

Mahasatipatthana Sutta

i. Anapana Pabba (Section on In and Out Breathing)

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu dwell perceiving again and again the body as just the body? Here (in this teaching), bhikkhus, a bhikkhu having gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to an empty, solitary place;[note21](#) sits down cross-legged,[note22](#) keeping his body erect, and directs his mindfulness (towards the object of mindfulness).[note23](#) Then only with keen mindfulness he breathes in and only with keen mindfulness he breathes out. Breathing in a long breath, he knows, "I breathe in a long breath"; breathing out a long breath, he knows, "I breathe out a long breath"; breathing in a short breath, he knows, "I breathe in a short breath"; breathing out a short breath, he knows, "I breathe out a short breath". "Aware of the whole breath body, I shall breathe in",[note24](#) thus he trains himself; "Aware of the whole breath body, I shall breathe out", thus he trains himself. "Calming the process of breathing, I shall breathe in",[note25](#) thus he trains himself; "Calming the process of breathing, I shall breathe out", thus he trains himself.[note26](#)

Just as, bhikkhus, a skilful turner or a turner's apprentice pulling a long pull (on the string turning the lathe), knows, "I am pulling a long pull"; pulling a short pull, knows, "I am pulling a short pull", just so, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu breathing in a long breath, knows, "I breathe in a long breath"; breathing out a long breath, knows, "I breathe out a long breath"; breathing in a short breath, knows, "I breathe in a short breath"; breathing out a short breath, knows, "I breathe out a short breath". "Aware of the whole breath body, I shall breathe in," thus he trains himself; "Aware of the whole breath body, I shall breathe out", thus he trains himself. "Calming the process of breathing, I shall breathe in", thus he trains himself; "Calming the process of breathing, I shall breathe out", thus he trains himself.

Thus he dwells perceiving again and again the body [note27](#) as just the body (not mine, not I, not self, but just a phenomenon) in himself; or he dwells perceiving again and again the body as just the body in others;[note28](#) or he dwells perceiving again and again the body as just the body in both himself and in others.[note29](#) He dwells perceiving again and again the cause and the actual appearing of the body; or he dwells perceiving again and again the cause and the actual dissolution of the body; or he dwells perceiving again and again both the actual appearing and dissolution of the body with their causes.[note30](#) To summarize, he is firmly mindful of the fact that only the body exists (not a soul, a self or I). That mindfulness is just for gaining insight (vipassana) and mindfulness progressively. Being detached from craving and wrong views [note30](#) he dwells without clinging to anything in the world.[note32](#) Thus, bhikkhus, this is a way in which a bhikkhu dwells perceiving again and again the body as just the body.

iii. Sampajanna Pabba (Section on Clear Understanding)

And again, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu, while going forward or while going back does so with clear understanding;[note39](#) while looking straight ahead or while looking elsewhere he does so with clear understanding; while bending or stretching his limbs he does so with clear understanding; while carrying the alms bowl and while wearing the robes he does so with clear understanding; while eating, drinking, chewing, and savouring he does so with clear understanding; while urinating or defecating he does so with clear understanding; while walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking, speaking or when remaining silent, he does so with clear understanding.

Thus he dwells perceiving again and again the body, as just the body in himself... Thus, bhikkhus, this is also a way in which a bhikkhu dwells perceiving again and again the body as just the body.

II. Vedananupassana (Contemplation on Feelings)

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu dwell perceiving again and again that feelings (vedana)[note45](#) are just feelings (not mine, not I, not self but just as phenomena)?

Here (in this teaching), bhikkhus, while experiencing a pleasant feeling,[note46](#) a bhikkhu knows, "I am experiencing a pleasant feeling"; or while experiencing an unpleasant feeling,[note47](#) he knows, "I am experiencing an unpleasant feeling"; or while experiencing a feeling that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant,[note48](#) he knows, "I am experiencing a feeling that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant."

While experiencing a pleasant feeling associated with sense pleasures,[note49](#) he knows, "I am experiencing a pleasant feeling associated with sense pleasures"; or while experiencing a pleasant feeling not associated with sense pleasures,[note50](#) he knows, "I am experiencing a pleasant feeling not associated with sense pleasures."

While experiencing an unpleasant feeling associated with sense pleasures,[note51](#) he knows, "I am experiencing an unpleasant feeling associated with sense pleasures"; or while experiencing an unpleasant feeling not associated with sense pleasures,[note52](#) he knows, "I am experiencing an unpleasant feeling not associated with sense pleasures."

While experiencing a feeling, that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant that is associated with sense pleasures,[note53](#) he knows, "I am experiencing a feeling that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant that is associated with sense pleasures"; or while experiencing a feeling that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant that is not associated with sense pleasures, he knows, "I am experiencing a feeling that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant that is not associated with sense pleasures."

Thus he dwells perceiving again and again feelings as just feelings (not mine, not I, not self, but just as phenomena) in himself; or he dwells perceiving again and again feelings as just feelings in others; or he dwells perceiving again and again feelings as just feelings in both himself and in others. He dwells perceiving again and again the cause and the actual appearing of feelings; or he dwells perceiving again and again the cause and the actual dissolution of feelings; or he dwells perceiving again and again both the actual appearing and dissolution of feelings with their causes.[note54](#) To summarize, he is firmly mindful of the fact that only feelings exists (not a soul, a self or I). That mindfulness is just for gaining insight (vipassana) and mindfulness progressively. Being detached from craving and wrong views he dwells without clinging to anything in the world. Thus, bhikkhus, in this way a bhikkhu dwells perceiving again and again feelings as just feelings.

III. Cittanupassana (Contemplation on the Mind)

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu dwell perceiving again and again the mind (citta) as just the mind (not mine, not I, not self but just a phenomenon)?

Here (in this teaching), bhikkhus, when a mind with greed (raga) [note55](#) arises, a bhikkhu knows, "This is a mind with greed"; or when a mind without greed [note56](#) arises, he knows, "This is a mind without greed"; when a mind with anger (dosa) [note57](#) arises, he knows, "This is a mind with anger"; or when a mind without anger [note58](#) arises, he knows, "This is a mind without anger"; when a mind with delusion (moha) [note59](#) arises, he knows, "This is a mind with delusion"; or when a mind without delusion [note60](#) arises, he knows, "This is a mind without delusion"; or when a lazy, slothful mind (samkhittacitta) [note61](#) arises, he knows, "This is a lazy, slothful mind"; or when a distracted mind (vikkhittacitta) [note62](#) arises, he knows, "This is a distracted mind"; or when a developed mind (mahagattacitta) [note63](#) arises, he knows, "This is a developed mind"; or when an undeveloped mind (amahagattacitta) [note64](#) arises, he knows, "This is an undeveloped mind"; or when an inferior mind (sauttaracitta) [note65](#) arises, he knows, "This is an inferior mind"; or when a superior mind (anuttaracitta) [note66](#) arises, he knows, "This is a superior mind"; or when a concentrated mind (samahitacitta) [note67](#) arises, he knows, "This is a concentrated mind"; or when an unconcentrated mind (asamahitacitta) [note68](#) arises, he knows, "This is an unconcentrated mind"; or when a mind temporarily free from defilements (vimutticitta) [note69](#) arises, he knows, "This is a mind temporarily free from defilements"; or when a mind not free from defilements (avimutticitta) arises, he knows, "This is a mind not free from defilements".

Thus he dwells perceiving again and again the mind as just the mind (not mine, not I, not self but just a phenomenon) in himself; or he dwells perceiving again and again the mind as just the mind in others; or he dwells perceiving again and again the mind as just the mind in both himself and in others. He dwells perceiving again and again the cause and the actual appearing of the mind; or he dwells perceiving again and again the cause and the actual dissolution of the mind; or he dwells perceiving again and again both the actual appearing and dissolution of the mind with their causes. [note70](#) To summarize, he is firmly mindful of the fact that only the mind exists (not a soul, self or I). That mindfulness is just for gaining insight (vipassana) and mindfulness progressively. Being detached from craving and wrong views he dwells without clinging to anything in the world. Thus, bhikkhus, in this way a bhikkhu dwells perceiving again and again the mind as just the mind.

Notes

1. The words of Ananda Mahathera who was the Buddha's attendant monk. He recited the texts of the Dhamma, as he had heard them from the Buddha, at the First Council of monks (approx. 544 b.c.).
2. This is a polite form of address which was used when monks spoke to the Buddha. It means "Blessed One".
3. The Kuru country was located in North West India near New Delhi.
4. A bhikkhu is a Buddhist monk who has received full ordination.
5. "Bhadante" is a polite answer to an elder or superior. Its approximate meaning would be "Yes, Venerable Sir".
6. The one and the only way: ekayano, this means that this is: the only way which surely leads to the benefits listed, there is no other way, and this way leads to nowhere else. This statement does not need to be believed in blindly, but as a meditator practises he can verify it by his own experience.
7. Cessation (atthanamaya) is generally translated as "destruction" which might wrongly imply an active attack on the physical and mental pain. However, the physical and mental pain cease due to lack of craving, just as a fire is extinguished due to lack of fuel.
8. Physical and mental pain (dukkha-domanassa) is a compound word which denotes the whole spectrum of physical and mental pain. Here, dukkha (du = bad, painful, + kha = empty, space) refers to all types of physical pain, and domanassa (du = bad, painful + mana = mind) refers to all types of mental pain including frustration, grief, fear and various types of phobias and neuroses.
9. Here naya means the four Noble Paths (ariya magga). The Noble Path is the name for the consciousness that has Nibbana for its object. The Four Noble Paths are the path of a Stream Enterer (sotapatti magga), the path of the Once-returner (sakadagami magga), the path of a Non-returner (anagami magga), and the path of an Arahant (arahatta magga).
10. Nibbana (Skt. Nirvana), is a reality experienced by a mind totally free from greed, hatred, and delusion.
11. Satipatthana (Sati = mindfulness, awareness of what is occurring + patthana = that which plunges into and penetrates continuously, again and again) is the type of mindfulness that penetrates repeatedly into the body, feelings, mind, and dhammas, and sees the actual reality that is occurring. This is in contrast to the normal unmindful state in which the mind bounces or skips over these phenomena. "The four satipatthanas" might therefore be translated as the "four steadfast mindfulnesses".
12. The Four satipatthanas in Pali are kayanupassana, vedananupassana, cittanupassana and dhammanupassana.
13. Kaya is the aggregate of physical phenomena. Here it refers to the corporeal body.
14. The phrases, "body as just the body", "feelings as just feelings", show that the body, feelings, mind, and dhammas are not to be seen as mine, I or self. This is the natural knowledge that arises from observing the body, feelings, mind and dhammas with steadfast mindfulness. It is not a belief. Normally this knowledge is absent due to lack of steadfast mindfulness.

15. Diligence (atapi) means bringing the mind back to the object of meditation again and again no matter how many times it slips away.

16. Clear understanding (see Note 39)

17. World (loka) refers to anything that arises and passes away, i.e. the five aggregates of clinging.

18. Feelings (vedana) (see Note 45)

19. Mind (citta) is that which knows, is aware, or is conscious (see Cittanupassana Section).

20. The word dhamma has a number of meanings according to the context in which it is used. It can mean: natural phenomena, mental objects, a state, truth, reality, wisdom, actions, good actions, practice, cause and offence. Also, in English usage Dhamma (there are no capital letters in the Pali language) can mean the Teachings of the Buddha or the texts which contains those teachings. Here, in this context dhamma is any natural phenomenon that is not a concept and it is specifically referring to the five hindrances, the five aggregates of clinging, the six internal and external sense bases, the seven factors of enlightenment and the Four Noble Truths.

21. The main point here is that the place for meditation should be as quiet and free from people and distractions as possible.

22. If sitting cross-legged is too painful the meditator will not be able to sit for very long. The main point is to sit in a comfortable and alert way. Therefore, a chair may be used. Mindfulness of breathing can also be developed while standing, walking or lying down.

23. The mindfulness should be directed to the place at which the breath makes contact with the upper lip or the tip of the nose depending on where it is felt in each individual.

24. The whole breath body (sabbakaya) means the whole breath from the beginning to the end.

25. As the mind calms down the breath will also calm down without exerting any conscious control over it.

26. It is not necessary to repeat all the above phrases in the mind, but the essential point is to be aware of the actual phenomena. These phrases are all examples to show that the meditator has to be aware of the breath in whichever condition it is in and does not need to control the breath in any way.

27. Here "body" means the process of breathing.

28. The meditator knows by inference that in others, just as in himself, there is no I or self that breathes but just breathing exists. This cuts out delusion concerning external phenomena.

29. This cannot be done at the same time but is done alternately.

30. The causes of the appearing and the dissolution of the breath are the existence or the non-existence of the body, the nasal apertures, and the mind. The actual appearing and the actual dissolution refer to the actual phenomena of the breath arising and passing away. The main point here is to be aware of the actual appearing and the actual dissolution of the breath so as to perceive its impermanent, unsatisfactory and soulless nature.

31. Wrong view refers to thinking that there is a permanent self or I who is breathing. If the meditator sees the breath as impermanent, unsatisfactory, and not self then there will be no craving or wrong view at that time.

32. See Note 17.

33. While walking (gacchanto) lit. means while going.

34. I am walking: Here as elsewhere in this discourse the use of the term "I" is only a grammatical usage and does not mean that an "I" really exists. In Pali language it is impossible to construct a verb without an ending showing a subject, for example,

gaccha + mi = gacchami, I am going

gaccha + ma = gacchama, we are going

A similar situation occurs in English where sometimes we have to make up a subject to make a sentence i.e. "It's raining". Clearly the "It" does not exist and there is only raining. Similarly there is only walking and no "I" who is walking.

35. When the meditator is aware of the actual motion of the legs and body, that is the sensation of touch and motion, he can be said to "know", "I am walking". In all the postures he should be aware of what is actually happening in a similar way.

36. The meditator should even be aware of movements of the body within a posture, e.g. while sitting he moves an arm or while lying down he rolls over.

37. Body here means the positions, postures, and movements of the body.

38. The causes of the appearing and the dissolution of the body here and in subsequent sections are the existence or non-existence of ignorance of the Four Noble Truths, craving, kamma, and nutriment.

39. Clear understanding (sampajanna) is of four types: satthaka-sampajanna, sappaya-sampajanna, gocara-sampajanna and asammoha-sampajanna.

Before a meditator does any action he should first consider whether that action is or is not a beneficial action. This prior consideration is called satthaka-sampajanna.

If it is a beneficial action then the meditator should next consider whether it is suitable or proper. This is called sappaya-sampajanna. For example, if the meditator wishes to go to a pagoda to meditate this is a beneficial action. However, if at the time he wishes to go to the pagoda there is a large crowd gathered for a pagoda festival and there would be many disturbances because of that, then it would not be suitable.

The understanding of the proper field for the mind is gocara-sampajanna. If the meditator is practising the four satipatthanas this is the proper field for the mind. If he is thinking about or indulging in sense pleasures this is not the proper field for the mind.

The understanding that sees that all conditioned phenomena are impermanent and unsatisfactory and that sees all phenomena (including Nibbana) are not-self is asammoha-sampajanna.

40. This meditation can be practised in either of two ways. The first way is to see each part as repulsive and the second way is to see that as parts or collectively the body is not-self.

To develop the perception of the repulsiveness of the body it is very helpful to view an autopsy of a corpse as this will make it easier to truly see that each part is repulsive. This method of meditation is very effective for cutting out lust.

To develop the perception of not-self the meditator should reflect on each part and see that they are devoid of consciousness e.g. the hair on the head does not know it has hair growing on it; what is it that thinks "This is my hair"? By meditating in this way the meditator will clearly see the difference between the mind and the body. Also he will see for himself that it is deluded to view the body as me, as mine or as self.

41. Only primary elements (dhatu) and no being or soul.

42. The primary elements (dhatu) are the natural qualities of matter. The earth element (pathavi-dhatu) is the quality of hardness and softness or the degree of solidity. The water element (apo-dhatu) is the quality of fluidity and cohesion. The fire element (tejo-dhatu) is the quality of heat and cold. The air element (vayo-dhatu) is the quality of motion, vibration and support.

All four primary elements are present in any given substance but one is more prominent. The quality of hardness and softness is called earth element because that is the prominent quality of earth, but, earth also has the qualities of cohesion, heat and motion. The parts from the hair of the head up to the brain, in the Patikulamanasika Pabba, are examples of bodily parts in which the earth element is prominent. The parts from bile up to urine are examples in which the water element is prominent. Heat and cold in the body are examples of the fire element. The breath is an example of the wind element.

43. In this simile the four high roads represent the four postures. The butcher or his apprentice represents a meditator who sees the body as only elements, just as the cow having been divided is no longer seen as a cow but is seen only as meat.

44. The meditations based on corpses are best done while or after actually seeing a corpse. By seeing the reality that the body will one day be a corpse too, the mind becomes free from attachment to the body.

45. Vedana (feelings) is not used here in the sense of "emotions", but refers only to the pleasant, the unpleasant, and the neither pleasant nor unpleasant feelings that arise, only one at a time, with every consciousness, (i.e eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-..., body?..., and mind-consciousness). It is important to see these feelings clearly as they are the cause of craving. Also, if the meditator does not see these clearly then he may think that there is a being experiencing feeling.

46. E.g., bodily comfort and mental happiness.

47. E.g., bodily pain and mental pain.

48. Neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling is the hardest to perceive as its characteristic is the absence of pleasure and pain. E.g., the neutral feeling that is normally present on the surface of the eye and the feeling in the mind when it is neither happy nor unhappy.

49. E.g., the normal type of pleasure and happiness based on sense pleasures.

50. E.g., the happiness experienced while seeing the true nature of body and mind.

51. E.g., the unpleasant feeling experienced when one does not obtain the sense pleasures one wants to obtain.

52. E.g., the unhappiness experienced by a meditator reflecting on his lack of progress towards realizing Nibbana.

53. E.g., the neutral feeling experienced when the mind is calm and detached from sense pleasures.

54. The causes of the appearing and the dissolution of feelings are the existence or non-existence of contact (phassa), ignorance of the Four Noble Truths, craving and kamma.

55. Greed (raga) does not just mean strong passion but refers to the whole range of lust, craving, and attachment to sense pleasures from the weakest sensual desire to the strongest lust. It can produce only unwholesome actions.

56. The mind without greed is the wholesome opposite of greed and is the cause of renunciation, generosity, charity, and giving.

57. Anger (dosa) always occurs together with mental pain (domanassa). Therefore, if mental pain is present the meditator should know that anger is also present. Aversion, ill-will, frustration, fear, and sadness are all included in this term. Anger can produce only unwholesome actions.

58. The mind without anger is the wholesome opposite of anger and is the cause of loving-kindness (metta), friendliness, and goodwill.

59. Delusion (moha) is the mental concomitant that clouds and blinds the mind making it unable to discern between right and wrong actions, unable to perceive the characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and soullessness, and unable to perceive the Four Noble Truths. It is common to all unwholesome types of consciousness but here it refers specifically to those types of consciousness associated with doubt, uncertainty, restlessness, distraction, and confusion.

60. The mind without delusion is the wholesome opposite of delusion. It is the wisdom that perceives the impermanent, unsatisfactory and soulless nature of conditioned phenomena, perceives the Four Noble Truths, and is able to discern between right and wrong actions.

Greed, anger, delusion and their opposites all have a wide range of intensity from weak to strong. In insight meditation it is important to be aware of whatever is present in the mind no matter how weak or strong it appears to be.

61. This is the shrunken mind that is lethargic, indolent, and lacks interest in anything.

62. A diffused, restless state of mind that goes here and there is therefore not concentrated.

63. The type of mind experienced in the rāpa jhanas and arāpa jhanas.

64. The mind as generally found in the sensuous (kamavacara) realms (i.e. without jhanas).

65. As above (Note 64.)

66. The rupa jhanas and arupa jhanas. Amongst these two the arāpa jhanas are superior to the rāpa jhanas.

67. The mind with either proximate concentration (upacara samadhi) or absorption concentration (appana samadhi). A meditator who has no experience of jhana will not need to be mindful of the concentrated mind, the superior mind or the developed mind.

68. The mind without proximate or absorption concentration.

69. The mind temporarily free from defilements due to insight or jhana. There are ten defilements (kilesa), namely: greed, anger, delusion, conceit, wrong views, doubt, sloth, distraction, lack of moral shame, lack of moral dread (lobho, doso, moho, mano, ditthi, vicikiccha, thinam, uddhacam, ahirikam, anottapam).

70. The causes of the appearing and the dissolution of the mind are the existence or non-existence of ignorance of the Four Noble Truths, craving, kamma, body and mind (nama and rāpa).

71. The five hindrances are unwholesome mental concomitants that confuse the mind and obstruct it from achieving wholesome states such as insight or jhana.

72. Sense desire is the craving for any of the five types of sense-objects (i.e. sights, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile objects). It arises due to unwise attention to the pleasant aspect of an object. It is discarded due to the wise attention to the perception of either impermanence, unsatisfactoriness or soullessness or to the unpleasant aspect of an object. It is totally eradicated by the path of an Anagami (anagami magga).

73. Ill-will is the same as anger (see Note 57). It arises due to the unwise attention to the unpleasant aspect of an object. It is discarded due to wise attention to the perception of either impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, or soullessness or to the development of loving-kindness. It is totally eradicated by the path of Anagami.

74. Sloth and torpor refer to the state of indolence, dullness of mind and dullness of mental concomitants. They arise due to unwise attention to lack of interest, lazy stretching of the body, drowsiness after meals, and mental sluggishness. They are mental concomitants and do not refer to physical tiredness. They are discarded due to wise attention to the perception of either impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, or soullessness or to the development of energy and exertion. They are totally eradicated by the path of an Arahant (arahatta magga).

75. Distraction (uddhacca) refers to the agitated, restless, and unconcentrated mind. Worry (kukkucca) refers to worrying about past actions that one has or has not done. They arise due to unwise attention to the things that cause distraction and worry. They are discarded by wise attention to the perception of either impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, or soullessness or to the development of calmness of mind. Distraction is totally eradicated by the path of an Arahant. Worry is totally eradicated by the path of an Anagami.

76. Doubt or wavering refers to doubts such as "Is the Buddha really fully enlightened?"; "Does this practice really lead to the cessation of dukkha?"; "Have the disciples of the Buddha really attained enlightenment by this practice?"; "Is there a future life?"; "Was there a past life?". Doubt or wavering arises due to unwise attention to things that cause doubt. It is discarded due to wise attention to the perception of either impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, or soullessness or to the Dhamma. It is totally eradicated by the path of a Sotapanna or Streamwinner (sotapatti magga).

77. The cause of the appearing of the hindrances is unwise attention (ayoniso manasikara). To cause of the dissolution of the hindrances is wise attention which removes them temporarily and the Four Noble Paths (ariyamagga) which permanently discards them (See also Notes 71 to 76).

78. The five aggregates of clinging are the objects depending on which the four types of clinging arise. The four types of clinging are the clinging to sense pleasures, the clinging to wrong views, the clinging to the belief that there are other paths and practices that can lead to happiness and liberation besides the Eightfold Noble Path, and the clinging to the view that there is a Self or Soul.

79. The word rāpa refers to everything made of the four primary elements (i.e. the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element). But here it refers mostly to the corporeal body which arises together with the remaining four aggregates of clinging.

Feeling is described in Note 45.

Perception recognizes or perceives an object by means of a mark. It enables one to recognize colours such as blue, white or red. It can also wrongly recognize a rope as a snake.

Mental formations include faith, energy, intention, greed, hatred, delusion, non-greed, non-hatred, non-delusion, and mindfulness which prepare, arrange, or accomplish actions. There are fifty mental formations.

Consciousness is that which is aware of an object. Here it refers only to sensuous, rāpa and arāpa types of consciousness and does not include path or fruition consciousness (magga-phala citta) which are not objects of clinging.

80. For the causes of the appearing and the dissolution of the corporeal body see Note 38; of feelings, perception and mental formations see Note 54; and of consciousness see Note 70.

81. Sense bases are those things which extend and expand the range of the mind. The six internal sense bases are the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. The six external sense bases are sights, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile objects and mental objects.

82. The fetters (samyojana) are those things which bind one to the rounds of rebirth. They are: 1. craving for sense pleasures (kamaraga); 2. anger (patigha), 3. pride or conceit (mana), 4. wrong view (ditthi) 5. doubt or wavering (vicikiccha), 6. the belief that there are other paths and practices that can lead to happiness and liberation besides the Eightfold Noble Path (silabbataparamasa), 7. craving for rebirth in the sensuous, rāpa or arāpa worlds (bhavaraga), 8. envy or jealousy (issa), 9. meanness or stinginess (macchariya), 10. ignorance of the Four Noble Truths (avijja).

These fetters arise due to unwise attention which regards the sense bases as permanent, satisfactory and as Self or belonging to a Self. They are discarded temporarily by wise attention to the impermanent, unsatisfactory, and soulless characteristics of the sense bases. They are totally discarded by the four Noble Paths (i.e. ditthi, vicikiccha, silabbataparamasa, issa, and macchariya by sotapatti magga; kamaraga and patigha by anagami magga; and the remaining fetters by arahatta magga).

83. For the causes of the appearing and dissolution of the physical sense bases see Note 38; of the mind see Note 70; and of mental objects see Note 54.

84. Mindfulness is that which watches what is occurring at the present moment in the body and mind. (Also see Note 11).

85. All the factors of enlightenment arise due to wise attention and come to complete development due to the path of an Arahat (arahatta magga).

86. This is the wisdom or insight that can differentiate the corporeal body and the mind and perceives both as impermanent, unsatisfactory and not-self.

87. This is the balanced mental effort that is generated while being mindful.

88. This is the interest and lack of boredom that arises due to seeing things as they really are. It is often associated with a feeling of lightness, lifting of the body or a thrill of joy that can make the hair on the body stand up.

89. With the arising of rapture the mind becomes calm and peaceful. This is called tranquility.

90. With the arising of tranquility the mind is not distracted and no longer wanders here and there but is aware of each object that appears in the mind. This is concentration.

91. With the arising of concentration the mind sees each object in a detached and calm way. It feels neither aversion to pain nor is overpowered by pleasure but it is calmly and effortlessly observant of the impermanence, unsatisfactoriness or soullessness of every constituent of body and mind. This is called equanimity.

92. The cause of the appearing of the seven factors of enlightenment is wise attention (yoniso-manasikara) which views phenomena as impermanent, unsatisfactory and not-self. The cause of the dissolution of the seven factors of enlightenment is unwise attention (ayoniso-manasikara) which views phenomena as permanent, satisfactory and as a soul or self.

93. Birth (jati) refers to both birth and repeated rebirth.

94. Here dukkha does not just refer to painful feelings but has a wide range of meaning. Birth, ageing and death are dukkha because they are painful. Pleasant feelings are dukkha because they are subject to change. The rest of the five aggregates of clinging are dukkha because they are oppressed by ceaseless arising and dissolution.

95. Sorrow, lamentation and anguish are different intensities of mental pain that arise due to loss or painful states such as loss of a good reputation, the passing away of relatives or the loss of possessions through fire, flood, or theft. Sorrow is the weakest and is felt internally with little outward expression. Lamentation is more intense and results in outbursts of wailing and crying. Anguish is the most intense and although one cries and wails there is still deep inexpressible pain that makes one look exhausted and hopeless.

96. These things cannot be gained by wishing or prayer. They can only be gained by attaining the Noble Paths.

97. The craving for pleasurable sights, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile objects is kamatanha. The craving to be born in any sensual; rupa or arupa worlds, and the attachment to rupa or arupa jhanas, and the craving associated with the belief in an eternal and indestructible Self or Soul are all included in the term bhavatanha. The craving that associated with the wrong view that at death one is annihilated and hence that there is no rebirth or results of good or bad actions is vibhavatanha.

98. The word establishes (nivisati) has two aspects. Firstly, the craving arises at that place and secondly because of happening again and again it establishes itself there so that it arises habitually whenever the same object is met or thought about.

99. The world (loka) refers to the five aggregates of clinging.

100. Contact (phassa) refers not to the contact of an object with the body but to the contact of an object with the mind. Thus, when an object, a sense base and consciousness appear together it is called contact.

101. Volition (cetana) is the mental concomitant that causes actions of body, speech, and mind.

102. Initial thinking (vitakka) searches for, introduces, and moves towards a new sensual object. Continued thinking (vicara) stays with the same object and repeatedly thinks about, ponders, and examines that object in greater detail. They have different meanings when they are associated with the jhanas, which are all free from craving.

103. It is important to note that craving arises and is discarded in the same place and that craving is removed by mindfully observing each object as it arises at one of the six sense doors and not by mere intellectual understanding.

104. Right View (samma ditthi) develops through several stages. At first one understands that good actions produce good results, and that bad actions produce bad results. Next, one understands the impermanent, unsatisfactory and soulless nature of conditioned phenomena which deepens the understanding of cause and effect so that only cause and effect are seen. The last stage is to understand the Four Noble Truths and to see that if the cause (craving) ceases the result (dukkha) will also cease.

105. If one has Right View then depending on that Right Thought (samma sankappa) will arise. Also if one has Right Thought then Right Speech (samma vaca) and Right Action (samma kammanta) will arise because one's actions are dependent on one's thoughts.

106. Tale bearing refers to taking stories from one person to another in order to create a split between those two people and also to make oneself liked by the second person, e.g. person A hears person B saying bad things about person C. Then A goes to C and tells him what B has said in order to create discord between B and C and to make C like A.

107. This refers to idle chatter or gossip that is of no benefit to anyone. Nowadays it is worth considering if this applies to reading and writing certain types of books.

108. Only the intentional killing of living beings is meant here and not unintentional killing such as accidentally stepping on an insect. Something is called a living being if it possesses consciousness and does not include plants, bacteria, amoebae, and viruses which according to Buddhism are without consciousness.

109. Stealing does not just mean simple theft but also includes smuggling, tax evasion, and using false weights or measures.

110. This refers to sexual misconduct (i.e. adultery, rape), drinking alcohol, and taking drugs.

111. This refers to obtaining one's livelihood by wrong speech or wrong action. It includes trading in weapons, in animals for slaughter, in slaves, in liquor, in drugs, and in poisons.

112. The word jhana comes from the root jha = to stare. Here it is used to refer to a degree of concentration in which the mind stares at an object with such concentration that one is unaware of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, or tactile objects. There are four types of jhanas mentioned here which are characterized or differentiated by the mental concomitants present in each. As mental concomitants of jhana, vitakka and vicara refer to the initial and sustained application of the mind to a single object. Just like a man first puts his hand on a shaking object and then keeps his hand on the shaking object, vitakka puts the mind on the object and vicara keeps the mind there. At this stage the mind is still not perfectly calm. In the second jhana the mind is so still that it stays on one object without any vitakka and vicara. Rapture (piti) is the same as the enlightenment factor of rapture (see Note 88). Sukha refers to ease and comfort of body and mind.

113. The Buddha and his enlightened disciples are Noble Ones (ariya).

114. The causes of the appearing of dukkha are ignorance of the Four Noble Truths, craving and kamma. The cause of the dissolution of dukkha is the Eightfold Noble Path. The cause of the appearing of craving is Feeling. The cause of the dissolution of craving is the Eightfold Noble Path. The cessation of dukkha, which is Nibbana, has no arising or passing away and is therefore not included here.

The path leading to the cessation of dukkha is of two kinds: supramundane (lokuttara) and mundane (lokiya). Both appear due to the four factors of stream entry. (i.e. associating with virtuous men, hearing the true Dhamma, wisely considering the Dhammas one has heard, and practising in accordance with that Dhamma). The lokuttara path cannot pass away once it has been attained but the lokiya path can pass away due to not wisely considering the Dhamma one has heard and not practising in accordance with that Dhamma.

115. An Anagami is an enlightened individual who has eradicated ditthi, vicikiccha, silabbataparamasa, issa, macchhariya, kamaraga and patigha (see Note 82) and consequently at death will be reborn in the Pure Abode (Suddhavasa) where he will attain Arahatsip. He is called a Non-returner because he will never be reborn again in the sensuous realm (kamaloka). This last section is meant to encourage the meditator with the knowledge that if he practises in a really diligent and consistent way in accordance with this sutta he can expect to attain the total eradication of greed, hatred and delusion, in this very life.

Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

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