration for insight." If a question arises as to how much strength is required to firmly maintain the mind, the answer would be "**Ārammaṇe nirantaram ekākārena pavattamāno.**" When the concentration reaches the same level as access concentration the hindrances will not arise in between the process of contemplation and noting. Only contemplation and noting will continually occur without a break.

It means that during the said period, it could be firmly maintained. Furthermore, it is indicated by the statement: "**Paṭipakkhena anabhibhūto appito viya**" that the momentary concentration that accompanies the knowledges of arising and passing away and dissolution, having become keen, has strength just like absorption. It means this kind of concentration, being capable of deterring the harmful hindrances, can keep the mind stable and firm like absorption. These are the distinguishing features of the three kinds of concentration for insight.

With regard to the grammatical expression of relinquishing (*vossagga*) in the word "**Vossaggārammaṇato**" its meaning can be taken in both ways as abandonment (*pariccāga*) and suppression (*pakkhandana*), just as the phrase "**Vossaggaparīnāmiṃ.**" In the two meanings just stated, if the intention conveyed has reference to the meaning as abandonment (**pariccāgattha**), it is to be spoken as "**Ārammaṇānaṃ vossaggo pariccāgo.**" Also according to object (*ārammaṇa*), it should be taken as an external sense-object. In the matter of insight, all kinds of consciousness arising from reflections, thoughts, and imaginations that occur without contemplating and noting, are called external (*bahiddha*) objects as stated in the Satipaṭṭhāna Saṃyutta,⁸ etc., wherein it says: "**Bahiddhā vā cittaṃ vikkhipati.**" It means that it falls outside the scope of insight. If it refers to the meaning as suppression (*pakkhandanattha*), it should be interpreted as "**Ārammaṇe vossaggo pakkhandanaṃ.**"

According to the object too, it should be taken as a sense-object (*gocarajjhatta*). All sensations of mind and matter are called internal objects (*ajjhatta*) similar to what is stated in the Satipaṭṭhāna Saṃyutta as "**Ajjhattaṃ satimā sukhumasmi'ti.**" It means that it is an object

⁸ S.v.156.

that constitutes the internal source for the object of insight. It is also called an internal sense-object. In this regard, the only difference in respect of both the two shades of meaning lies in the grammatical sense. However, they convey the same meaning. The similarity may be explained thus. It would fully imbibe the meaning of “abandoning the external objects,” and that means “if there is no arising of reflection, thoughts, imagination, and planning without contemplating and noting, it rushes into the internal objects, *i.e.* contemplating and noting is being done continually without any interval on the objects that ought to be contemplated and noted. Moreover, if it is stated as “Rushing into internal objects, if contemplation and noting is made continuously, it would embrace the meaning of abandoning the external objects; an absence of reflection, thoughts, imagination, and planning without contemplating and noting. Hence, the meaning conveys the same sense.

Essential Points to Remember

One who uses insight as a vehicle, starts developing insight only without permitting access concentration and absorption occur. To such a meditator, the knowledge of insight occurs first without the arising of access concentration and absorption. The fundamental intention is: “The meaning that says that concentration occurs only when insight is fully accomplished” has been extracted from the Commentary wherein the method of tranquillity preceded by insight is mentioned so that it could be firmly noted and remembered.

This Commentary, which indicates the two kinds of the practice of mental development, is the statement drawn from the Pāḷi texts. Only a few interpolations have been made therein to make it obvious. Generally, since it is consistent with what is contained in the Pāḷi text, it can be said that “It is a reproduction from the Pāḷi text.” Hence, the said statement of the Commentary is undoubtedly reliable without requiring further questioning such as: “Would it be in conformity with the Pāḷi text?” Reference may be made to the *Aṅguttaranikāya*⁹ and *Paṭisambhidāmagga Yuganaddhakathā*,¹⁰ if desired. For easy comprehension, a phrase from the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* will be quoted here:—

⁹ A.ii.149, *Paṭipadāvaggo*. ¹⁰ Pts.ii.91.

“Rūpaṃ aniccato anupassanaṭṭhena vipassanā, rūpaṃ dukkhato anupassanaṭṭhena vipassanā, rūpaṃ anattato anupassanaṭṭhena vipassanā. Tattha jātānaṃ dhammānaṃ vosaggārammaṇatā cittassa ekaggatā avikkhepo samādhi. Iti paṭhamaṃ vipassanā, pacchā samatho. Tena vuccati “Vipassanāpubbaṅgamaṃ samathaṃ bhāveti”ti.”¹¹

The gist of the above Pāli is: “Because of the contemplative nature of the mind that contemplates materiality as impermanent it is known as insight; and because of the contemplative nature of the mind that contemplates materiality as suffering, not-self and uncontrollable, it is known as insight. Furthermore, it is not merely insight. During the brief moment of insight contemplation, those kinds of consciousness and the mental concomitants bringing forth one-pointedness of the mind with a single object of insight along with the state of relinquished external object or the state of taken interval object, without any distraction, is known as tranquillity. It conveys the meaning as in **“Iti paṭhamaṃ vipassanā, pacchā samatho.”**

In accordance with the Mūlapaṇṇāsa Ṭikā:—¹²

“Tatthajātānaṃ’ti tasmim̐ ariyamaggakkhaṇe uppannānaṃ sammādiṭṭhiādīnaṃ dhammānaṃ. Niddhāraṇe cetam̐ sāmivacanaṃ. Vavassaggārammaṇato’ti vavassaggassa ārammaṇatāya ... nibbānassa ārammaṇakaraṇenāti attho. Cittassa ekaggatā’ti maggasammāsamādhim̐ āha.”

Tattha: Therein, **ariyamaggakkhaṇe:** at the moment of that Noble Path, **sammādiṭṭhi ādīnaṃ dhammānaṃ:** in the states such as right view, *etc.*, constituting, **vosaggārammaṇato:** the state of relinquishing other objects, *i.e.* having nibbāna as the only object, **Cittassa ekaggatā:** having only one object of the path consciousness without distraction (*avikkhepo*) is called, **sammāsamādhim:** right concentration. (The remainder is the same) There are four methods of mental development together with the methods of yoking together (*yuganaddha*) and eliminating restlessness about the Dhamma (*Dhammuddhacca pahāna*) in the Pāli texts.

However, the reason for mentioning in an abbreviated form the two methods shown in the Commentary is probably because in the two kinds of method shown in this Commentary the remaining two methods also can be included therein. The way of inclusion is:—

¹² MṬ.i.204, Myanmar.

¹¹ Pts.ii.96

Method of Yoking Together

A meditator who has attained *jhāna* after absorbing into the first *jhāna*, contemplates insight on that *jhāna*. Again, after entering the second *jhāna*, he or she contemplates insight on that *jhāna*. In this way, the method of mental development that is to be developed by absorbing into *jhāna* one at a time by contemplating insight along with tranquillity combined in pairs until the path is achieved is known as the yoking together method. As this method involves contemplating insight by putting tranquillity in the forefront, it is embraced in the method of insight preceded by tranquillity (*samathapubbaṅgama*).

Method of Eliminating Restlessness About the Dhamma

At the initial stage when the knowledge of realisation of arising and passing away (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*) occurs either to one whose vehicle is tranquillity (*samatha-yānika*) or one whose vehicle is insight (*vipassanā-yānika*), radiance (*obhāsa*), knowledge (*ñāṇa*), rapture (*pīti*), tranquillity (*passaddhi*) etc., appear, which are the corruptions of insight (*vipassanupakkilesā*). When it so happens, a reflection is likely to occur assuming that radiance, etc., are special phenomena or that awakening has been achieved, and that because of this achievement, it has so happened. This reflection being a distraction connected with Dhamma, is known as restlessness concerning the Dhamma (Dhammuddhacca). The usual phenomena of mind and matter will not be clearly reflected in the mind of one in whom Dhammuddhacca is arising. The process of contemplating and noting is also likely to be delayed without making further progress. It might even be retarded and destroyed. Hence, this Dhammuddhacca should be eliminated.

Contemplation and noting should be carried on diligently without giving attention to radiance, etc. If contemplating and noting is done as stated, Dhammuddhacca will automatically be removed, and it would have been already eliminated. At that time, the usual phenomena of mind and matter are perceived with the mind's eye and reflected upon clearly. Then the act of contemplating and noting will stay put on the object of mind and matter called internal objects (*gocarajjhatta*). From that time onwards, insight knowledge will make progressive strides and subsequently reach the stage of Path Knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*). The aforesaid method of rejecting restlessness about the Dhamma to achieve the path is called the "Dhamm-

uddhacca pahāna method.” This method, being relevant to both *Samatha-yānika* and *Vipassanā-yānika*, is included in both *Samatha pubbaṅgama* and *Vipassanā pubbaṅgama*. So it seems that only two methods of mental development are mentioned in this Commentary.

In order to gain purity of mind (*cittavisuddhi*), one whose vehicle is insight should not initially develop tranquillity. The momentary concentration that occurs when insight becomes strengthened would bring purity of mind to such a meditator. This meaning is obvious from what has been stated in the Pāli texts, Commentaries, and Subcommentaries.

This treatise is written laying emphasis on how a *Vipassanā-yānika* contemplates and notes. Hence, in respect of the method of mental development for achieving purity of mind, there is no need to mention it separately. However, since benefits would be derived by one who has been asked to develop momentary concentration if he or she is aware of the eight kinds of release (*niyyāna*), eight kinds of obstruction to release (*niyyānāvaraṇa*), six dangers of concentration, six remedies for these dangers and how insight consciousness would remain fixed on one object that *niyyāna*, etc., will be extracted and mentioned from Paṭisambhidāmagga Ānāpānakathā (162-3)

The First Release and its Obstruction

*“Nekkhammaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ. Tena ca nekkhammena ariyā niyyanti. Kāmacchando niyyānāvaraṇaṃ. Tena ca kāmacchandena nivutattā nekkhammaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ nappajānātīti — kāmacchando niyyānāvaraṇaṃ.”*¹³

The above Pāli passage conveys the meaning that the merits of insight enable the Noble Ones to gain liberation. The reason for naming it release (*niyyāna*) is because by virtue of the merits derived from that insight the Noble Ones escape from the misery of *samsāra*. Sensual desires are the hindrance and obstruction to liberation. “*Niyyānāvaraṇa*” is so called because as the sensual desires would obstruct and deter the virtues of insight — which bring about liberation of the Noble Ones — will not be clearly known and understood. For this reason, sensual desire is deemed to be an obstruction and obstacle to liberation from the miseries of *samsāra*.

¹³ Pts.i.162-163, Soḷasañānaniddeso.

*“Pabbajjā paṭhamam jhānam, nibbānañca vipassanā;
Sabbepi kusalā dhammā, nekkhammanti pavuccare”ti.*¹⁴

In accordance with the above verse, ordination as a monk, the first *jhāna*, *nibbāna*, insight, and all other wholesome actions are called renunciation (*nekkhamma*), as may be appropriate.

In the *Mahāṭikā*, wholesome actions derived fundamentally without greed are explained as renunciation. This exposition is given as proper and appropriate according to the situation. In this regard, since it concerns concentration for insight, the meaning is tendered referring only to the virtues of insight as renunciation. In all future types of release too, reference will be made similarly to insight, concentration, and other things that may be relevant.

If one fails to contemplate and note the arising phenomena of mind and matter at every moment of their occurrence at the six senses doors, the true nature of mind and matter, cause and effect, and their characteristics will not be discerned. Due to not realising as stated, desire for, and pleasurable attachment to, those objects that are not discerned and similar sense-objects, will occur. If contemplation and noting is carried on at every occurrence of mental and physical phenomena, the true nature of mind and matter will be perceived. Their cause and effect will be truly known, and their characteristics will also be discerned. Because of this realisation, pleasurable attachment to and desire for those objects, which are to be discerned, as well as other similar sense-objects will be got rid of. Being able to prevent this pleasurable attachment from arising and getting rid of those desires, the merits or virtues of insight are known as renunciation. All Noble Ones have been liberated from the miseries of life through this practice. It means that Noble Ones have escaped from the sufferings of *saṃsāra* after the realisation of *nibbāna* through path knowledge by way of developing insight knowledge in stages. For this achievement in being able to escape from suffering, the virtues of insight are known as the release of the Noble Ones.

Sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*) being capable of preventing and obstructing the said insight is known as an obstruction. The way of causing obstruction may be explained thus: In this existence, every person has an innumerable number of worldly affairs to be performed, such as, personal matters, other people’s business, domestic duties

¹⁴ ItiA.ii.170.

concerning husband, wife, children, relatives, friends, pupils, servants, disciples, teachers and so on. Sensual desire paves the way with a desire to gain happiness. One is preoccupied with the work of planning and striving in connection with mundane affairs. One has to search for what is not yet available, or not yet achieved. What has been owned, possessed, and obtained needs to be kept intact and managed properly. Hence, there is no respite or leisure.

No thought has ever arisen to practise insight meditation. At times, though one may think of doing meditation practice, no effort could be made to resort to the actual practice of meditation. One is likely to enjoy the pleasurable conditions of life lost in one's own thoughts and imaginations, letting the mind run freely. One is likely to take delight in being able to talk freely, travel, and live as one wishes. Because of these pleasurable conditions, if a thought arises to meditate, one becomes anxious of sacrificing the physical comfort and mental happiness that one is presently enjoying. Hence, the failure to practise meditation.

Due to failing to meditate, no insight knowledge can be gained. Such being the case, one cannot personally know and realise what insight means and what kind of state it is with one's own personal knowledge and experience. Every person who fails to achieve release *i.e.* insight, cannot possibly escape from the misery and suffering of the cycle of birth and death.

On probing the main reason of being unable to gain emancipation, it will be clear that the cause is desire for happiness and delight in sensual pleasures. As such, it can be clearly known that it is sensual desire that prevents, obstructs, and deters one from achieving insight knowledge and getting rid of suffering and misery. There are also cases where insight meditation cannot be practiced due the desire to be happy and prosperous in the future rounds of existences.

This is how sensual desire prevents and deters the release of insight. Sensual desire may even prevent insight from arising during the course of contemplating and noting. It might even invoke the desire for sensual pleasures of a serious nature as enjoyed before taking up the practice of meditation. It may occur subtly in the course of meditation. How it occurs is that one may find delight in gaining momentum in the course of contemplating and noting. Repeated imaginary thoughts and reflections may occur through delight. One

may become eager to speak about one's own achievements in noting, wishing for intimate friends to practise meditation. One might also expect better achievement in the process of noting and to gain better knowledge of the Dhamma as well as to attain the path, its fruition, and nibbāna. In this regard, some may think that longing for the path, its fruition, and nibbāna is **not** craving (*taṇhā*), but merely will (*chanda*) to gain virtue. Craving cannot put one's thoughts on supramundane phenomena. In stating thus, it is to be considered whether the wholesome desire of ordinary worldlings is capable of dwelling on the real Path, Fruition, and nibbāna or not. In the mind of a worldling only the consciousness arising at the stage of knowledge of adaptation (*gotrabhū*), which occurs just prior to the achievement of the Path can dwell upon the real nibbāna. All the remaining types of consciousness are incapable of doing so.

As it is stated in the texts that the contemplative mind of ordinary worldlings can never dwell upon the real path and its fruition, any kind of desire or consciousness other than knowledge of adaptation cannot possibly take the genuine nibbāna as its object. Hence, the path, its fruition, and nibbāna which is yearned for by ordinary worldlings is not an ultimate reality (*paramattha*). It is a concept (*paññatti*) that is known through hearsay or imagination such as concepts of name (*nāma paññatti*) concepts of mode (*ākāra paññatti*), or concepts of form (*saṅghāna paññatti*). Nevertheless, mere concepts of the path, its fruition, and nibbāna can be taken as mental objects and yearned for by craving just as will (*chanda*) for wholesomeness can do likewise. For this reason, it has been taught in the Saḷāyatana Vibhaṅga Sutta¹⁵ as: “**Anuttaresu vimokkhesu pihaṃ upatṭhāpeti,**” *i.e.* it causes desire for the noble and incomparable fruition of Arahantship. It is expounded in the Subcommentary of that Sutta¹⁶ as: “**Anussutiladdhaṃ pana parikappasiddhaṃ arahattaṃ uddissa patthanaṃ tḥapeti,**” *i.e.* it causes to arise the longing aimed at achieving Arahantship, which has been heard of and completed by supposition. Moreover, in the Subcommentary on the Sakkapañha Sutta,¹⁷ it says: “**Anussavūpaladdhe pana anuttaravimokkhe uddissa pihaṃ upatṭhapento ‘Tattha pihaṃ upatṭhapetī’ti vutto,**” *i.e.,* dwelling on the genuine supramundane dhamma though craving cannot arise, to let the longings occur to gain Arahantship through

¹⁵ M.iii.219.

¹⁶ MṬ.ii.283, Myanmar.

¹⁷ DṬ.ii.335.

hearsay is said to cause a desire for them.” If these longings do not arise at all, only insight will be continuously taking place at the very moment of contemplating. The appearance of longing desires would therefore be something like deterring as “We shall first arise, you (insight) can wait for the time being.” To some, the moment such a longing occurs while concentration and wisdom mature and strengthen, it could be possible that contemplating and noting will lose its momentum or be destroyed. When such a thing happens it is likely that sorrow and disappointment will creep in. This describes how prevention and obstruction occur during the course of meditation.

Referring to this matter of the possibility of cause obstruction and prevention, it is stated “Because of the obstruction and prevention caused by sensual desire, wholesome insight that will bring about the Noble Ones’ release from the suffering is not known.” The expression “Is not known” does not mean to convey the sense of lack of knowledge through learning (*sutamaya-nīṇa*). It only means to say the lack of knowledge due to the non-arising of it in one’s continuum of consciousness by way of mental development. Hence, for being capable of deterring insight, which is the way to liberation of the Noble Ones, sensual desire is known as an obstruction to release (*niyyānāvaraṇa*). It is also called a hindrance (*nīvaraṇa*). Therefore, it has been taught in the Paṭisambhidāmagga as:-

“Kenatṭhena nīvaraṇā niyyānā varaṇatṭhena nīvaraṇā.”

Wholesome insight, which is called renunciation, being the way leading to the emancipation of the Noble Ones is to be construed as release. One who is inclined to get liberated from the suffering of *saṃsāra*, should develop and rely upon that insight, which is the path leading to liberation. Since sensual desire is likely to deter and stand in the way of gaining insight it is known as an obstruction to release. Thus sensual desire should be avoided. If it occurs, it should be rejected by contemplating and noting.

The Second Release and its Obstruction

“Abyāpādo ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ. Tena ca abyāpādena ariyā niyyanti. Byāpādo niyyānāvaraṇaṃ. Tena ca byāpādena nivuttattā abyāpādaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ nappajānātīti — byāpādo niyyānāvaraṇaṃ.”

Abyāpādo: not being disappointed and averse is **ariyānam niyyānam:** the way of the Noble Ones, to get emancipated. **Byāpado:** getting disappointed and angry, is **niyyānāvarenaṃ:** an obstruction to release. (The meaning of the remainder may be rendered as before).

The mind that is free from disappointment occurring along with insight consciousness, which contemplates and notes, is called non-aversion (*abyāpāda*). Noble Ones have attained nibbāna and been liberated from the suffering of *saṃsāra* by contemplating and noting without disappointment irrespective of whether disagreeable sense-objects or unbearable sensations occur, or whether contemplating and noting is defective. That is the why such non-disappointment is known as release, the path trodden by the Noble Ones leading to emancipation. Hence, this release — non-aversion in contemplating and noting — should be relied upon and developed. Aversion and disappointment in respect of a person, a sense-object, or a defect in contemplating and noting is called “*Byāpāda*.” If this aversion occurs, the Dhamma contemplated and noted without disappointment that will bring about ultimate liberation from suffering cannot be known, performed, and achieved. Hence, disappointment and aversion are called obstructions to release (*niyyānāvarenaṃ*) that should be avoided.

If aversion, such being angry with a person, quarrelling, imagining meeting that person and arguing with them, being averse to disagreeable sensations, sights, sounds, *etc.*, or being disappointed due to defective noting, if they occur, should be noted and eliminated. After noting them, the mind should be firmly concentrated on the meditation object that is usually noted. If aversion cannot be dispelled by noting in this way once or twice, noting should be done repeatedly at every moment of their arising. Eventually, feelings of disappointment will disappear completely.

The Third Release and its Obstruction

“Ālokasaññā ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ. Tāya ca ālokasaññāya ariyāniyyanti. Thinamiddhaṃ niyyānāvarenaṃ. Tena ca thinamiddhena nivutattā ālokasaññānaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ nappajānātīti — thinamiddhaṃ niyyānāvarenaṃ.”

Noting the perception of light with concentrated attention is the path that leads to emancipation. Sloth and torpor is an obstacle and

hindrance to emancipation. (The meaning of the remainder may be rendered relying on the method employed in the first release).

Reflecting with concentrated attention on sunlight, moonlight, starlight, and the radiance produced by meditation is known as the perception of light (*ālokasaññā*). If reflected upon, this will dispel sloth and torpor, which is the cause of drowsiness and indolence.

When the mind is idle and drowsy causing one to become sleepy, insight should be developed after dispelling sloth and torpor by the perception of light. Since by so doing, liberation from the suffering of *samsāra* can be gained through the realisation of nibbāna, the perception of light is known as release, the Path of the Noble Ones leading to emancipation. Furthermore, in the matter of insight, attentiveness and noting done after mind and matter have been contemplated to be clearly perceived with the mind's eye, it can be called perception of light. When noting can be done distinctly with clarity, then dozing, indolence, sluggishness, and idleness will be cleared away. Throughout the day and night, the mind is able to remain clear without drowsiness or dullness. Even when going to bed after stopping contemplation and noting one may find oneself automatically contemplating and noting mental and physical phenomena. Hence, with this perception of light, which is capable of being attentive to all mental and physical phenomena, sloth and torpor will be removed and final liberation from suffering will be achieved by developing insight knowledge on the noble path. So, contemplating and noting with a clear mind is also to be regarded as release, the road to emancipation trodden by the Noble Ones.

Sloth and torpor (*thīnamiddha*) is the cause of drowsiness and dozing, and mere laziness and reluctance to contemplate and note is also known as sloth and torpor. This is likely to deter the perception of light and so is called an obstruction to release. When it occurs, it must be contemplated and noted vividly, and then rejected.

The Fourth Release and its Obstruction

“Avikkhepo ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ. Tena ca avikkhepena ariyāniyyanti. Uddhaccaṃ niyyānāvaraṇaṃ. Tena ca uddhaccena nivutattā avikkhepaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ nappajānātīti — uddhaccaṃ niyyānāvaraṇaṃ.”

The meaning is: the mind that is not flitting and distracted is the path taken by Noble Ones towards liberation. Restlessness is an obstruction blocking the way to liberation. (The meaning of the remainder may be rendered as before).

Momentary concentration on mental and physical phenomena that are being contemplated and noted is known as calmness (*avikkhepa*). This means: "The non-distracting phenomenon with the quality of stability as opposed to distraction." When this concentration becomes strong, it would appear as if it repeatedly falls upon the meditation object that is noted at every moment. It would seem as if the noting mind and the object suddenly go in conjunction. For instance, it is something like heavy bags of rice that, if dropped on to the ground, would remain still wherever they were dropped, or, like sharp-pointed spears if planted into soft ground remain where they pierced the earth, or like some sticky substance thrown against a wall, which become stuck wherever it hits.

Likewise, though the objects of mind and matter may change in a variety of ways, the mind will become fixedly remain calm and stable on the object that is noted every time, by virtue of Khaṇikasamādhī. All Noble Ones have escaped and are liberated from the sufferings of *saṃsāra* after gaining insight, the path, and its fruition through that momentary concentration. Hence, momentary concentration penetrates and is fixed on an object free from distraction at every moment of noting is called release, the way to emancipation followed by the Noble Ones. This concentration should be relied upon and developed.

While concentrating on the sense-object, the mind that flits away as if it is going to leave that object is known as restlessness (*uddhacca*). It means "The nature of the mind that flits from the sense-object where it rests only for a moment." Because of this restlessness, the mind fails to concentrate firmly on the object and moves out quickly from the sensation. If restlessness is weak, it flits at a slow pace. Stronger restlessness will accelerate the wavering of the mind. It is also likely to wander and stray in the matter of contemplating and noting. The way it flits is that it might reflect on what is being noted and recollected or not. On reflecting whether it is functioning in regular order or in sequence, it might flit; and then it might go astray by reflecting whether the sense-object is dim or clearly perceived. It

also wanders by becoming often anxious as to how noting should be done properly. At the moment of imagining with such a fleeting mind, no insight concentration can possibly occur. Concentration that has been gained will become weak, losing the power of concentration and tranquillity due to the rambling thoughts. Thus, restlessness may be called an obstruction to release that is capable of deterring emancipation. If this fleeting mind occurs, it should be rejected by contemplating and noting. Then the mind should revert to the usual meditation object.

The Fifth Release and its Obstruction

“Dhammavavatthānaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ. Tena ca dhammavavatthānena ariyā niyyanti. Vicikicchā niyyānāvarenaṃ. Tāya ca vicikicchāya nivutattā dhammavavatthānaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ nappajānātīti — vicikicchā niyyānāvarenaṃ.”

Dhammavavatthānaṃ: The knowledge that can distinguish between wholesome and unwholesome states is the cause leading to the emancipation of the Noble Ones. **Vicikicchā**: Sceptical doubt whether it is wholesome or not, is **niyyānāvarenaṃ**: an obstruction to release. (The meaning of the remainder may be rendered as before).

The above says that the knowledge that can distinguish a faultless wholesome state from a faulty unwholesome state is known as *“Dhammavavatthāna.”* All Noble Ones, by realising the Dhamma and eliminating all unwholesome states whatsoever, and by developing all wholesome states, have been liberated from the cycle of suffering through the attainment of nibbāna. Hence, the knowledge that can determine the distinguishing features of wholesome and unwholesome is called release, the medium through which the Noble Ones are emancipated. This factor, sceptical doubt, being capable of deterring the said knowledge is known as an obstruction to release. A person who is not free from doubt will not be liberated from the miseries of *saṃsāra* due to not being able to reject unwholesome states nor develop wholesome states.

However, in the matter of insight, the fundamental point is the knowledge that is capable of determining distinctly what is wholesome and which lends support to gaining insight, and the knowledge that is capable of deciding the distinction between what is the

wholesome state of insight and what is not. Therefore, with regard to insight, it should be borne in mind that only these two kinds of knowledge are the phenomenon of release.

In Chapters III and IV a further explanation will be given to determine and distinguish genuine from counterfeit insight. In brief, contemplating and noting within a brief moment of the arising of the phenomena of mind and matter every time they occur in the present moment, is known as insight, which is evidently perceived by the senses. When empirical knowledge (*paccakkha-ñāṇa*) becomes mature, what cannot be known at the moment, *i.e.* the past, future, and all exterior aspects of the phenomena will have been contemplated and determined by inferential knowledge (*anumāna-ñāṇa*). Only these two kinds of insight are called “Wholesome insight.” All other thoughts of various kinds should not be regarded as genuine insight. Equipped with this knowledge, the Noble Ones have diligently practised for the development of the genuine insight and have gained emancipation from the suffering of *saṃsāra* through the attainment of *nibbāna*.

Moreover, morality, ascetic practices, tranquillity, systematic attention, and the knowledge that can determine wholesome actions that are likely to bring about beneficial results to insight are the release of the Noble Ones. Hence, these two kinds of release should be inculcated by learning, listening, and questioning. Sceptical doubt (*vicikicchā*) means uncertainty that arises as to whether the wholesome deed of insight can be derived merely by contemplating and noting mind and matter at every moment of their arising. This scepticism is really a terrible thing. If it arises in one’s mind, it may not be known as doubt. It might seem that it is wisdom, which investigates and reflects with impartiality from both aspects. This scepticism is mere deception or beguilement impersonating as wisdom. It has therefore been taught in the *Netti Commentary’s* exposition of *Yuttihāra*¹⁸ as “**Ubhayapakkhasantīraṇamukhena vicikicchā vañceti**” it is for men of wisdom to exercise care and attention by reflecting equally from both aspects, as doubt is likely to deceive.”

This doubt is not likely to occur in profusion to a person lacking knowledge. He or she is able to practise meditation correctly as instructed, for his or her confidence in and reliance upon the spiritual

¹⁸ *NettiA.90*, Myanmar.

teacher. However, without due guidance of a meditation teacher, one will go off the track, and cannot possibly practise meditation correctly. One who is learned may be able to practise correctly even without the guidance of a meditation teacher if he or she understands the right method. Nevertheless, like one who has no experience in travelling, one who has no meditation teacher may not make quick progress due to being hesitant; and may not reach the goal due to obsession, wavering thoughts, and uncertainty having heard of various meditation methods. Such being the case, it has been taught in the Vammika Sutta that this sceptical doubt resembles a junction where two roads intersect. This simile may be explained in this way.

A traveller carrying valuable property, when reaching a road junction stops for a while due to being unable to decide which route to take. While thus vacillating, dacoits and robbers who are following him caught and killed him after robbing him of his property. In the example now cited, just as the traveller was tarrying and wavering at a road junction, one who practises insight meditation will not be able to make progress in contemplating and noting if doubt arises. If it so happens, the meditator will fall into the hands of the robbers, which are the mental defilements, and so will not escape from the suffering of *saṃsāra*. Only by dispelling this sceptical doubt through contemplating and noting continuously, emancipation from the endless cycle of suffering can be achieved. Sceptical doubt thus resembles a junction where two roads meet.

This doubt causes doubt about the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha, the three kinds of training, *viz*: training in higher morality (*adhisīla*), the training in higher consciousness or concentration (*adhicitta*), and the training in higher wisdom (*adhipaññā*), the past aggregates (*khandhā*), the future aggregates, the present aggregates, and the Law of Dependent Origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*), totalling eight points.

At the present time, however, doubt may occur relating to four things: the meditation teacher, the method of meditation, a person who claims to have achieved higher knowledge by meditating according to that method, and one's own personal effort put into the practice of meditation. As such expecting with benevolent intention to enable meditators to endeavour practising insight meditation smoothly without defect by rejecting the doubts and uncertainties, and to speedily achieve the path, its fruition, and nibbāna, a good

number of explanations have been offered in this treatise beginning from how the purification of morality is gained. More explanation is still called for. In particular, many more statements will be found in Chapters III and IV.

To note as “walking,” “standing,” “sitting,” “lying down,” “bending,” “stretching” and so on according to the method that will be explained in Chapter V, should be firmly specified as wholesome states. Doubts should not be entertained as to whether these are wholesome or not. The reason being that at a brief moment of noting as “walking,” *etc.*, realisation occurs that is aware of the nature of mind and matter by way of the moving characteristics involved in walking, *etc.* Mindfulness occurs knowing that it so happens. Faith candidly appears. No covetousness with grasping greed (*alobha*) occurs. No fault-finding feeling of anger (*dosa*) arises. This knowledge or wisdom (*nāṇa*), mindfulness (*sati*), faith (*saddhā*), absence of greed (*alobha*), absence of anger (*adosa*), *etc.*, and all other similar states are without fault, and blameless. As only these faultless and perfect states occur at every moment of noting, the wholesome deed of insight occurs whenever noting is done. It must be resolved without the slightest doubt that this wholesome deed of insight will not occur if one fails to note. It is similar to the derivation of the wholesome deed of tranquillity by one who contemplates the earth device (*pathavī kasiṇa*) as “earth, earth,” since only an unblemished phenomenon occurs at a brief moment of noting, every time noting is carried on. This briefly explains how one should avoid doubt in the course of practising meditation. Amplification will be found in Chapter IV.

If doubt arises, the knowledge that can decide: “Contemplating and noting mental and physical phenomena is indeed the wholesome deed of insight,” will not occur. Without that knowledge, no insight can be developed and no liberation from suffering can be gained. Hence, doubt is known as an obstruction to release. Doubt concerning the Buddha, *etc.*, is able to deter the knowledge that has the faculty of deciding about wholesome states. Thus, this sceptical doubt is also an obstruction to release. Please take care not to entertain sceptical doubt, by taking it to be wisdom that is capable of investigating. Reject it every time it appears. If it is not rejected, it will close the door leading to the emancipation from the suffering of *saṃsāra*.

The Sixth Release and its Obstruction

“Ñāṇaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ. Tena ca ñāṇena ariyā niyyanti. Avijjā niyyānāvarenaṃ. Tāya ca avijjāya nivutattā ñāṇaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ nappajānātīti — avijjā niyyānāvarenaṃ.”

The knowledge that knows mind and matter distinctly in their true characteristics, and the knowledge that knows mind and matter distinctly as mere effects produced by causes is the dhamma leading to emancipation sought by the Noble Ones. The reason for calling it release is because with the analytical knowledge of body and mind and knowledge of discerning conditionality the Noble Ones gain liberation from worldly sufferings. The erroneous conception and delusion regarding materiality as being a living entity or an individual due to ignorance and wrong conception as being created by an Almighty God, King of Devas, Brahma, *etc.*, or as creatures that have come into being automatically without any cause, is an obstruction to release. Hence, this ignorance brought about by delusion is an obstruction to emancipation.

This interpretation is offered based on the Mahāṭikā in respect of the words knowledge (*ñāṇa*) and ignorance (*avijjā*). However, it would be appropriate for the term knowledge be taken as inclusive of all insight knowledges and Path knowledge. Also, in respect of the term ignorance, it would be proper to consider it as embracing all kinds delusion that are contrary to all those kinds of knowledge. In this regard, as it is a matter concerning insight, all aspects of insight knowledge and all delusion that runs counter to these knowledges, will be quoted and described. One who contemplates and notes mind and matter every time they occur, knows correctly at the initial stage of meditation and at every moment of noting: “It is the nature of mind to know the sense-object with awareness,” and “It is the nature of matter not to know anything that occurs.” When noting and concentration become mature a meditator knows: “Mind and matter occur due to such and such a cause,” or “Because of the presence of these causes, mind and matter occur.” The meditator also knows: “These occurrences are merely causes and effects.” Such mental and physical phenomena are thus truly known and realised along with the knowledge of why they have occurred. When concentration becomes stronger, awareness occurs that they are impermanent,

unsatisfactory, and not-self, *i.e.* they do not obey one's wish or command. Then, when concentration becomes stronger still, the awareness occurs that these phenomena dissolve instantaneously after their arising. Then again, when concentration is stronger than before, they will be found to constantly vanish and dissolve at every moment of noting. All kinds of such keen awareness that occur at every moment of contemplation and noting are called knowledge.

The Noble Ones escaped from worldly suffering after achieving nibbāna by developing all such kinds of insight knowledge. That is why this insight knowledge and full awareness is called release, the road to the emancipation of the Noble Ones. This release should be relied upon and developed. One who neglects to contemplate and note the mental and physical phenomena every time they arise, will not even comprehend what, in reality, is mentality and materiality. The fact that these effects occur due to causes will not be known.

Their characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self will not be discerned either. Nor will one know the true transient nature of their arising and vanishing. Neither will it be realised that they dissolve continually. Not realising them as such in spite of their conspicuousness, these mental and physical phenomena, which one has failed to contemplate and note, will be misconceived as being an individual, a living being, or a living entity. One might also misconceive them as coming into existence automatically, or as being created by someone. One will wrongly regard them as being permanent, delightful, and as a self or living entity. It might be misconstrued as individuality, one single entity, and one single living substance that is indestructible and non-dissoluble.

In regard to this matter, through not being able to reflect as stated immediately at the moment of the arising of thought, since by retrospection some time later, wrong notion and attachment will surely occur due to the nature of misconceived idea in respect of these mental and physical phenomena, which one has failed to contemplate and note. Knowing means vision (*vijjā*) or knowledge. Not knowing, which is the antithesis of knowing, means delusion and ignorance. Those two expressions are directly opposite to one another and convey the opposite meanings. Similarly, if the words knowledge (*ñāṇa*) and ignorance (*vijjā*) are expressed negatively, they will become not-knowing (*añāṇa*) and not-seeing (*avijjā*). Hence,

this ignorance will continually occur to one who fails to contemplate and note. Even for one at the initial stage of contemplation and noting, ignorance dominates causing misconceptions. If it does not so happen, the ordinary wholesome mind, a follower of ignorance, will have a misconceived notion just like ignorance. Knowledge, the opposite of ignorance is likely to arise late.

At the beginning of meditation practice, although contemplating and noting is done, no knowledge capable of distinguishing mind and matter will arise. Only the usual perception is likely to occur. One may then be unable to dispel grasping the sign of formations (*sañkhāra-gahaṇa nimitta*), the conventional sense-object. For instance, before genuine knowledge arises by contemplating and noting, the occurrence of the sight that is seen at the moment of seeing, or the visual object, is wrongly thought of as: "It is 'I' who sees," or as: "I have seen this or that object." This is ignorance, a wrong conception. The meaning of: "Ignorance is a factor incapable of knowing" only refers to not knowing the ultimate reality (*paramattha*) in its true nature. It is only known at once according to the usual awareness called grasping the sign of formations. As ignorance and the mind that follows arise with a wrong notion, the Pāli texts state that ignorance conceals the truth so that one fails to become aware of the true nature of the sense-object. Every time the objects of insight occur, such as the six kinds of consciousness arising from the six sense-objects, if ignorance appears first causing a wrong conception to occur, then release, *i.e.* insight knowledge that realises the truth, cannot be gained. Thus ignorance is called an obstruction to release.

Contemplating and noting the transient nature of mental and physical phenomena at every moment they arise is called knowledge of release. It means that release is developed at every moment of noting. Imagining and reflecting while failing to note is called an obstruction to release. Whenever one fails to note, ignorance would be rejected by contemplating and noting it as being either forgetfulness or mere imagination. The mind that follows after ignorance should itself also be regarded as ignorance in this respect.

The Seventh Release and its Obstruction

“Pāmojjaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ. Tena ca pāmojjena ariyā niyyanti. Arati niyyānāvarenaṃ. Tāya ca aratiyā nivutattā pāmojjaṃ ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ nappajānātīti – arati niyyānāvarenaṃ.”

Joy and delight, with which Noble Ones are endowed, enables them to be released from bondage. Indolence and unhappiness in the practice of meditation are obstacles and deterrents to release, on the path to liberation. (The meaning of the remainder may be rendered as before).

The Mahāṭīkā explains that this delight (*pāmojja*) indicates the achievement of absorption (*jhāna*). The exposition is rendered according to the context. It does not mean that it is not the way to achieve insight-concentration. It is because direct explanation has been given in the Pāli texts that rapture (*pīti*), tranquillity (*passaddhi*), bliss (*sukha*), concentration (*samādhi*), and knowledge of things as they truly are (*yathābhūta-ñāṇa*) occur in succession emanating from delight. So, I will now explain what is relevant to insight-concentration.

Every time noting is done well and smoothly, joy and satisfaction will occur. This satisfaction is known as delight (*pāmojja*). Happiness prevails in contemplating and noting as wished for by delight. Because of this delightful attachment to meditation, insight knowledge can be developed progressively by virtue of which the Noble Ones escape from the suffering of *saṃsāra*. Therefore, delight is called the release of the Noble Ones. This delight arises easily in those whose insight is immature. It seldom occurs in respect of those whose insight is mature for the simple reason that a variety of the investigating mind arises in them. To give a simile, it is like a child who is pleased to receiving a few cents, but an adult cannot be content with such a paltry sum. An adult is likely to be pleased only if receiving five, ten, or a hundred dollars. Nevertheless, however mature one may be, delight is likely to occur at the time of gaining momentum in the course of his noting beginning from the occurrence of knowledge of arising and passing away (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*), as it has been stated in the Dhammapada:—

*“Yato yato sammasati, khandhānaṃ udayabbayaṃ.
Labhatī pītipāmojjaṃ, amataṃ taṃ vijānataṃ.” (Dhp v 374)*

It conveys the meaning that in respect of mental and physical phenomena, wherever they occur, the arising and dissolution of the five aggregates should be contemplated. In consequence, relating to the material phenomena that are contemplated, rapture (*pīti*), and delight (*pāmojja*) are gained. This joy and delight is the real nibbāna, the deathless, which can be reached by those meditators who by practising insight meditation, become aware of the true nature of the transient nature of mental and physical phenomena. Therefore, delight will automatically become obvious when mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*) become mature in one who is contemplating and noting, as will be revealed in Chapter V. It will, therefore, be unnecessary to explain separately.

However, when the power of contemplating and noting becomes weak, causing laziness, by bringing to mind and reflecting on the extreme purification of morality, and the purification of the mind that contemplates and notes, free from defilements, from the time of beginning meditation, the attributes of the Triple Gem, and the advantages of practising insight, delight will be developed.

Indolence in the practice of insight meditation is known as discontent (*arati*). This laziness that causes an obstruction to those who are unable to take up meditation practice is commonplace. Exceptionally few actually practise meditation. There is, of course, no justification for finding fault with the majority of the people who cannot find time to meditate because they are facing with the suffering of existence. As the Dhammapada states:-

“Andhabhūto ayaṃ loko, tanukettha vipassati.

Sakuṇo jālamuttova, appo saggāya gacchati. (Dhp v 174)

All human beings, being devoid of insight that could discern the dangers of *saṃsāra*, are like those who are blind, though they are in fact not literally blind. Among many who are blind, only a few are able to follow the path of insight meditation. Just as only a few birds could escape from a net in which they are caught, only exceptionally few individuals could reach nibbāna.¹⁹

Also amongst those few who practise meditation, those who have not yet achieved higher knowledge due to lack of concentration and noting, are likely to become indolent. On becoming idle, feelings of

¹⁹ DhpA, Reach heaven or nibbāna (*Sugatiṃ vā nibbānaṃ vā pāpunāti*).

delight and eagerness in the practise of meditation are likely to dwindle and disappear. Willingness to continue to meditate might even vanish altogether. If no endeavour is made to carry on with the practice, liberation from suffering cannot possibly be achieved. Hence, in the practice of insight meditation, idleness is known as an obstruction to release. If idleness creeps in, recollection of the supreme attributes of the Triple Gem, *etc.*, should be developed by expelling feelings of idleness as stated before. Alternatively, it should be dispelled by reflecting on the eight objects of trepidation (*saṃvega vatthu*), *i.e.* agitating and recalling to mind a sense of great urgency.

The Eighth Release and its Obstruction

“Sabbepi kusalā dhammā ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ. Tehi ca kusalehi dhammehi ariyā niyyanti. Sabbepi akusalā dhammā niyyānāvarenaṃ. Tehi ca akusalehi dhammehi nivutattā kusale dhamme ariyānaṃ niyyānaṃ nappajānātīti — sabbepi akusalā dhammā niyyānāvarenaṃ.”

The gist of the above passage is: All wholesome states lead to the way of liberation of the Noble Ones. The reason for calling them release is because the Noble Ones gained liberation by virtue of these wholesome states. All unwholesome states are obstructions to release. These unwholesome states, due to being obstructive and prohibitive are called obstructions to the way for liberation of the Noble Ones so that wholesome states cannot be known or discerned. For this reason, all these unwholesome states also are regarded as causing obstruction to release, the achievement of liberation.

All kinds of wholesome states, such as generosity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), mental development (*bhāvanā*), reverence (*apacāyana*), *etc.*, are the practised by the Noble Ones for their emancipation. The word “*sabbepi*,” amalgamates all wholesome acts by the grammatical term “*pi*.” There is not a single wholesome act that does not lead towards emancipation. It means that if there is a sincere intention to get emancipated from the suffering of *saṃsāra*, it amounts to striving to get emancipated in accordance with what has been taught as “*Sammā paṇihitaṃ cittaṃ, sammā paṇihitāya diṭṭhiyā.*” The reason being that all Noble Ones have attained nibbāna and escaped from the suffering of *saṃsāra* by developing all wholesome states in their own mental aggregates. One who wishes to get free from suffering should make

full endeavour and perform with a sincere and noble intention the meritorious deeds of generosity, morality, mental development, reverence, and multifarious duties connected with religion. There is no wholesome deed that is not worth performing and developing.

Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that in the course of practising insight meditation continuously day and night without a break, only the wholesome deed of insight is the essential practice leading to liberation from all suffering. Hence, only insight should be highly esteemed. It should be constantly aroused and developed without an interval of even a minute or a second. This is because insight is the noblest of all worldly (*lokiya*) wholesome states. In the course of meditation, the moment that insight knowledge ceases, path knowledge spontaneously occurs with nibbāna as the object bringing with it the fruits of full liberation. It is therefore not necessary drop insight practice to perform any other meritorious deed while seriously practising meditation with vigour. There is not even any need to strive in the practice of tranquillity meditation. Nothing need be said regarding unnecessarily worrying about the meritorious deeds which will become an impediment (*palibodha*) that can cause serious damage to the work of insight. The significance of this can be clearly understood by the story of Attadattha Thera that is cited in the Dhammapada Commentary.

The Story of Attadattha Thera

Not long before the Buddha's final passing away, one bhikkhu reasoned as follows: "The Buddha, the Exalted One, is going to attain final cessation (*parinibbāna*) in four months, unfortunately, I have not yet fully accomplished the duties to be fulfilled by a monk (*i.e.* to become an Arahant). It would be appropriate to practise meditation arduously for the attainment of Arahantship while the Buddha is still living." Reflecting thus, he took up meditation practice and dedicated himself to the practice that would bring him the most benefit. He even refrained from associating with other monks. He was therefore addressed by his fellow monks as Attadattha bhikkhu. It means one who only cares for his own self-interest. When news spread about his behaviour, some of the ordinary monks put the matter up to the Buddha as an allegation out of sheer dissatisfaction. "Venerable sir! This monk Attadattha has no respect and reverence

for you. He is devoid of loving-kindness (*mettā*) and compassion (*karuṇā*). He doesn't even care to attend the Saṅgha meetings held for the purpose of consultations made in connection with your ensuing passing away. He has become greatly estranged." Hearing about this complaint, the Buddha summoned Attadattha Thera and on interrogating him, learnt the reasons for his behaviour.

Thereupon, the Blessed One said: "Well done!" He then admonished the monks. This episode is mentioned in the Dhammapada Commentary²⁰ as follows:—

"Sattā tassa sādhu-kāraṇaṃ datvā, 'Bhikkhave, yassa mayi sineho atthi, tena attadattherena viya bhavituṃ vaṭṭati. Na hi gandhādīhi pūjenti maṃ pūjenti, dhammānudhammapaṭipattiyā pana maṃ pūjenti. Tasmā aññenapi attadatthasadiseneva bhavitabba'nti."

After the Buddha had said, "Well done!" in approval of the answer given by Attadattha Thera, he gave this exhortation: "Monks! One who loves and reveres me should emulate Attadattha Thera. Monks! Those who honour and revere me with offerings of incense, perfumes, etc., should not be regarded as honouring me. Only by practising in conformity with the Dhamma, will it amount to paying reverence and venerating me. Hence, anyone who truly reveres me behaves like Attadattha Thera. Furthermore, the Buddha uttered the following verse:—

*"Attadatthaṃ paratthena, bahunāpi na hāpaye;
Attadatthamabhiññāya, sadatthapasuto siyā. (Dhp v 166)*

"One should not forego one's own welfare for that of another no matter how great the advantage may be for them. Fully knowing one's own benefit, one should take care of one's own welfare."

From the point of view of worldly affairs, though one may be able to do things worth a hundred or a thousand dollars in the interests of another, one should not forego one's own welfare even to lose a dollar or a cent. From the point of view of Dhamma, one should not let his own interest suffer even for the achievement of Stream-winning as against another's advantage to the extent of possibly reaching the stage of Arahantship. It is because, however great the

²⁰ DhpA.iii.158

advantage may be that will accrue to another, it would not bring about even a slight happiness to oneself.

Only one's own advantage no matter how little it might be, will bring happiness to oneself as may be appropriate. Hence, it means that after becoming fully aware of one's own welfare, one should continuously strive in earnest for the derivation of benefit for one's own interest. Though it merely concerns one's own personal business, since effort is being made with a noble purpose in practising meditation, it should not be discarded or neglected in preference to other inferior matters. For example, it is just like a person who while earning one hundred dollars a day from his business deals, should not abandon his good business prospects in preference to another kind of work that would bring him a daily income of only one dollar. Hence, the Commentary goes on to say:—

“Attadatthaṃ na hāpemi’ti bhikkhunā nāma saṅghassa uppannaṃ cetiyapaṭisaṅkharanādi kiccaṃ vā, upajjhāyādi vattaṃ vā, na hāpetabbaṃ. Ābhisamācārikavattañhi pūrentoyeva ariyaphalādīni sacchikaroti, tasmā ayampi attadathova. Yo pana accāradha vipassako ‘Aja vā suve vā’ti paṭivedhaṃ patthayamāno vicarati, tena upajjhāyavattādīnipi hāpetvā attano kiccameva kātappaṃ.”

The meaning is: In the role of monks, observance of moral duties relating to Saṅgha should not be neglected in matters such as renovation of damaged shrines, duties to the preceptor, *etc.*, because such observance would probably help in the attainment of the path and Fruition as it will fulfil the duties belonging to good conduct of monks. However, if a monk ardently practises insight meditation with serious intent aspiring to the achievement of the path, its fruition, and nibbāna either today or tomorrow. Such a monk should reduce his eagerness in the performance of his duties to the preceptor, but should dedicate himself to the practice of insight meditation only, which is, of course, his primary concern and duty.

In the above-mentioned Commentary relating to the expression **upajjhāyavattādīnipi**, the following meaning is conveyed by the usage of the word ‘*pi*’ which is used for emphasis (*sambhāvanājotaka*). “A co-resident monk (*saddhivihārika*), *i.e.*, both disciples and preceptors, *etc.*, should invariably perform their duties. Failure to do so would amount to committing a breach of duty (*vattabheda*) that is an offence

of wrong doing (*dukkata*), requiring confession. It will also destroy the morality of Pātimokkha restraint. Moreover, it will cause an obstruction to heaven, preventing him from reaching the higher celestial realms, and an obstruction to the path, which would prevent him from attaining the Path. Be it as it may, even with these shortcomings in failing to perform the significant duties, *etc.*, it is still justifiable and proper for him to practise insight meditation. Such being the case, there is no denying the fact the insight can be developed by a monk even without performing the less essential duties of renovating shrines, *etc.*, which are concerned with the affairs of the Saṅgha. In this regard, a monk wishing to practise insight meditation arduously without performing the minor duties, should first seek permission from his preceptor, *etc.*, and then only take up the practice of meditation. Only when he has done so, he will be free from that offence.

The Buddha's Admonition on the Eve of His Demise

While the Blessed One was lying on his deathbed in the Sal tree grove belonging to Malla kings in the city of Kusināgara, as his final passing away was approaching, myriads of celestial beings from ten thousand world-systems came to the place filling this world-system without leaving any empty space. They took their seats and paid their last respects to the Buddha. With great reverence they made their offerings with all kinds of flowers full of fragrance, incense, and perfume, and with all kinds of musical performances. Referring to these offerings made with respect and veneration the Buddha taught in this way:—

“Na kho, Ānanda, ettāvataṃ Tathāgato sakkato vā hoti garukato vā mānito vā pūjito vā apacito vā. Yo kho, Ānanda, bhikkhu vā bhikkhuni vā upāsako vā upāsikā vā dhammānudhammappaṭipanno viharati sāmīcippaṭipanno anudhammacārī, so Tathāgataṃ sakkaroti garuṃ karoti māneti pūjeti apaciyati paramāya pūjāya. Tasmātihānanda, dhammānudhammappaṭipannā viharissāma sāmīcippaṭipannā anudhammacārinoti. Evañhi vo, ānanda, sikkhitabba”nti. (D.ii.138)

“Ānanda! Those celestial beings by offering and honouring me with all fragrant flowers, incense, and perfume, and with

sweet songs and music to such an extent, do not amount to paying respect to me, revering me, adoring me, and honouring me with tribute and homage.

“Ānanda! A monk or nun, a male or female disciple, who reveres the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha by practising the holy life in conformity with the Dhamma, (*i.e.* striving to attain the path, its fruition, and nibbāna). Such a person is shows due respect and reverence for me; has a high regard for me; venerates and adores me; performs the noblest offering (*pūjā*), and honours me fittingly.

“For this reason, I say to you Ānanda, you should endeavour with a firm resolve as: ‘We will fulfil the holy life, practising in conformity with the attainment of the final liberation of the path, its fruition, and nibbāna.’”

Worshipping the Buddha, and offering incense and perfume with great reverence to the Buddha, being all wholesome deeds are meritorious performances leading to the emancipation of the Noble Ones from the suffering of worldly existence. However, an exposition has been made in the Commentary describing the noble wish of the Buddha that mere worshipping and offerings made to him with reverence do not actually amount to worshipping him. It is meant in the following way:—

The Buddha’s attainment of Perfect Enlightenment by fulfilling the perfections, practising the noble conduct, and the self-sacrificing generosity or liberality (*cāga*) with immense hardship and trouble for the entire period of four incalculable aeons and a hundred thousand world cycles, has enabled all celestial and human beings to readily attain the path and its fruition in their present life time. This greatest and noblest sacrifice was made, not with the expectation of receiving honour. Assuming that immense merits are derived by mere offering or worship and being content with this, without making an effort to practise meditation for the achievement of the most noble virtues of morality, concentration and insight, and release, is not enough for the attainment of the path, its fruition, and nibbāna in this present existence. It is mere wishful thinking. Liberation from the suffering of *saṃsāra* cannot possibly be attained by just making offerings and worship.

Moreover, this kind of worship will not help to perpetuate the Buddha's dispensation even for a day, nor for the brief period needed to take a bowl of rice-porridge. Building a thousand monasteries and a thousand shrines or pagodas of huge dimensions would only bring immense advantages of merits to the benefactors. It is not an act of worship that will help to perpetuate the dispensation. Only the noble practice of meditation (*paṭipatti*), that is morality, concentration, and insight should be regarded as revering the Buddha properly. This will also help to prolong the dispensation. To make everyone have high esteem for the practice of meditation, the above statement was made. This is the explanation as given in Commentary. (It is however, not an exact translation). Also in the Dhammadāyāda Sutta, the Buddha admonished as below:—

"Tasmātiha me, bhikkhave, dhammadāyādā bhavatha, mā āmisadāyādā. Atthi me tumhesu anukampā: 'Kinti me sāvaka dhammadāyādā bhaveyyuṃ, no āmisadāyādā'ti." (M.i.12)

"Monks! Prove yourselves to be worthy heirs of the noble Dhamma taught by me. Do not allow yourselves to become heirs of inferior material things. Monks! I have great compassion for you! How do my disciples become the heirs of noble Dhamma, not just the heirs of material things?"

The four requisites permitted by the Buddha: robes, food, dwellings, and medicine are the inferior inheritance of material things. A monk who is contented with these four requisites, which he is able to make use of is undoubtedly an inferior heir of material things. Meritorious deeds performed wishing and hoping for pleasurable existences, are or an inferior inheritance. Monks or laymen alike who feel satisfied with doing such meritorious deeds are deemed to be inferior heirs. Those who only accept and enjoy this inferior material inheritance despite the fact that they are fortunate enough to come across the Buddha's dispensation during their lifetime, cannot escape from the suffering of *saṃsāra*. Great compassion therefore arose in the heart of the Buddha foreseeing that such people would surely have to go through immense suffering. It is just like a mother whose heart throbs with maternal love and pity on finding her beloved children on the brink of disaster and trouble. The Buddha had similar compassionate feelings, and had therefore gave due admonition to

his disciples not to be satisfied and contented with the inferior type of material inheritance. The path, its fruition, and nibbāna is the genuine and noble inheritance of the Dhamma. Morality, concentration, and insight, which can lead to the attainment of the path and its fruition in this existence, are deemed to be the genuine inheritance according to the method of non-separation (*avinābhāva*).

Wholesome deeds such as charity, morality, *etc.*, done with the aim of attaining nibbāna are also regarded as an inferior inheritance. The reason is that there is a chance of achieving the path, its fruition, and nibbāna by virtue of such merits, only in future existences. In any case, endeavour should be made to gain these two kinds of Dhamma inheritance, *viz*: genuine and inferior. Of these two kinds, it is imperative that only morality, concentration, and insight, which are undoubtedly the genuine inheritance, should be given priority and be developed to attain the path, its fruition, and nibbāna in the present life-time. In this regard, it is the noble wish of the Buddha that we all strive to achieve the path, its fruition, and nibbāna even in this very life. This supremely noble intention is obvious from the way of admonishing Venerable Poṭṭhila Thera. A brief account of this story will be mentioned in Chapter IV.

Furthermore, the Buddha's wish and goodwill is really noble and worthy of the highest esteem. He would not be satisfied with our achievement of the lower paths in the present existence. Only if insight meditation is practised diligently for the attainment of Arahantship, will it meet with the Buddha's full satisfaction and approval. Hence, this exhortation has been given in Dhammapada:—

*“Na sīlabbatamattena, bāhusaccena vā pana.
Atha vā samādhilābhena, vivittasayanena vā.” (Dhp v 271)*

*“Phusāmi nekkhammasukhaṃ, aputhujjanasevitaṃ.
Bhikkhu vissāsamāpādi, appatto āsavakkhayaṃ.” (Dhp v 272)*

The above means: “Monks! Don't remain content and think of yourselves as getting better status just by being endowed with purity of morality, or for practising the ascetic practices without reaching Arahantship. Don't think highly of yourselves for being well-versed in the Dhamma and for being able to recite the texts by heart through learning. Nor should you feel confident for being endowed with the eight attainments (*samāpatti*). Neither should you be rest assured of

your future spiritual welfare by residing in a secluded forest monastery. You should not find solace feeling confident that you can easily realise and gain the path of Non-returning, which is not easily within the reach of ordinary worldlings.” (Relating to the above, since it is usual to express don’t by using “mā,” it would be more appropriate if it was expressed as “Mā silabbatamattena.”)

It is an exhortation to numerous monks who were accomplished in morality, *etc.* Some of them were feeling too sure of themselves as: “Arahantship can be attained at any time due to being accomplished with purified morality,” and so they did not practise meditation. Some, being over-confident: “We are accomplished in the ascetic practices with experience and the eight attainments; and we are able to live in a secluded monastery remote from towns and villages, so we would have no difficulty in achieving Arahantship. With such thoughts in mind, you should not remain content without making any effort to practise insight meditation.

Also monks who are Non-returners remained complacent, refraining from practising insight meditation beyond that stage for the ultimate attainment of Arahantship, thinking: “I have already achieved the Fruition of Non-returning, hence, I would have no difficulty to attain Arahantship at any time.” They remained complacent and found comfort, being self-assured, without practising insight meditation. The above Pāḷi verse is the Buddha’s exhortation given to those monks. As such, do not be rest assured until and unless Arahantship is attained. In other words, practise with diligence relentlessly until Arahantship is realised. How marvellous is the noble wish and goodwill of Buddha, the Blessed One!

In accordance with the aforementioned teachings of the Buddha, the practice of insight meditation is indeed the noblest duty to be carried out by a person. One who is practising and developing insight is deemed to be paying the highest respect and worshipping the Buddha with the most noble conduct and morality. He or she is also deemed to be an heir of the Dhamma who has accepted the noble inheritance of Dhamma with honour. Moreover, he or she is deemed to be a person strictly complying with the wish of the Buddha not being satisfied merely with the accomplishment of morality. Hence, while practising and developing insight continuously without a pause even for a minute or a second, attention should be made

essentially to the act of contemplating and noting mental and physical phenomena. No other meritorious deeds will then need to be performed. Nevertheless, when the contemplating and noting becomes weak due to the arising thoughts of sensual pleasures, *etc.*, any other means to contemplate and note for the rejection of these thoughts should be borne in mind and adopted. Depending on the Vitakkasaṅṭhāna Sutta, *etc.*, a brief account of the method of bearing in mind, and practising, will be described.

Special Methods of Bearing in Mind

First Method of Bearing in Mind

If lust occurs at the sight of the opposite sex, meditation on the repulsive (*asubha-bhāvanā*) should be resorted to. If anger arises, loving-kindness (*mettā-bhāvanā*) should be developed. If greed occurs relating to conditioned things, attention to impermanence (*anicca-manasikāra*) should be aroused, *i.e.* one should bear in mind that things are uncontrollable, without an owner (*assāmika*), and transient (*tāvakālika*), being subject to the law of impermanence. When anger arises, attention should be given to material elements (*dhātu-manasikāra*). Under such circumstances, how it should be borne in mind has been stated already in the matter relating to sense-faculty restraint (*indriya-saṃvara*). If delusion occurs relating to the mind as doubt, *etc.*, it should be eradicated by making an investigation, or by listening to the Dhamma and so on. Alternatively, if any kind of defilements arise, they should be eliminated by any kind of tranquillity meditation. All defilements could be dispelled by such practice.

If one gets tired physically and mentally when contemplating and noting for a considerable length of time, attention should be diverted to any kind of tranquillity meditation in which one is proficient. If one is not adept in any, noting should be done as usual on the object in which one is proficient. The meaning of this has already been mentioned in the matter concerning laymen's morality, based on the Commentary. If remorse or worry occurs to monks connected with their morality, a remedy should be sought for curing it by confession of one's wrong-doings. This first method of bearing in mind is most relevant to those who are knowledgeable and adept in tranquillity meditation.

Second Method of Bearing in Mind

Reflection should be made on the faults of sensual thoughts. If sensual thoughts are allowed to develop, it would cause harm and destruction to morality thereby causing one to fall into the four lower realms. It prevents one from reaching the celestial or human realms where happy conditions prevail. It would also hinder one from getting liberated from the suffering of *saṃsāra*. Giving in to mundane selfish desires, due to needing to nourish and look after the material body according to its demands, all kinds of suffering has been encountered throughout *saṃsāra*. By reflecting on such faults, the arising sensual thoughts should be rejected. The following verse was composed by sages of ancient times, showing the method how it should be borne in mind:—

*“Nāhaṃ dāso bhaṭo tuyhaṃ nāhaṃ posemi dāni taṃ.
Tvameva posento dukkhaṃ, patto vaṭṭe anappakaṃ.”*

“Oh, material body, the so-called self that causes sensual thoughts to arise! I am not your slave, nor your servant, a mere labourer earning wages. Having received due admonition from the Buddha, I cannot at possibly please you according to your desires. I have suffered endless trouble and misery throughout the cycles of existence due to having lavished care on you to please you according to your wish.”

Third Method of Bearing in Mind

If sensual thought occur frequently connected with any particular sense-object, this object should be ignored and given no attention. If such thoughts arise at every moment of contemplating and noting, the practice of contemplating and noting should be stopped for a while. Much benefit may accrue to some by suspending contemplating and noting if desire becomes extreme, anxious, or jealous. If it so happens, it would be proper to completely stop contemplating and noting for a period of two or three hours, half-a-day, or even for a whole day or night and to have some light conversation with others on other matters as a diversion. It may even be necessary to go on a pilgrimage, worshipping and paying homage to pagodas. Moreover, bathing, washing of clothes, *etc.*, can be done. If wishing to rest, sleep for some time to keep the mind at rest without contemplating and

noting. Only when an opportune moment comes, the usual contemplating and noting should be resumed. This method will be greatly beneficial to those who cannot make a progress towards the knowledge of the Path, for being over-zealous in practising meditation in spite of achieving very keen knowledge of equanimity about formations (*sañkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*) for a very long time. Hence, it has been taught in the Pāli text²¹ as: “**Asati amanasikāro āpajjitabbo,**” *i.e.* reaching the stage of becoming unmindful (not having sati) or not bearing in mind (not having manasikāra). Instruction has been given in the Commentary in the same way. If these thoughts cannot yet be rejected by just setting them aside without bearing in mind, any lesson or script which is remembered by heart should be uttered by rote. Or, in the alternative, metaphorically speaking, what is carried in one’s own hand-bag or pouch may be taken out and then, repeatedly observed to find out what these are, reflecting thus: “Oh, this is a lighter, or that it is a match box, or that it is a pin, or that it is a razor, or that it is a nail-clipper, or that it is a needle, *etc.*, *etc.*” The method adopted by sages of old time as to how Vitakka can be rejected by performing the work of constructing a building meant for meditation, has also been cited in the said Commentary together with a number of anecdotes in illustration.

Fourth Method of Bearing in Mind

If a thing is imagined or planned, the cause for the arising of that imagination must be investigated and known. Prior to the obvious arising of that imagination, some vague thought usually occurs in the mind connected with any one of the sense-objects. If it can be noted and realised, the moment such a thought arises, imagination is likely to be eliminated and deterred from arising. This imaginative mind may last for a considerable length of time in the case of one who finds pleasure in and is inclined to invite imaginary thoughts. One who contemplates and notes every time imaginative thoughts occur, having no desire to entertain these thoughts, may be able to get rid of the arising imagination even at the initial stage of its occurrence. It may be dispelled immediately, and then, realisation will come automatically after some time. If it is not dispelled, the mind that impels the last imaginative thought to arise should be

²¹ M.i.118, Vitakkasañṭhāna Sutta,

reflected upon; and the mind that arouses the imagination should be reflected upon. Investigation should be made according to the method stated from the initial stage of the arising thought until it reaches the stage of bearing in mind.

If, by so investigating, the initial cause is detected and perceived, a resolution should be made not to permit such a mind to recur. Then, contemplating and noting should be resumed.

Fifth Method of Bearing in Mind

This method is not a different kind of bearing in mind. It is the method requiring relentless effort to be put in to contemplate and note as is usually contemplated and noted. No matter what defilements arise, contemplation and noting should be done at every moment of their arising without pondering or stopping, vigorously, and continuously, like one who is furious and intimidating as: "What kind of stuff are you defilements made of? I am going to subdue you, dominate you, and conquer you by noting relentlessly." It is described in the Pāli text²² as: "**Tena, bhikkhave, bhikkhunā dantebhi danta mādihāya jivhāya tāluṃ āhacca cetasā cittaṃ abhiniggaṇhitabbam,**" Monks! If by any other means, thoughts cannot be rejected, a monk should suppress the wandering mind (through the mind which contemplates and notes) with all his might by firmly pressing the upper teeth on the lower teeth, and pressing the tongue on the palate. If unremitting effort is made to contemplate and note according to the fifth method of bearing in mind, the wandering mind will undoubtedly be subdued. Such being the case, this fifth method is most suitable for those who lack knowledge, and who indulge in the practice of meditation for a short period of time, say for a few days, or for a few months. All who are practising insight meditation should have a high regard for this fifth method. Meditation that is developed by this method, being continuously devoted to contemplation without letting the mind go astray, is known as undirected meditation (*appaṇidhāya bhāvanā*). The other four methods are developed after the rejection of thoughts. Due to resorting to contemplating and noting with the mind fixed on an object of sensation, they fall within the ambit of direction meditation (*paṇidhāya bhāvanā*). This is, of course, more appropriate for those accomplished with experience,

²² M.i.120.

who practise for a long duration of time, *i.e.* for months or years. These two kinds of meditation — directed and undirected — are mentioned in the Satipaṭṭhāna Saṃyutta.²³ Furthermore, the methods of bearing in mind to develop the factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*) and to reject the arising hindrances are also described in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta Commentary. These methods are generally embraced in directed meditation.

What to Note in the Eighth Release

All wholesome, meritorious deeds, are things that lead to the liberation of the Noble Ones, so all wholesome deeds should be done. However, in the course of continuously developing insight, emphasis should be placed on developing insight. When it becomes impossible to note because of the fleeting mind, thoughts (*vitakka*) should be rejected by the appropriate method of bearing in mind, then one should continue with the practice of contemplating and noting. The meditation teacher should give appropriate guidance to a meditator who lacks knowledge and experience.

All unwholesome, demeritorious actions are factors that hinder and deter emancipation from the suffering of *samsāra*. In the case of insight, all imaginations that flit and reflect without being contemplated and noted deter insight. Such factors should be eliminated by contemplating and noting them every time that they occur.

Dangers Besetting Concentration

First Two Dangers

“Atītānuddhāvanaṃ cittaṃ vikkhepānupatitaṃ; taṃ vivajjayitvā ekaṭṭhāne samādahati – evampi cittaṃ na vikkhepaṃ gacchati.”

“Anāgatapaṭikaṅkhaṇaṃ cittaṃ vikampitaṃ; taṃ vivajjayitvā tattheva adhimoceti – evampi cittaṃ na vikkhepaṃ gacchati.”²⁴

The meaning of the above two Pāli phrases is:–

1. The consciousness that runs after past sense-objects becomes distracted. It is a fetter of concentration (*samādhissa paribandho*). (This is an excerpt from the explanation of corruptions of insight to clarify the meaning). Having abandoned that past

²³ S.v.156.

²⁴ Pts.i.166.

object, and placing it firmly on the present object, the mind is not distracted.

2. The consciousness that longs for future sense-objects trembles. (It is a fetter of concentration). Having abandoned that future object, the mind is placed firmly on the present object. In this way, the mind is not distracted.

They can be explained further as follows:—

All that has already been seen, heard, smelt, tasted, touched, and known are called past sense-objects. The retrospective mind dwelling on past objects will fall within the category of the distracted mind. It is, in fact, the mind that is distracted. How it is imagined may be described in this way: imagination may arise in the course of contemplating and noting with retrospection on what has been seen, heard, experienced, felt, and noted in respect of the sense-objects during those days, months, and years that have already elapsed. Good or bad sensations felt in contemplating and noting might also be recalled and reflected on. What has escaped notice might be imagined again after some time. One might also reflect whether noting was good or bad, vivid or dull, and also whether what has been noted is mind or matter, and so on. All such reflections, thoughts, and imaginations that have made their flights to the past events are known as distraction. This is a danger to insight-concentration. Hence, at every moment of the occurrence of the wandering mind, it must be contemplated and noted, then the mind should be fixed on a single object that is presently arising. In other words, noting of objects should be done at every moment of their arising. As it concerns insight-concentration, it is said to be the present objects of consciousness. In the case of tranquillity meditation, the mind should be fixed with one-pointedness only on the meditation object. For future purposes also, please note in the same way that particular reference is made to insight-concentration with due consideration. At every moment of the arising of an object, if contemplating and noting is done only in respect of the present phenomenon, the mind will become stable, tranquil, and free from distraction.

All things or objects which are about to be seen, heard, touched and thought of or known, and which may arise, are known as future sense-objects. The mind that imagines, hoping and longing for such objects of consciousness, is of flitting in the sense that it is agitated.

It does not remain still or calm. It looks forward to the future expecting and imagining what is going to be seen, heard, *etc.*, and what are likely to be the prospects. It may occur in the mind as a vision, as if it were a reality, relating to the way in which a person with whom one wishes to meet is found; or in which one has become prosperous in a business venture done in such a way, or the way of reaching celestial realms, *etc.* One may be expecting an object of consciousness to arise to be mentally noted, and also anticipating more satisfactory noting. Moreover, special knowledge may be hoped for. One might even consider what kind of peculiar perception or awareness is going to occur. Feelings of anxiety may occur whether success would be achieved in the practice of meditation. All these rambling thoughts arise from the tremulous mind anticipating consciousness that has not yet arisen. It is a mind that is not tranquil and stable, but restless, wandering, and agitated. These are indeed the dangers that beset insight-concentration. This sort of mind should also be noted every time it arises. If noting is carried on in this way, the mind will remain calm, without distraction, for a while.

“Do not reflect on the past and do not long for the future. Just contemplate and note the present arising of mental and physical phenomena without fail.”

Third and Fourth Dangers

“Līnaṃ cittaṃ kosajjānupatitaṃ; taṃ paggaṇhitvā kosajjaṃ pajahati – evampi cittaṃ na vikkhepaṃ gacchati.”

“Atipaggahitaṃ cittaṃ uddhaccānupatitaṃ; taṃ viniggaṇhitvā uddhaccaṃ pajahati – evampi cittaṃ na vikkhepaṃ gacchati.”²⁵

3. Laziness always follows the feeble mind. In other words, idleness creeps in when effort is weak. Encouragement should be given to the mind that becomes slack, as by so doing, idleness is rejected. If it rejected, the mind will not be distracted.
4. The mind that makes excessive exertion tends to be restless. The mind that becomes greatly strengthened through utmost exertion, if subdued, will reject the restlessness. If so rejected, the mind will not be distracted.

They can be explained further as follows:–

²⁵ Pts.i.166.

When noting becomes weak, no advancement is made towards achieving special stages in the progress of insight, the mind may become inactive and slack. This is mere idleness, not wanting to meditate. It is a danger to achieving insight-concentration. So, every time idleness occurs, it should be noted and rejected. If one fails to reject it by noting, an effort should be made to raise one's morale by stimulating the mind. The way of stimulating the mind can be known from the eleven ways of cultivating the enlightenment factor of effort, as shown in the Commentary. A few examples will be cited.

Consider the Horrors of the Lower Realms

The body of a being who lands in hell (*niraya*) has a dimension equal to three quarters of league (*gāvuta*). The warders of hell stake out these huge hell beings on the extremely bright surface of burning iron sheets, and then strike them hard with a big red-hot iron spike the size of toddy palm tree trunk pinning down the right palm of the hell being. The same is done to the left palm, right foot, left foot, and the chest. The same cruel treatment is imposed on the creature placed in a lying posture with face down, pinning them down in five places. The hell being remains alive as long as the unwholesome kamma is not exhausted. Such a being suffering in hell is in a state of utmost misery. Prior to being punished, he feels great fear at the sight of the burning iron sheet. He is also severely traumatised, merely hearing the harsh words of command given by the warders. Having seen, heard, and endured such cruel punishment, he has to undergo immeasurable agony and misery both physically and mentally. While undergoing this terrible suffering, neither help, relief, nor pity be expected despite his repeated entreaties. He has to suffer severe pain, suffering, and misery alone without the help of anyone, neither parents, relatives, nor friends, and undergoes intense distress every second, ceaselessly wailing and crying bitterly. Under such circumstances, there is no opportunity even to think of practising insight meditation. Then the hell-warders chop the denizens of hell, who have not expired yet, with a gigantic adze the size of half a house's roof, until their victims are carved into the shape of hexagon or octagon. The blood that flows becomes a river and automatically burns to the hottest point. The sufferings of the denizens of hell are beyond measure. At this moment they have no opportunity to practise

meditation, under the above mentioned torture, if they are not dead; they are turned upside down and chopped with the giant adze.

If they do not expire then, they are forced to pull the red-hot iron cast like bullocks or horses and to climb up a mountain of fire. If they are opposed to climbing up the mountain, they are beaten with the red-hot iron rods, and compelled to climb. When they reach the top of the mountain, they must climb down again. They are forced to climb up and down repeatedly. Then these denizens of hell are thrown by force into a barrel of bubbling liquid iron. They are immersed to the bottom of the iron cauldron. To reach the bottom lasts thirty thousand years. Then to float to the surface lasts another thirty thousand years. On the surface, they are floating to and fro like rice grains in a boiling pot. They are surely faced with unmeasured sufferings. At that moment, it is impossible for them to practice meditation. If the denizens of hell do not die due to their evil kamma not being exhausted yet, the warder of hell hauls him up from the boiling cauldron of liquid iron and throws him down to the everlasting flaming cauldron. This hell has dimensions of one league each in length, breadth, and height. It is something like a huge box made of iron. The flames from the eastern wall penetrating through the western wall reach outside to a distance of a hundred leagues and are fiercely hot. Fiery flames from the western wall, northern wall, the iron ceiling high above, and from the bottom likewise spread over a wide expanse with fury and vehemence. The unfortunate inhabitant of hell is roasted alive and is running about helter-skelter in great pain and misery lamenting and wailing. Sometimes, after a vast number of years have elapsed, one of the gates of the hells is opened for a moment. The denizens of hell rush towards the opening. Some of them are rolling in great agony while struggling to reach the door with great fatigue and exhaustion. A few of them reach the threshold of the door. Some are able to reach outside after millions of years. This door is closed automatically. Those who are able to escape immediately fall into the hell of excrement. While immersed in that excrement, he is bitten by larvae the size of an elephant's neck.

After his escape from this hell, he falls into the hell of hot burning ashes. In that hell, he suffers terrible misery due to being burnt by live coals and hot ashes. After being released from that hell, he again reaches the hell of forested wild plants of silk cotton. These trees

have sharp thorns about sixteen inches long, which are all red-hot. The hell warders mercilessly beat him and force him to climb these trees. When climbing up, the big sharp thorns are facing downwards. When descending from the tree, the thorns are turned upwards. As climbing and descending have to be done in fright with great speed, the entire body is torn to shreds. After his escape from that hell, he reaches the hell of a forested area of sword-like leaves.

No sooner has he landed at this hell, the double-edged blades of the leaves, which are like swords, start falling on him as a result of which his limbs such are severed. When he takes to his heels to avoid disaster, razor blades sprout from the cast-iron ground. In front of him, iron walls block the way preventing his escape.

After being released from this hell, he lands in the hell of a stream of canes (stems of giant rods) known as "Vettarani," (this hell is full to the brim with boiling iron liquid.) In this hell there are vines and leaves that resemble razor blades. The entire surface of the earth below is covered with standing razor blades. The banks are diffused with cane reeds, vines, and kusa grass which is as sharp as razor blades. The person in hell gets into the stream, he suddenly collapses because of either injuries or cuts received from the sharp blades, or of injuries to the skin cause by scalding. When he falls down in pain, he is helplessly drifting up and down the burning liquid of iron. He also receives severe incised wounds from the cane reeds and kusa grass that thrive along the bank of the stream, and from the vines and leaves in midstream. His body is therefore cut into shreds. No opportunity arises for him to indulge in the practice of meditation.

When the warders of hell find this denizen of hell in distress floating to and fro, they pull him out with a great iron hook, and ask him what he wants. If he replies that he is hungry, they bring an iron basket containing red-hot pieces of solid iron to feed him. Then the poor being shuts his mouth tight in great fear. When he does so, the warders of hell force open his mouth with pointed pick-axes from both sides. When his mouth is open, they feed him by throwing the red-hot solid iron lumps into his mouth. These hot iron balls burn the lips, tongue, throat, larynx, and intestines and exit through his anus. If he says he is thirsty, they pour boiling liquid iron into his mouth. This liquid burns his bowels and is excreted from the anus. He suffers immense pain and misery without being able to move.

For as long as he remains alive due to his unwholesome kamma, the denizen of hell is hurled back into the great hell by the warder. This kind of dire distress in hell is elaborately described in the *Bālapaṇḍita Sutta*, *Devadūta Sutta*, etc. The present illustration given in brief is extracted from these Suttas. A person who has gone down to hell and faces tremendous suffering and untold misery cannot possibly find a chance to practise insight meditation. So, admonition has been given in the way as stated in the foregoing.

Oh, men of virtue! You who are presently carrying on contemplating and noting to gain insight! Be on the alert without forgetfulness. Don't be lazy. If you are forgetful, negligent, and idle, you cannot possibly escape from the incessant cycle of existence. If so unliberated, at one time or another, you are likely to descend into hell, then you will have to go endure untold suffering and misery. You had went through great sufferings and misery in the past. In the course of your coming across misery in hell, though you might yearn for acquiring merits with tears in your eyes, the opportunity will not come to practise insight meditation. Now is the opportune moment for you to strive to practise meditation. Accordingly, I exhort you to do so. Don't be lazy. Don't forget and be negligent. Cultivate the practice of insight meditation with enthusiasm and diligence. Respectfully follow and comply with the admonition benevolently given by the Buddha conveying the same sense as stated in the following words.

*‘Jhāya (tuvaṃ) bhikkhu mā pamādo,
Mā te kāmaguṇe ramessu cittaṃ.
Mā lohaguḷaṃ gilī pamatto,
Mā kandi ‘Dukkhamida’nti ḍayhamāno. (Dhp v 371)*

The meaning is: “Bhikkhu! Contemplate and note with unremitting effort and equanimity. Don't delay or be idle. Don't let your mind seek comfort in the five strands of sensual pleasures. By being indolent and negligent, you may be thrown into hell. Therefore, do not let yourself down to the extent of reaching purgatory and swallowing burning iron balls because you too are reluctant to meditate. It is best to avoid suffering bitterly, crying and wailing, then lamenting: “How miserable it is be burnt in the fires of hell!”

No opportunity can be had either while caught in a fishing-net or trap in the animal realm. As an animal, such as a horse, ox, or buffalo,

that has to bear the heavy load of a carriage, or pull a bullock cart being prodded by a stick fitted with a sharp pin, you will have no opportunity to think of or practise meditation. In the realm of hungry ghosts (*peta*), while stricken with extreme hunger and thirst for countless aeons, the opportunity does not arise to perform the practice of meditation. Nor will you have opportunity to mediate if you happen to be in the realm of demons (*asura*) where you will suffer misery being faced with starvation and scorched to near death under the onslaughts of strong winds and burning sun, while bearing the burden of a huge body of just bones and skin. Such animals, ghosts, and demons, cannot achieve insight knowledge and path knowledge, however much they might endeavour to practise meditation.

Men of virtue! Only in this present existence as human beings, can insight meditation be practised. Hence, you should not remain idle. Do not be negligent. Go on practising meditation. This is how encouragement is given reflecting on the dangers of the lower realms.

Reflect on the Advantages of Release

The path, its fruition, and nibbāna are achieved by means of insight meditation. Through this achievement one is liberated from the miseries of the lower realms and *saṃsāra*. How could such immense advantages be derived by developing insight perfunctorily and superficially? Is it not true that serious effort needs to be made to earn even a hundred, a thousand, or ten-thousand dollars in the field of mundane affairs? Why should one not be able to strive wholeheartedly for a week, a fortnight, a month, or longer, to get liberated from the cycle of suffering through full accomplishment in the practice of insight meditation. It is obviously reasonable to strive and sweat for just one day to gain wealth and happiness for one year. It is all the more reasonable and worthwhile to strive, undergoing hardship for a month to derive happiness throughout one's life. Why should one be unable to make an arduous effort, undergoing hardship, for a fortnight, a month, two months or more, to eradicate all suffering in preference to striving and toiling in worldly affairs? Oh, men of virtue! Do make a relentless effort relating to the work of insight meditation, which can bring immense advantages by achieving the path, its fruition, and nibbāna. This is the way of giving encouragement by reflecting on the advantages that can be derived.

Reflect on the Practice of the Noble Ones

This journey into insight cannot be taken by ordinary worldlings. This is a path trodden only by Fully Enlightened Ones, Solitary Buddhas, and Noble Disciples. Lazy and inferior individuals cannot follow this path. One who walks on this path is partly endowed with the special attributes and morality of the Fully Enlightened Ones, Solitary Buddhas, and Noble Disciples.

Men of virtue! Why are you slack and half-hearted in emulating the attributes and the virtues of the Noble Ones. Follow the path shown by these Noble Ones and try to reach a good distance towards the final destination (the path, its fruition, and nibbāna) with constant diligence. This is the way of encouragement given to follow the Path that was trodden by the Noble Ones.

Show Gratitude to Your Supporters

This way of this reflection is relevant to monks. Male and female benefactors alike have to toil continuously day and night to seek for money, goods, and property for their own livelihood. In some cases, they have to work at the risk of their lives. Nevertheless, only an appropriate amount of accumulated wealth is spent for their own personal use out of their hard-earned money. The cream of their earnings either in kind or cash are offered in donation to monks. This act of charity is done, not because the monks are their relatives, nor because they are indebted to the monks. This donation is not offered hoping for assistance to gain prosperity in their business ventures, nor to gain status. Monks are endowed with morality, concentration, and wisdom. By giving charity to such noble monks, immense benefits, and happiness can be gained to the extent of reaching the fortunate destinations of the human and celestial realms, and also attaining nibbāna. Metaphorically speaking, great benefits equal to the size of a great banyan tree can be derived by donating only a small amount comparable to a tiny seed. Throughout innumerable existences to come, they are likely to be reborn in human and celestial realms where happy conditions prevail by donating a mere spoonful of cooked rice, a plate of curry, a fruit, a cake, a single robe, a small monastery, or a dose of medicine. Nibbāna can even be attained. Expecting to gain such benefits, people donate part of the property that they own for their own use and consumption. (This only refers

to a purified form of donation offered with faith). Although such alms giving is done with a benevolent mind, if the monk is not endowed with the noble qualities of morality, concentration, and wisdom, the act of charity cannot bring such great advantages as may be anticipated. Only if a monk is endowed with noble qualities will full advantages accrue. Hence, a monk who sincerely wishes to help his benefactors gain the full advantages from their virtuous acts of charity with confidence in and relying on his noble qualities, should endeavour to gain full accomplishment in those virtues. It would be highly improper to remain idle and take things easy. If he is negligent of his monastic duties, it amounts to being inconsiderate of his benefactors. Thus, it was taught in the Ākaṅkheyya Sutta:-

‘Ākaṅkheyya ce, bhikkhave, bhikkhu: ‘Yesāhaṃ cīvara piṇḍapāta senāsana gilānappaccaya bhesajjaparikkhāraṃ paribhuñjāmi tesāṃ te kārā mahapphalā assu mahānisaṃsā’ti, sīlesvevassa paripūrakārī ajjhattaṃ cetosamathamānuyutto anirākatajjhāno vipassanāya samannāgato brūhetā suññāgārānaṃ.’ (M.i.33)

“Monks! Considering: ‘I make use of another person’s property such as robes, almsfood, monastery, and medicines for my own consumption,’ if a monk sincerely wishes: ‘May the charitable acts of my benefactors in offering the aforesaid property bring them immense advantages,’ he should fulfil his monastic duties completely by purifying his moral conduct. He should practise tranquillity meditation to gain purity of mind. He should engage in contemplating and noting, and remain absorbed in *jhāna*. He should be fully equipped with the attributes of insight. He should retire to a secluded monastery and develop tranquillity and insight.”

Encouragement should be given by reflecting as stated above. “Bhikkhu! Bear in mind that your male and female benefactors have offered food, robes, and so on, having confidence in you. They expect nothing from you. They are performing charity with the sole intention of gaining happiness by being reborn in human and celestial realms, and hope to attain nibbāna in due course. Being able to make use of these donated properties you do not have to worry about nourishment. Nor do you have to face the miserable conditions of heat and cold. You acquire the requisites without the need to endure hardship.

Moreover, you have ample time at your disposal to practise the Dhamma in accordance with the Buddha's admonition. Hence, all of your benefactors deserve great gratitude. However, if you are negligent in your efforts to accomplish concentration and insight, these benefactors who have great faith, and rely on you, will not be able to enjoy the full benefits of their acts of charity. Therefore, to reciprocate their goodwill to which you are indebted, you should indulge in the practice of insight meditation with relentless effort. This is the way of encouragement through reciprocity.

A monk who practises meditation diligently with the four-factored effort (*caturaṅgavīriya*) by encouraging himself as stated in the foregoing, he could reach the stage of Arahantship as in the case of Mahāmitta Thera cited in a number of Commentaries, or the case of Piṇḍapātika Tissa Thera cited in the *Ānguttaranikāya* Commentary. It has therefore been taught in the *Samyutta Pāli* text²⁶ as follows:—

“Alameva saddhāpabbajitena kulaputtēna vīriyaṃ ārabhituṃ: Kāmaṃ taco ca nhāru ca atṭhi ca avasissatu, sarīre upasussatu maṃsalohitaṃ. Yaṃ taṃ purisathāmena purisavīriyena purisaparakkamena pattabbaṃ, na taṃ apāpunivā vīriyassa saṅghānaṃ bhavissatī’ti ... Na, bhikkhave, hīnena aggassa patti hoti. Aggena ca kho, bhikkhave, aggassa patti hoti ... Tasmātiha, bhikkhave, vīriyaṃ ārabhatha appattassa pattiyā, anadhigatassa adhigamāya, asacchikatassa sacchikiriyāya. ‘Evaṃ no ayaṃ amhākaṃ pabbajjā avañjhā bhavissati saphalā saudrayā. Yesaṃca mayaṃ paribhuñjāma cīvāra piṇḍapāta senāsana gilānappaccaya bhesajjaparikkhāraṃ tesam te kārā amhesu mahapphalā bhavissanti mahānisamsā’ti – evañhi vo, bhikkhave, sikkhitabbaṃ. Attatthaṃ vā hi, bhikkhave, sampassamānena alameva appamādena sampādetuṃ; paratthaṃ vā hi, bhikkhave, sampassamānena alameva appamādena sampādetuṃ; ubhayatthaṃ vā hi, bhikkhave, sampassamānena alameva appamādena sampādetu’nti.”

“One of good family who has gone forth as a monk, having firm faith in the Buddha, with a firm conviction that he can reach the path, its fruition, and nibbāna should meditate with the four factor effort (*caturaṅgavīriya*): “Let only the skin,

²⁶ S.ii.28. Some has been omitted for the sake of brevity. Those who have time may refer to the *Dasabalavagga* of the *Nidāna Samyutta* and its Commentary.

sinews, and bones remain, let the flesh and blood dry up, I will not relax my effort until I have attained what can be reached by manly courage, determination, and exertion.”

It is indeed right and proper to strive in meditation without letting up exertion with these four factors until the path, its fruition, and nibbāna is attained.

“Monks! It is impossible to reach the noble goal of the path and its fruition with inferior and weak confidence (*saddhā*), effort (*virīya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*). Monks! The holy stage of the path, its fruition, and nibbāna can only be attained through noble and keen faculties. Monks! Strive to reach the goal that has not yet been reached, to achieve what has not yet been achieved, and to realise what has not yet been realised. If you practise with diligence, your going forth, monks, will not have been in vain, fruitless, and unprofitable. Moreover, reflect, ‘We are wearing the robes, consuming the food, living under the roof of the monastery, and depending upon the medicines offered to us as gifts by our benefactors. The gifts offered by them are of great benefit to us.’ Reflecting thus with foresight, devote your efforts solely to the work of meditation. Monks! It is proper that he who desires his own advantage should try to become endowed with morality, concentration, and wisdom by cultivating mindfulness at all times. Monks! One who foresees and cares for the welfare of others should thus try to become endowed with morality, concentration, and wisdom. Monks! One who wishes to bring about advantages to both parties with his foresight and goodwill, should become endowed with morality, concentration, and wisdom through mindful contemplation.”

Furthermore, by reflecting upon the admirable and eminent position as an inheritor of the supramundane Dhamma, and the magnanimity of the Buddha, the Blessed One, the Teacher of gods and human, *etc.*, the mind can be encouraged. By reflecting on the supreme attributes of the Buddha with joy (*pīti-sambojjhaṅga*), which is a factor of enlightenment, and on the attributes of Dhamma and Saṅgha, in the way that a supreme effort was made in practising

meditation by Soṇa Thera, *etc.*, purity of morality, as also the highly revering quality of Suttanta-desanā, *etc.*, the mind can become inspired and delighted. When the mind gets delighted and inspired by being encouraged with one or more of these methods, it will not go astray, but instead will become firmly fixed with concentration, calm, and free from obscurity. Then, contemplating and noting can be done efficiently, and will gain momentum.

Sometimes the mind may become extremely keen and eager with concern while meditating. Thoughts may often arise with anxiousness as to how noting can be done on the arising consciousness without missing even subtle objects. Reflection is likely to be done very often as to whether recollection can be made or not, or that such and such a thing was not noted, or that in future, noting will not miss anything that ought to be noted. Thoughts may occur periodically that the greatest exertion has been made in practising meditation and that no further exertion need be made.

Probably the meditator would strive, clenching the teeth and firmly closing the mouth, stiffen the hands and clenching the fists. Such thoughts and imagination that often arise with extreme anxiety, are an unstable and distracted mind. If the mind is distracted and wandering constantly, the noting mind tends to divert away from the meditation object. It would appear as if the mind is bounced back from the object. This extremely anxious mind is a danger to insight-concentration. The distraction and restlessness of the mind, which were mentioned where the first danger was explained is identical to wandering thoughts. However, in relation to the past objects, as the wandering thoughts are similar to scattering the mind, it is known as distraction (*vikkhepa*). By becoming over anxious, as the wandering thoughts occurring in close proximity connected with noting, they appear to be springing up from the sense-object that is noted, and appear to be staying somewhat aloof from the sense-object, it is known as restlessness (*uddhacca*). Their difference should be noted in the same way.

When becoming anxious, thoughts that imagine with eagerness may be missed in the course of noting. The sense-object noted and felt may also be vague. Hence, it is likely that the noting will become weak. When it so happens, keep the anxious mind at ease. "There is no such thing as 'T' or a self capable of fulfilling desires as one might

wish. No matter how much effort is made in contemplating and noting, insight knowledge, which will enhance the power of noting, may not occur. In that case, relax the mind and carry on noting steadily just to keep it going without a break, taking an indifferent attitude: "Let noting occur as it likes, or even miss something that should have been noted." Merely by relaxing the mind, the restless and distracted mind, would automatically be eliminated. It will stop wandering and flitting. In some cases, the moment that relaxation is done, the mind becomes tranquil, and noting will regain its momentum with clarity and vivacity. It has therefore been taught: "The mind always stop wandering and becomes tranquil by suppressing over-eagerness in contemplating and noting."

If the contemplating and noting becomes very feeble, it should be aroused and stimulated. If it is too rigid and vigorous, it must be relaxed. Only by noting without too much rigidity and slackness, but with equanimity, the mind becomes tranquil and stable.

Fifth and Sixth Dangers

"Abhinataṃ cittaṃ rāgānupatitaṃ, taṃ sampajāno hutvā rāgaṃ pajahati, evampi cittaṃ na vikkhepaṃ gacchati."

"Apanataṃ cittaṃ byāpādānupatitaṃ, taṃ sampajāno hutvā byāpādaṃ pajahati, evampi cittaṃ na vikkhepaṃ gacchati."

5. The mind that very much inclines in pursuit of lust for sensual pleasures. In other words, it falls into the trap of sensual attachment. If the extremely pliant and yielding mind is fully comprehended, lust (*rāga*) or passionate desire, is abandoned. By abandoning it, the mind will not be distracted.
6. When the mind is very detached or disinclined, it is always affected with feelings of ill-will or disappointment. Having comprehended this mind that remains aloof, ill-will (*byāpāda*) is rejected. By rejecting it, the mind will not be distracted.

In another way, the rapturous mind that is absorbed in noting with keenness is known as the mind that is pliant and inclined. The mind that often anticipates and longs for special knowledge, is known as an extremely pliant mind. This extreme bent of mind will occur in conjunction with feelings of pleasurable attachment. This is a danger because it will probably damage and deter the progress of

insight-concentration. How the damage is done has already been stated in the section relating to the first obstruction to release. Hence, at the moment of the occurrence of the extremely pliant mind, it should be firmly noted. If it is realised and comprehended as such, rejection of the pliant mind should be considered as complete. This sort of mind will not arise again. By mere realisation in the aforesaid way, the success made in rejecting defilements, such as, lust, will be obviously known and appreciated as mentioned in Chapter IV relating to the Saṃyuttanikāya and Mūlapaṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā. When noting in an ordinary way without extreme forms of lust, the mind will become calm and stable without distraction.

One who cannot satisfactorily contemplate and note after meditating for many days and months, may feel like abandoning the task, imagining: “It seems impossible for me to achieve my objective.” Such feelings of disappointment are the thought that shuns insight meditation exercise and avoids taking it up seriously. This will allow no opportunity to gain realisation of special knowledge of the Dhamma and insight knowledge. It might occur to the meditator to quit and run away from the meditation centre. This mind occurs combined with a feeling of disappointment. If it so happens, there will be absolutely no concentration or tranquillity of the mind. How could noting be carried on satisfactorily? This despairing mind is a tremendous danger to insight-concentration. Reluctance to note, wishing to abandon the practice, and feelings of despair should be noted through contemplation, and then rejected. Do not relax and give it up though you are not successful in keeping your mind calm and stable by noting once or twice only. Repeat noting every time such thoughts arise, then revert to noting the usual objects that are appearing in the mind’s eye. Eventually, feelings of despair will totally disappear, which would enable one to note with peace and mental tranquillity. It has thus been taught as:²⁷ **“Taṃ sampajāno hutvā byāpādaṃ pajahati – evampi cittaṃ na vikkhepaṃ gacchati.”**

Don’t feel delighted with pleasurable longing, and don’t be disappointed either. Every time desirable feeling occurs in respect of any pleasurable sensation, just carry on noting. Every time you anticipate or yearn for something, please note this yearning. Every time you feel disappointed, carry on noting the despairing mind.

²⁷ Pts.i.167.

How the Mind Remains Unified

“Imehi chahi thānehi parisuddham cittaṃ pariyodātaṃ ekattagataṃ hoti. Katame te ekattā? Dānavosaggupaṭṭhānekattaṃ, samathanimittupaṭṭhānekattaṃ, vāyalakkhaṇupaṭṭhānekattaṃ, nirodhu-paṭṭhānekattaṃ. Dānavosaggupaṭṭhānekattaṃ cāgādhimuttānaṃ, samathanimittupaṭṭhānekattaṃca adhicitamanuyuttānaṃ, vāyala-kkhaṇupaṭṭhānekattaṃca vipassakānaṃ, nirodhu-paṭṭhānekattaṃca ariyapuggalānaṃ.” (Pts.i.166-167)

The meaning of the above Pāli passage is that the mind that becomes purified in every aspect, being able to expel all the aforesaid six kinds of danger, remains unified without any interference from the defilements. This unified mind constitutes:—

1. Unity of mind that manifests in the act of giving charity,
2. Unity of mind that manifests the sign of tranquillity meditation,
3. Unity of mind that manifests the characteristic of dissolution,
4. Unity of mind that manifests the cessation of all formations, *i.e.* nibbāna.

The unity that foreshadows the mental image of offering charity and of relinquishing is only the mind of meditators who have borne in mind acts of charity. The unity that reflects the sign of an object of tranquillity meditation is a mind of meditators who practise tranquillity meditation. The unity that reflects the characteristic of dissolution of all formations is the one and only mind standing aloof from others and borne by the meditators who contemplate insight. The unity that visualizes nibbāna whereby all formations have come to a complete cessation is the mind that remains apart on its own and is borne by Noble Ones who have attained the path and its fruition. By employing the six remedies as stated before, the mind of a person who has got dispelled the dangers attached of concentration only dwells intent on contemplating and noting the arising mental and physical phenomena continuously without looking back to the past or looking forward to the future, without reluctance and slackness, without over-anxiety, and without distraction from the sense-object. This kind of insight mindfulness is said to be purified without blemish and entirely free from hindrances. It means remaining in a mental state of singleness of purpose or one-pointedness. When concentration becomes strengthened, no defilements can creep in while noting.

The mind that is noting will not mix with its companions, the defilements. This concentration which is keen and vigorous is known as unity of mind (*ekatta*). It means that it is the only kind of arising of meditation consciousness (*bhāvanā-cittuppāda*) having no desire to mingle with or remain in the company of defilements. The mind that is developing meditation that occurs in conjunction with that concentration is the tranquillity of the mind known as one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*). What is meant by it is that it occurs singly without relying on the defilements and remains fixed in concentration.

Of the four kinds of unity, only the aspect of alms-giving is reflected on by one who is developing the recollection of liberality (*cāgānussati*), when concentration becomes strengthened. No reflection occurs in respect of any other objects. At that moment, since the mind is one-pointed without mingling with defilements, it is called "Having abided in generosity (*dānavosaggupaṭṭhānekatta*)." It means: "Remaining persistently in fixed concentration with single-mindedness reflecting the way of performing charity with generosity."

Apart from that, only the sign of a tranquillity meditation object that is concentrated upon will be reflected in the mind of a person developing tranquillity meditation as and when concentration gains maturity. Other consciousness or objects would escape notice. At that time inasmuch as the noting mind occurs singly and is aloof from its companion defilements, it is known as "Abiding in the sign (*nimittupaṭṭhānekatta*)." It conveys the sense that the sign (*nimitta*) of the consciousness of tranquillity meditation, which is born in mind, appears and one dwells in access concentration or absorption. It should therefore be remembered that purification of the mind has arisen to persons who use tranquillity as a vehicle from the time of the occurrence of the only kind of consciousness upon which only the object of tranquillity is reflected as intended, in conformity with the said Paṭisambhidāmagga. Some, of course, used to say that if the image of the Buddha is visualized by a person who is engaging in the recollection of the noble attributes of the Buddha (*Buddhānussati*), it is a higher quality of tranquillity meditation; or, if it has come into the mind's eye as a heap of bones, it is a form of mediocre meditation, or, if a figure of the opposite sex is visualized, it is an inferior type of meditation. This statement should be compared to and verified with what is mentioned in the Paṭisambhidāmagga.

Only the mental and physical phenomena that are noted by meditators practising insight meditation when their concentration becomes keen and strong from the time of achieving analytical knowledge of body and mind. No other objects will then be visualized or perceived. During this time, not wishing to mingle with hindrances that have occurred by thinking about some other objects, only the mind that contemplates and notes will occur continuously. From that time onwards, it should be remembered that the mind that contemplates and notes is abiding in unity, and is free of all hindrances.

In particular, beginning from the time of achieving knowledge of dissolution up to the stage of knowledge of adaptation, only the nature of dissolving mind and matter will become apparent at every moment of noting. At that moment, insight consciousness that notes at every moment without mingling with the defilements is called “Abiding in the characteristic of dissolution (*vayalakkhaṇūpatthānekatta*). This means that as only the dissolution of mind and matter is obvious, it is abiding in momentary concentration, which brings about only insight-consciousness. Depending on this Pāli statement, it has previously been stated as: “Beginning from knowledge of dissolution, the superior form of momentary concentration occurs in one whose vehicle is insight. The way of abiding in unity of the noting mind with the realisation of the characteristic of dissolution is obvious to one who has gained the knowledge of dissolution. Eventually, when the final stage of insight meditation is reached, the path and its fruition is attained. The Noble Ones who have reached the path and its fruition will have only visualized the nature of nibbāna, the complete cessation of all conditioned phenomena that are contemplated and noted. Then, no other objects would become manifested. Hence, it should be remembered that the mind absorbed in the path and its fruition abides in unity of cessation (*nirodhupatthānekatta*). In other words, it is abiding in concentration, the only attributable cause to achieve path and fruition consciousness with realisation of nibbāna where all conditioned phenomena are totally extinguished. The way of abiding in this unity is obvious to those who have achieved that stage. With these few words of explanation, it is sufficient to appreciate how those whose vehicle is insight strive to gain purification of the mind and how it occurs.