

A Guide to develop the Foundations of Mindfulness

... Contemplation on the Postures ...
(iriyā-patha)

by

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She delivered this lecture on March 5th, 2524 (1981)
at Vivatta (Round-free) Insight Practice Institute
Ayutthaya, Thailand

Note: This guide contains only the basis to the development of Insight to be put into practice following the advice of the kalyānamitta, the good/wise friend. This is just a guidance booklet; it can solely help us to develop an understanding of what the practice is about. It's not "the ready-made formula" that would allow us to accomplish the task without the backing of a teacher.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Thanks are due to Wiangchai Watcharanirun for his help in translating the text at a beginning stage. Also I would like to deeply thank Wallop Wongphodee for the kindly help of all sorts he offered while being engaged in this work; especially his advice concerning Dhamma and Thai language issues. I am most grateful to my friend Alejandro Ramirez Lovering for having shared so much of his time to help me in everything related to the English language. For having read part of the English text and giving me valuable suggestions regarding style, making the text easier to read, I would like to thank my friend Sue Dirksen. Gratitude is also due to Tipawadee Emavardhana for minutely having checked the English version in relation to the Thai and for translating part of this page into Thai; and to Ubasikā Majoorey Charoen for revising the English text along with the Thai version. The finished text owes a great deal to all of these people.

Appreciation for my teacher Achan Prani is beyond words. Words always fall short, and this is a matter of life or death, that is, of liberating knowledge or unlimited ignorance: she once told me: "people don't know that they don't know".

This work is dedicated to the memory of my beloved mother Elena Martinez to whom, as well as to all living beings who are suffering, I wish to transfer any merit created by producing this translation and giving it away as a *Dhamma-gift*.

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March 22, 2550 (2007)

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Good people who have confidence (*saddhā*) and interest to practice to go beyond circling in death and [re]birth—beyond touring in the round of perpetual wandering (*samsāra-vatta*)—, in all probability will have to carefully examine and search for a consistent explanation in the practice of *Dhamma*, the method leading out of this never-ending cycle of suffering (*samsāra-dukkha*): “Using what method and practicing how do we get away from this cycle?”

According to the evidence displayed in the Pāli Canon and its Commentaries, one must practice the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*satipathāna* 4), that is, one must contemplate body (*kāya*), contemplate feeling (*vedanā*), contemplate mind (*citta*) and contemplate mind-objects (*dhamma*). Body, feeling, mind and mind-objects are the four objects (*ārammana*, or *vatthu*) to be contemplated. Contemplating body is contemplating *rūpa*:¹ walking-*rūpa*, standing-*rūpa*, sitting-*rūpa* and lying-*rūpa*—thus this is contemplation of body as a basis for mindfulness (*kāyanupassanā-satipathāna*).

However, the one who is to enter the practice must first develop a correct understanding—one has to know and be sure of the reason the practice is going to be undertaken. This *first step* concerns the development of a proper understanding [*yoniso manasikāra*]: “What do I wish, what do I purpose from this practice?”

If one enters the practice because one desires to acquire merit, desires peace, desires to see *arising-and-ceasing*, desires to see heaven or hell, and so forth, [*ayoniso manasikāra*], this is not correct -it’s going way too far. For this reason, before actually entering the practice, learning and studying is required in order to get a right understanding [about the practice]. Before anything else, one must learn what material phenomena (*rūpa*) are and what mental phenomena (*nāma*) are,² and what is the method to contemplate them: How should one contemplate? How should one apply awareness [*manasikāra*] at the time of walking, standing, sitting or lying down? It is indispensable to know the reason before [*yoniso manasikāra*] one walks, stands or sits: For what reason is one to walk or sit? In which way is it a *necessity* to walk or sit? If it’s not a *necessity* then don’t walk, don’t sit, etc.

Being a necessity or *necessary* means that to be in the posture it’s not bearable—sitting or walking, standing or lying down is no longer tolerated. When *dukkha*³ in the posture is *forcing* us to change, that is, when stiffness and/or aching is actually happening, one can proceed to change. One must know for what reason one is *obliged* to change.⁴ If one changes the posture to recuperate, to feel comfortable or likewise, one is creating aiding conditions (*paccaya*) for defilement (*kilesa*)—this means that one must be acquainted with the method of preventing defilement, so that it cannot arise in any given object—because defilement always depends on the four postures [for its arising]. An example is when one desires to walk, stand, sit or lie down, to get comfortable. *Thought* desires to sit or lie down to get comfortable. Just this is defilement and it’s [a consequence of] the wrong feeling/awareness about the reason [why one changes], thus is an aiding condition for [the occurrence of further] defilement. Defilement therefore is dependent on its continuous arising, unendingly creating the round of rebirth (*samsāra-vatta*).⁵ The truth is that although one does not want to sit, one has to sit; although one does not want to lie down, one has to lie down. Because if one were to only sit or only lie down without changing the posture at all, one would see how obviously impossible that would be. After walking, standing, sitting, or lying down for some time one has to get stiff, get sore—it’s inevitable.

The truth is that, in this way, all the various postures are *dukkha*, and therefore one is forced to keep on changing, obliged to keep on relieving [suffering]. Stiffness and aching are *dukkha-vedanā* [unpleasant feeling], but when one changes, when one eases *dukkha*, one intends/desires to recuperate, to feel comfortable, one never realizes that one changes because *dukkha* *must* be eased, that *dukkha* is *forcing* us to change all day, all night. Even when sleeping, just as one becomes aware that one is awake, at the very moment, one has to make a movement right away. This is because the stiffness and/or aching are already present: being in the previous *mode* (*ākāra*) is not bearable, therefore one must change, must ease. When there is stiffness and/or

¹ *Rūpa* is to be translated as “**materiality**”, or as “material (or physical) phenomena (or *event*)”, to differentiate it from “matter”. For example, the bodily postures, although they rely on matter (that is, on the four great elements), they are not in themselves matter, or *concrete matter*, but “mind-produced matter” (*cittajarūpa*)—therefore they are to be known through the mind-door.

For a better understanding of the Buddhist terms see the Pāli Glossary as often as necessary. Pāli is the language of the earliest Buddhist scriptures by which the whole Teaching is exposed

² *Nāma* has the characteristic of knowing (an object)—even though *nāma* itself can also be an object of observation—while *rūpa* has the characteristic of not knowing anything

³ This term is usually translated as “suffering”, or as “stress”, etc. These renderings can be limited and misleading because of the background they stand for in Western thought. So it’s preferable not to give an equivalent. It’s also difficult to find an exact translation for some Pāli terms since they can change their meaning according to the context

⁴ One better be careful with terms like “not bearable” or “no longer tolerated”, thinking that it means when one’s bones and muscles are about to break up or one is on the verge of dying. This isn’t an ascetic practice. One changes naturally: when *dukkha* (stiffness and/or aching) tells us it’s time to take care of it: it’s time to change the posture/gesture

⁵ Defilement depends on defilement to arise, which is the endless continuation of *dukkha*

aching, one does not like it (this is *dosa*). Just as one changes, the stiffness is gone, one likes it (this is *lobha*).⁶ Therefore, before changing, first one has to consider: “For what reason am I to change?”

At the time one is going to change, one must first be aware of the fact that one *has* to change - that it is a *necessity* - because to be in the former posture is just too much to bear. Therefore, it is *necessary* to change for the purpose of easing suffering (*dukkha*); one changes not to get over it or feel comfortable.

Every posture should be known in this manner.

“The one who sees”, or “the one who contemplates”, must also understand that *nāma*⁷ is “the one who sees” (it “sees” by the heart/mind, not by the eyes). If one focuses only on *rūpa*, if one does not *feel* (experience, perceive, sense, become aware) that *nāma* is the one who sees”, “the one who contemplates”, then one cannot know who is seeing, as a result the mind (*citta*) will know in a placid way (non-consciously).⁸ One must also be aware of which *rūpa* is presently being known: is it sitting-*rūpa* or lying-*rūpa*? This is the way one should apply awareness, so that one does not misunderstand sitting-*rūpa* and lying-*rūpa*—or each and every *rūpa*—as being only just one *rūpa*.

The truth is that sitting-*rūpa* and lying-*rūpa* are a different *rūpa*; standing-*rūpa* and walking-*rūpa* are a different *rūpa* as well. They are not the same *rūpa*, because each *rūpa* is different. To know who is sitting or who is lying down has to be known in the *mode* (the gesture: *ākāra*). In terms of *mode*, each *rūpa* is different from one another [each *rūpa* has its own *mode* (its own particular way of manifesting itself)]. If the practitioner does not *feel* [experience, perceive, sense] in the sitting *mode* that it is sitting-*rūpa*, or in the lying *mode* that it is lying-*rūpa*, etc., then the scattering of *ghanasaññā*—the idea of one compact solid mass—will not be possible, because one has always taken this walking, standing, sitting and lying down to be “I” or “me”—I wish to sit then I sit, I wish to lie down then I lie down—, one firmly adheres to them as “this is self” and “this is my self”.

Hence the practitioner needs to *feel* [experience, perceive, sense] that when knowing sitting-*rūpa*, the sitting is *rūpa* —the lying down is *rūpa*, the standing is *rūpa*, the walking is *rūpa*. Thus the idea of one compact solid mass may be scattered out [disintegrated, or made to loose cohesion], and the idea of being a self or soul will not arise.

Practicing Vipassanā

has as its aim the destruction of the *self*, the wrong view that causes a firm belief in “this is self” and “this is my self”. So one needs to learn and study in order to develop a good understanding of the *nāmas* and *rūpas* happening—both internally and externally—throughout the various sense-doors: what is *nāma* and what is *rūpa* must be understood. This is most important, because this is the cause that allows for the uprooting of wrong view, the erroneous belief that mistakenly takes things for “this is self” and “this is my self”. And this misunderstanding is not specifically just about the body and the postures, this misunderstanding and belief exist generally throughout body and mind, both internally and externally, because when there is a “me” [internal] there has to be a “mine” [external].

Thus the practitioner needs to study about *rūpa-nāma* in accordance with the various sense-doors—such as *rūpa-nāma* through the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and heart/mind—in order to develop a good understanding first; then, gently and gradually, he can begin to practice. Below is a concise explanation about this, specifically in the sense of practice, to be memorized easily—for example, through the eye, what is *nāma* and what is *rūpa*?

through the eye.....seeing is *nāma* and the color is *rūpa*

through the ear.....hearing is *nāma* and the sound is *rūpa*

through the nose.....smelling is *nāma* and the smell is *rūpa*

through the tongue.....tasting is *nāma* and the taste is *rūpa*

⁶ *Lobha* (liking, greed, etc.) and *dosa* (disliking, anger, etc.) are some of the impurities that the text refers to when talking about *defilement*. See the Glossary under “*kilesa*”

⁷ From now on the terms *nāma* and *rūpa* would not be translated; however, one needs to keep in mind their true meaning. For example, if it reads “*nāma* is the one who knows”, it means: “*a mental event* is what knows (instead of *me, myself* or *I*)”

⁸ One is knowing the object only with *satī*, and not with *sampajañña*, i.e. one knows the object, but not which *rūpa* or *nāma* it is

through the body-sense.....

knowing heat, cold, hardness, softness, pressure, is *nāma*
and... heat, cold, hardness, softness, pressure, are *rūpa*

through the heart/mind (*mano*)

thinking, recalling, liking, disliking, sleepiness, irritation, fear, annoyance, laziness, boredom, worry,
and so forth, are *nāma*

Sitting, lying down, standing and walking can [only] be known through the mind; they are not seen through the eyes or known through the eyes.⁹ During practice one must know through the heart/mind (*mano*). The heart/mind (*citta*)¹⁰ is the one who sees, the one who contemplates.

The practitioner needs first to memorize all that has just been explained. Because it is necessary that it must be known, memorized and also understood, and it is of vital import for the person wishing to go beyond *dukkha*. It is a fundamental basis for the practice, due to the fact that wrong view sometimes resides in *rūpa* and other times in *nāma*. Such as:

Through the eye the wrong assumption is: “I see”
—one takes seeing-*nāma* as being oneself

Through the ear the wrong assumption is: “I hear”
—one takes hearing-*nāma* as being oneself

Through the nose the wrong assumption is: “I smell”
—one takes smelling-*nāma* as being oneself

Through the tongue the wrong assumption is: “I taste”,
—one takes tasting- *nāma* as being oneself

Through the body the wrong assumption is: “I’m cold”, “I’m hot”... etc.
—one takes coldness-*rūpa*, heat-*rūpa*, hardness-*rūpa*, softness-*rūpa*, etc. as being oneself

Through the heart/mind everything is grasped entirely with wrong view because defilement is in the heart/mind [it’s a mental factor]. How is it viewed wrongly? Wrong view is “I”—I walk, I stand, I sit, I lie down, I see, I hear, I smell, I taste, I feel cold, I’m hot, I’m comfortable, I’m uncomfortable, I like, I dislike, I love, I detest, I hate, I’m angry, etc. This view is referred to as *attānuditthi* [“self-view”, or “the view that a self exists”]. One feels one is a self: this view is called *sakkāyaditthi* [“personality-belief”, or “false view of individuality”]

Love, gladness, desire to get, desire to know, desire to see, desire to hear, desire to smell, desire to taste, desire to know about this and that—any kind of desire— is *lobha*, greed (*tanhā*: craving).¹¹

This two, craving (*tanhā*) and wrong view (*ditthi*), are the first important things that have to be abandoned by anyone wishing to go beyond the round of suffering (*vatta-dukkha*). As long as one does not abandon them, one still has to keep on circulating in birth, old age (decay), sickness and death. One must carry on in the round of *dukkha*, which knows not an end— birth after birth, old age after old age, illness after illness, death after death; being born time and again, decaying time and again, getting sick time and again, dying time and again: one is caught burning in the fire of *dukkha* and defilement perpetually.

If the question arises: “Is there any benefit in having been born a human being?” Acquiring the condition (*attābhāva*) of a human being must be the result of merit (*puñña*) and wholesomeness (*kusala*). And just once in a great while birth as a human being has the chance to occur—birth as an animal, etc. is the most common. Therefore, acquiring the condition of a human being in addition to meeting with Lord Buddha’s teaching is worthy of being considered the greatest fortune ever. Lord Buddha handed over his legacy to the entire current generation of people of integrity. It is for Lord Buddha’s assemblies¹² to help each other to maintain this superb heritage. What is this heritage? The Four Foundations of Mindfulness. For this reason,

⁹ The eye does not see sitting-*rūpa*, etc.; it sees color (or light) (only). They are mind-objects (*dhamma-ārammana*), not visible-objects

¹⁰ “Citta” and “mano” are synonyms. What we usually understand as “mind”, in Pāli is known as “heart”: the center & focus of man’s emotional nature as well as that intellectual element which inheres in and accompanies its manifestations; i.e. thought.

¹¹ The Pāli terms “*lobha*” and “*tanhā*” have the exact same meaning; but “*lobha*” is mostly used in the *Abhidhamma*, while “*tanhā*” in the Discourses. *Lobha* is usually translated as *greed* and *tanhā* as *craving*. Nevertheless, a whole range of terms applies to both, depending on the context and/or the intensity of the impulse, accordingly: desire, covetousness, longing, wish, expectation, intention, liking, inclination, etc.

¹² Lord Buddha’s assemblies are four: monks, nuns, and male and female lay disciples

those interested in practicing have to listen to and learn thoroughly the practice procedure first, in order to achieve a good understanding before actually starting to practice. They must also understand that the purpose of cultivating mental development (*bhāvanā*) based on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness is to step away from birth, i.e. to go beyond this entire mass of suffering—not to get happiness and comfort.

Once the practitioner has gained knowledge of the reason for walking, standing, sitting and lying down, he/she still has to know about the *reasonability* regarding the next step.

Launching the practice

While sitting, one becomes aware of the sitting *mode* (*ākāra*) and one becomes aware that one is knowing sitting-*rūpa*—“one” means “the one who knows” [the *nāma* which knows]. While lying down, one becomes aware of the lying *mode* and one becomes aware that one is knowing lying-*rūpa*. While standing, one becomes aware of the standing *mode* and one is aware that one is knowing standing-*rūpa*. While walking, one becomes aware of the walking *mode* and one is aware that one is knowing walking-*rūpa*—walking is manifested through the pacing *mode*. Every time, before one changes from one posture to another or before doing any movement, it is necessary to contemplate the reason or justification. One must gradually have mindfulness (*sati*) and carefulness all the time. If one changes unmindfully, the change is done, so one lets it pass. However, if one is not being unmindful, then it is necessary to know first for what reason one has to move or to change. For what reason is it necessary [to change]? The stiffness and/or aching exert pressure on us until one cannot sit in that *mode* anymore, if it’s truly necessary one must change for sure—one must know one *has to* change for the purpose of easing *dukkha*¹³. The awareness has to be like this. One should have this kind of feeling/awareness in every posture. Do not change *easygoing*; when changing *easygoing* wisdom does not arise. Knowing *dukkha* is to provide the cause that brings about wisdom. Wisdom in Buddhism knows that which is true, i.e. *dukkha*. *Dukkha* is *sacca-dhamma* (a reality, a fact, a truth).

At the time of eating one should first contemplate, “Why does one eat?” Not to eat, is it possible or not? In fact it is impossible because of hunger. Hunger causes us not to feel good. Hunger exerts pressure on us *making us* eat. One cannot not eat, is unbearable. Therefore, one must contemplate directly according to reality: one *has to* eat because one *has to* ease *dukkha* -not because of the tastiness.¹⁴

After eating, one still has to wash the utensils one used for eating. One must know about the *necessity* of having to wash them: What if one does not wash them? Can one eat the next meal using the unwashed utensils?

What is the reason one drinks water? One drinks because the throat is dry, one is thirsty: this is *dukkha*. One drinks to ease *dukkha*.

Why does one need to take a shower? Is it possible not to take a shower? First one must investigate the true reason why one takes a shower and then afterwards one goes ahead and takes a shower. One does not take a shower following what one is accustomed to: maybe one is used to taking a shower in the morning when waking up and does it automatically. It is not forbidden for the practitioner to take a shower, but one just needs to know ahead the reason why one is going to take a shower.

Changing clothes? Is it possible to go on without changing clothes? Why? And about wearing clothes: why must one wear them? Can one not wear clothes? Normally one thinks one wears clothes to look pretty or handsome [one puts on clothing for the sake of beauty] thus one must select this and that color. Actually try not to use them, do look, then what? In fact, clothes are used due to a sense of shame, to keep insects from biting us and swarming around [and to protect the body against cold, heat and sunlight].

Can one wear unwashed clothes that one wore already? One surely cannot. Why does one wash the clothing? Normally everybody washes their clothes to make them clean, they say the clothes are dirty. The truth is that the clothes are dirty because one has worn them, right? Is it really the clothes that are dirty, or is it oneself?¹⁵

Please examine these matters carefully.

¹³ It’s important to understand the sometimes-subtle difference between “accepting” and “enduring” *dukkha*. This practice is not about enduring; it’s about knowing that if it’s *necessary* one goes on and does it (change). Enduring is defilement (*kilesa*)

¹⁴ In other words, one is *obliged to* eat not because the food is tasty or enjoyable; one is *obliged to* eat because... of hunger (*makes us eat*, not the tastiness of the food).

“As the cockerel constantly scratches the ground in search of food; so should the monk constantly reflect on the food he takes reminding himself, ‘I eat this not for enjoyment, nor for complexion, but merely to appease the pain of hunger and to enable me to practice, thus I shall put an end to sorrow’”

¹⁵ Does the filth come from the clothing or from our body?

When defecating or urinating one first has to contemplate: Why it is necessary to do it? What would happen if one doesn't? One is surely not able not to do it. Also when getting up to go to the toilet, one has to be mindful of walking-*rūpa*, or of the *dukkha* of having to ease *dukkha*.

Why does one wash one's face or brush one's teeth? Can one not wash one's face or brush one's teeth?

At night the time comes when it is necessary to go to bed because the body must have rest. Once knowing the reason why one goes to sleep, one proceeds to lie down being aware of lying-*rūpa*. One should fall asleep with the intention in one's heart to wake up. Whenever one wakes up, first one should try to be mindful of lying-*rūpa* at that moment. Before getting up one must contemplate on the reason, "What is causing me to get up?" Also, how many times one is turning around before falling asleep?

Please be observant.

Normally when doing something one wants it done fast. Once it is done, one is pleased. Then, also by following what one is accustomed to, one's habit, one looks for something else to do. However, the practitioner cannot do things in this way. For example, one thinks one must finish eating, finish washing the dishes, and then one can resume the sitting-*kammatthāna* (one's *meditation*). Don't do it like this, don't think in this manner. Don't harbor the feeling of "I am a *kammatthāna*-person" [I am a "*meditator*", I am a "*practitioner*"].

Don't walk *kammatthānically* or sit *kammatthānically*. If one walks *kammatthānically* then one has to walk unnaturally. Sitting *kammatthānically* is sitting in an unusual way [it's *fabricated*]. One must sit in a normal way: sitting to ease the stiffness. One walks naturally: easing-stiffness-walking, easing-*dukkha*-walking. Walk as usual/as nothing special, do not walk by tiptoeing stealthily (nothing singular needs to be attached to the walking; just take a walk).¹⁶ This has to be accompanied with mindfulness and clear comprehension (*sati-sampajañña*): being aware of the walking *mode* [is mindfulness], knowing that it is walking-*rūpa* [is clear comprehension]. Whatever one does should be done a little slower than usual—which is not pretending to do it slow—and should be done one thing at a time, one by one; things are not done simultaneously. For instance, at the time the hand is getting some food, the mouth is chewing, the eyes are staring somewhere and the mind is aiming elsewhere—it cannot be done in this manner, this is lack of restraint (*samvara*)¹⁷. The practitioner must always have restraint, at all times.

Practitioners are inclined to want calmness, they aim for peace—this is not correct. When seeing *rūpa* [with the intention] to make it [become] clear one gets annoyed when wandering mind (*uddhacca*) occurs, instead of realizing that wandering mind is *nāma*,¹⁸ is a *dhamma*¹⁹, a *dhamma* that is showing the truth. *Inappropriate attention according to causal relations* (*ayoniso manasikāra*) is an aiding condition for defilement. When practicing correctly one becomes aware of wandering mind—knowing that wandering mind is *nāma*—and then one [gently] comes back again to start anew, to see the existing *rūpa* in the present moment. When one comes back to see the *rūpa* again, one must do so having *sikkhati* (careful observation)—it's possible to come back either correctly or incorrectly.²⁰

¹⁶ "Doing *kammatthāna*" means "to fabricate" something. The true nature of things remains unseen as long as one is focused on what one is fabricating. *Kammatthāna* is not something that one can *do*: one walks to cure suffering (only), meanwhile *kammatthāna* happens by itself; it happens, so to speak, as a "side-effect". This practice is not about doing "walking-meditation", or "sitting-meditation", etc. "*No to do*" (not to *fabricate*, i.e. to stop doing that which is unnecessary—that which would not be impossible not to do, for it depends on our desire, on our liking or disliking) is the key to the end of sorrow

¹⁷ This is another term hard to translate and understand mainly because in everyday language one relates it to *control*. However, the development of *vipassanā*-wisdom is in no way related to *control* (*attā*). It actually consists of letting go of every form of *control*—*control* that one habitually uses in daily life. So one needs to become familiar with the "no-control-feeling", i.e. the "*anattā*-feeling", which can be done only through the correct understanding of *restraint*. **Restraint**: to simply (softly) refrain from doing that which is unnecessary, that which doesn't have (the easing of) *dukkha* as its cause or motive. It's unnecessary to *look for* something necessary (*to do*), *dukkha* tells us—to *look for* is desire

¹⁸ *Nāma* means a mental phenomenon (*only*): not a *self*, not a "me" or "mine"

¹⁹ Wandering mind is a *dhamma* classified within the five hindrances (*nīvarana*) in the fourth and last exercise of *satipatthāna*, "contemplation of *dharmas*". In this context *dhamma* can be understood as comprising all phenomena classified by way of the categories of the *Dhamma*, the Buddha's teaching. Phenomena are contemplated "in terms of" the categories listed as *dharmas*; which are the five hindrances, the seven awakening factors, the five aggregates, the six sense spheres, and the four noble truths

²⁰ It is for this kind of careful observation or scrutiny (*sikkhati*) to discern if one is practicing correctly or not. An example of practicing incorrectly is when one becomes aware of wandering mind and one quickly pulls the mind back to be with the *rūpa*. Correct practice would be when *sikkhati*, observation, becomes aware of this fact. Further it may also have the opportunity to know that when this happens it's because one harbors aversion to wandering mind; and this aversion is due to attraction (i.e. desire) to be with the *rūpa* (all the time) (this would be the development of desire and not of wisdom)

Entering the working-ground (*kammatthāna*)²¹

*When entering the working-ground one should bear in mind that one comes here to train oneself*²². Hoping, wanting, and preparing things in this and that way is defilement. As long as defilement is present wisdom cannot arise because the mind is rather following defilement. When practicing to go beyond *dukkha*, one must become familiar with *dukkha* and defilement, and understand the method to extinguish defilement. Do not think that a still mind, an indifferent mind, is a mind without defilement. This is not true. An unmoving and quiet mind does not know what is what—this mind is defiled by delusion (*moha-kilesa*). The satisfaction of, “Jeez! My mind is so nicely still and peaceful, it’s not going anywhere at all”, is a mind defiled by greed and wrong view (*lobha-kilesa* and *ditthi-kilesa*). Greed and wrong view depend for their arising in this way. The development of the Foundations of Mindfulness is not to head towards peacefulness, but to become aware of what is correct in accordance with the reality of the intrinsic nature of phenomena (*sabhāva*). The nature of the mind is to know or cognize [an object]—but with the fondness of knowing [it] incorrectly. This is because one is accustomed to know incorrectly—thus one must *train oneself* to know correctly. One must begin to train in a new direction: in knowing ourselves by ourselves, not in knowing things outside ourselves. Mostly we know about other people, about their affairs—about the affair within... we are not aware.

At the time of eating, one hand is getting the food, the mouth is chewing, and the eyes are staring at the dishes with curiosity: “What curry is this? Is it tasty or not?” When taking a shower one does it quickly, when washing clothes one does it hastily. Whatever one does, one does it as in a big hurry. This is because one is accustomed to do things in this way—automatically. When doing things fast, in a big hurry, automatically, mindfulness (*sati*) cannot catch up.

The development of Insight (*vipassanā*) is therefore to fully understand *nāma-rūpa*. To fully understand *nāma-rūpa* is to fully understand *dukkha*. To fully understand *dukkha* is to fully understand the abandonment of craving. So one must know where craving arises, when it arises, what it depends on for its arising, and how/why it arises.

Craving arising through the eye **depends on** the visual object that is seen

Craving arising through the ear **depends on** the sound that is heard

Craving arising through the nose **depends on** odor

Craving arising through the tongue **depends on** flavor

Craving arising through the body-sense **depends on** bodily tangible object

Craving arising through the mind/heart **depends on** mental-object

Craving depends for its arising on these six places. Craving is a mental event, [i.e. it is *nāma*]. And why can craving arise? It can arise because it depends on the wrong understanding about the cause [or reason]—wrong in relation to the truth of the intrinsic nature (*sabhāva*). It is just this erroneous awareness not compatible with what is real, which is an aiding condition for [the arising of] craving. Fully understanding *dukkha* is the abandonment of craving. Craving desires to obtain happiness (*sukha*). Craving keeps whispering to the mind; it desires to get a new posture because it presupposes the new posture to be happiness. When one changes not knowing that *dukkha* is being eased, craving-satisfaction immediately gets a chance to enter and abide in that new posture. When one is aware that one changes to ease *dukkha*, craving-satisfaction for the new posture will therefore not arise. When the new posture is not an aiding condition for [the arising of] craving, the old posture that was *dukkha*—pain and/or aching—will not be an aiding condition for [the arising of] aversion (*dosa*), that is, dissatisfaction. While feeling good/comfortable one is satisfied (this is *lobha*). While feeling uncomfortable one is dissatisfied (this is *dosa*).

When there is a headache, a stomachache, or some other bodily sickness, one should see *nāma*, and one should see it right where it hurts knowing that the pain is *nāma* (*nāma*-pain) (this is to bar the idea of a self²³). Where is the sickness? One must see it *right out there* [at the body]; one doesn’t “go inside” to know it *in or from* the heart/mind. The *dukkha* that arises from physical sickness must be known in the *nāma* because it must be cured with medicine—it’s not the same *dukkha* that arises from the postures. The *dukkha* that arises because of walking, sitting, etc. for some time must be known at the *rūpa*. Which *rūpa* is *dukkha*: walking-*rūpa* is *dukkha* or sitting-*rūpa* is *dukkha*? One must know this too. Or when *nāma* is *dukkha*, also one must know which *nāma* is *dukkha*. When there is stiffness in walking or standing, one eases the suffering by changing the posture. However, the *dukkha* that arises from physical sickness must be cured with medicine; thus *nāma*-feeling (*vedanā*) is what is to be looked at.

²¹ In this particular case the *working-ground* is the objects of observation that are used to set up mindfulness

²² i.e. to learn by doing (mistakes), by repetition

²³ This is to prevent the arising of the idea that it is “I” that feels the pain, feels the physical sickness, etc.

Having to know that each posture is *dukkha* is to evict craving out of the different postures. Knowing the *reason* before changing is to allow oneself to know that one *has to* change to ease *dukkha*, and to evict craving out of the new posture because craving *assumes* that the new posture is happiness/pleasure, therefore it desires to get a new posture. When one continues to see, to contemplate every posture, until one sees that they are all *dukkha*, that every single *rūpa* is *dukkha*, then one can seek further happiness absolutely no more. Craving—hope itself—becomes hopeless [*hope becomes hopeless*] until it has no place to depend on, because every single *rūpa* is *dukkha*; no happy (*sukha*) *rūpa* can be found anywhere at all. So craving gives up all its longing. And the wrong assumption, that is, the perverted understanding (*vipallāsa*) that is accustomed to assume that the body is beautiful and this *rūpa-nāma* is happy, permanent and self, will be absent from the mind.

Perversion (*vipallāsa-dhamma*)

is the inaccurate view that distorts or blurs that which is real. It is compared to the way in which a man whose mind is possessed perceives the world. In terms of the constituent parts of a system (*anga-dhamma*), perversion is classified in three: view (*ditthi-vipallāsa* 1), thought (*citta-vipallāsa* 1) and memory (*saññā-vipallāsa* 1), which is seeing distortedly, knowing distortedly and remembering (perceiving) distortedly respectively. However, perversion has four objects (*ārammana*):

- 1 **The perversion of beauty** (*subha-vipallāsa*) regards this *rūpa* which is impure (ugly: *asubha*) as something good or beautiful
- 2 **The perversion of happiness** (*sukha-vipallāsa*) regards this *rūpa-nāma* which is suffering (*dukkha*) as happiness-yielding
- 3 **The perversion of permanence** (*nicca-vipallāsa*) regards this *rūpa-nāma* which is impermanent (*anicca*) as permanent
- 4 **The perversion of self** (*attā-vipallāsa*) regards this *rūpa-nāma* which is without self (*anattā*) as “me” or “mine”

These four perverted views arise in us all the time. *Ditthi* views things distortedly; *citta* thus follows knowing distortedly, and *saññā* remembering distortedly. As long as these four perversions exist within us one will be under bleak darkness and utter ignorance forever.

The defilements of greed, aversion and delusion (*lobha-, dosa- and moha-kilesa*) arise in us all day long. It is so because one has ignorance, (*avijjā*) and perversion, i.e. wrong understanding. Just these abovementioned four assumptions are the important fundamental root-causes [which support defilements]. This all happens due to a lack of contemplation about the true reason why one does things: *that everything one has to do is to ease dukkha*. Please do contemplate this deeply to experience it actually.

Having no food to eat is *dukkha*. Having no medicine when one is sick is *dukkha*. Having no clothing to cover the body is *dukkha*. Having no dwelling to protect oneself from the sunlight and rain is *dukkha*. Having to be in haste busily working and looking for money, as it is nowadays, is because of *dukkha* itself; looking for money to buy food, to buy anything, again, is just to ease *dukkha*, however, one does not see the truth in this. One thinks that the more money one earns, the more happiness one gets. But the true fact is that the more one has the more *dukkha* one has, due to fear of robbery, fear of being cheated, and the need to keep and maintain a lot. This is obvious *dukkha*, but one does not see it. Worry, fear, concern for this, concern for that, fear of this, fear of that; fear of sickness, fear of death, fear of difficulty, fear of poverty, and hundreds and thousands more. And what about the *dukkha* caused by sickness? And what about the *dukkha* caused by our own defilements? And what about the *dukkha* caused by the defilements of others? *Dukkha* and trouble are within oneself regularly all the time. Once one has eased *dukkha*, one feels glad, happy. But when *dukkha* recurs, then one is in trouble: one bustles about and runs to see the fortuneteller—one asks deities to come and help us.

If through contemplation one gets an insight into genuine cause-and-effect, profound faith in the words of Lord Buddha will arise.²⁴ It would not be necessary at all to look for other things as a refuge. One would have confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Ariya Sangha.²⁵ Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha would be

²⁴ Acquiring this faith is called “going for refuge” in Lord Buddha. The “refuge” here derives from the fact that one has placed trust in the truth of Lord Buddha’s Awakening and expects that by following his teachings—in particular, and to begin with, the principle of *skillful kamma*—one protects oneself from creating further suffering for oneself or others, eventually reaching true, unconditioned release. This act of going for refuge is what qualifies one as a Buddhist—as opposed to someone simply interested in Lord Buddha’s teachings—and puts one in a position to benefit fully from what Lord Buddha taught

²⁵ The Triple Gem: the Awakened One, the Teaching, and the Noble Order or holy community of the accomplished followers of Lord Buddha

our real refuge. Lord Buddha teaches to turn oneself into one's own refuge.²⁶ If one has oneself as a real refuge already, there's no need to run around looking for help in a god or goddess, because it isn't sure whether those kinds of things can really help us or not—one doesn't know.

Buddhism arose in the world because Prince Siddhattha²⁷ abdicated the royal throne for the search of freedom (*mokkha-dhamma*) until he attained a thorough insight-knowledge of the Four Noble Truths (*ariya-sacca*).²⁸ And the teaching he preached, it was preached so that good people could awaken to the Four Noble Truths, because if one does not have a thorough knowledge of the Four Noble Truths one still cannot go beyond this entire mass of *dukkha*. Actually the Noble Truths exist within all of us; however, we do not know what this Noble Truths are. The Noble Truths are but *rūpa-nāma*—which is nothing but the five aggregates (*khandha* 5) themselves, which in brief are: the *rūpa*-aggregate which consists of walking, standing, sitting and lying down, or the whole body itself; and the *nāma*-aggregate that consists of four: one feeling-aggregate (*vedanā-khandha*), one perception-aggregate (*saññā-khandha*), one mental formations-aggregate (*sankhāra-khandha*), which is comprised of fifty elements or mental factors (*cetasikas*), and one consciousness-aggregate (*viññāna-khandha*). Together they are called “the five aggregates”. But among the fifty elements included in the mental formations-aggregate there is one that is *samudaya-sacca* [Truth of the Origin], the rest are all *dukkha-sacca* [Truth of Suffering]. The one element which is the Truth of the Origin is greed (*lobha*), i.e. craving (*tanhā*) itself.

We human beings have the five aggregates when are born; for this reason every human being embodies two Noble Truths in himself already: the Truth of Suffering, and the Truth of the Origin which is the defilement that originates *dukkha* in us.²⁹ Lord Buddha teaches that there are Four Noble Truths: *Dukkha*, *Samudaya*, *Nirodha* and *Magga* [Suffering, Origin, Cessation and Path]; he also teaches that in order to cultivate the Path one must practice in accordance with the function of each Noble Truth:

Dukkha-sacca The Truth of Suffering	its function is that suffering must be fully understood
Samudaya-sacca The Truth of the Origin	its function is that its cause must be abandoned
Nirodha-sacca The Truth of Cessation	its function is that cessation must be realized
Magga-sacca The Truth of the Path	its function is that the path to cessation must be cultivated

For this reason, **our** duty is to fully understand *dukkha* in the postures, both major and minor,³⁰ because the Four Truths are **interrelated**. Knowing that *dukkha* exerts pressure on us, thus making us unable to tolerate being in that posture any longer, forcing us to change (making the change to be a *necessity*), forcing us to ease *dukkha*, is the way to prevent craving from arising in the new posture: this is the abandonment of craving. Craving does not like *dukkha*, so the new posture will not be a factor for craving to arise. Craving misconceives—assumes—the new posture to be happiness or pleasure; therefore, it desires to change, it desires to get a new posture. When these truths are known correctly, craving will not enter to abide in the new posture. So fully understanding *dukkha* is also the abandonment of craving. This is tantamount to saying that the practice is following the function of the Four Noble Truths: at the moment of comprehending *Dukkha* and [i.e.] abandoning *Tanhā*, one is realizing *Nirodha* and cultivating *Magga*.³¹

For this reason, those interested in going beyond *dukkha*, please try to fully comprehend *nāma-rūpa*—this *nāma-rūpa*—because precisely this *nāma-rūpa* in and of itself is the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*). But bodily unpleasant feeling (*dukkha-vedanā*) has to be seen first. Bodily unpleasant feeling is *dukkha* that can be amended. The Truth of Suffering [can only be known, it] cannot be amended. To see the Truth of Suffering

²⁶ “One is one's own refuge, who else could be the refuge?” –Lord Buddha said

²⁷ Lord Buddha's personal name. Sanskrit form: *Siddhartha*

²⁸ Noble truths, realities or facts. It can mean, ‘truths for a, or of the, noble one(s)’, i.e. truths that will make one noble, or the truths which bring about nobility

²⁹ The origin of what? Of suffering. What is the origin of suffering? Craving (*tanhā*). Thus craving is the defilement that causes or originates *dukkha* (in us)

³⁰ The mayor postures are: walking, sitting, lying down and standing. The minor are: stretching, bending, eating, drinking, chewing, scratching, urinating, brushing the teeth, taking a shower, gazing, moving the head to one side, to the other side, etc.

³¹ It's not that suffering is comprehended first and then one gives up craving. At the moment suffering is known (first truth), craving cannot arise (second truth), thus the path (fourth truth) leading to cessation (third truth) is simultaneously developed

itself, very sharp and acute wisdom is required. The Pāli Scriptures mention that beings do not see *dukkha* (suffering) because they *do not* contemplate *iriyā-patha* (the postures)—one changes position and feels comfortable, and so craving likes it. *Ghanasaññā*, the perception of compactness, eclipses *anattā*, not-self, which results in *feeling that one is somebody, a self or soul [attā]*. *Santati*, continuity, eclipses *anicca*, impermanence, which results in taking what “arises and ceases from moment to moment” to be permanent, unchanging.

When coming to practice (*kammatthāna*) it is necessary to bear in mind that one comes here to train; one doesn't come to see *rūpa* or see *nāma*, to attain path-and-fruit (*magga-phala*), to teach later on, nor for whatever other purpose—these are all factors for craving to arise. One needs to grasp this correctly so that defilements do not enter to abide. As long as defilement exists, wisdom cannot have the opportunity to arise to know reality. The fact is that the practitioner should train himself properly: if one produces the correct causes there's absolutely no need to worry about the result. Even though one does not want to see, one will (have to) see. However, [for this to happen] the practitioner must have mentality-and-materiality (*nāma-rūpa*) as a teacher first; it is this very *nāma-rūpa* itself which will teach us everything [not the other way around]. The important thing is that first one must stop wanting. When desire ceases, the end of troubles (i.e. of *dukkha*) is reached.

Why are the postures contemplated?

The postures are contemplated because they are one of the *kammatthānas* (*working-grounds or basis for contemplation*), namely, *kāyanupassanā-satipatthāna* (*contemplation of body as a basis for mindfulness*). Lord Buddha teaches the Foundations of Mindfulness in four categories: (1) *kāyanupassanā* (*contemplation of body*), (2) *vedānāpupassanā* (*contemplation of feeling*), (3) *cittanupassanā* (*contemplation of mind*), and (4) *dhammanupassanā* (*contemplation of dhammas*).³² Lord Buddha teaches in this way due to the fact that beings have different preferences—they have different dispositions (*carita*): craving disposition (*tanhā-carita*) and wrong view disposition (*ditthi-carita*). It's not the same in the case of Tranquility Practice (*samatha*) where Lord Buddha enumerates six dispositions. For Insight Practice (*vipassanā*) Lord Buddha teaches only two kinds, but these are further divided in four:

- 1 craving disposition with weak wisdom
- 2 craving disposition with strong wisdom
- 3 wrong view disposition with weak wisdom
- 4 wrong view disposition with strong wisdom

- **The contemplation of body** is suitable for those with a craving disposition with weak wisdom
- **The contemplation of feeling** is suitable for those with a craving disposition with strong wisdom
- **The contemplation of mind** is suitable for those with a wrong view disposition with weak wisdom
- **The contemplation of mind-objects** is suitable for those with a wrong view disposition with strong wisdom

If classified under the context of the abandonment of the four perversions:

The contemplation of body is for the abandonment of the perversion of beauty

The contemplation of feeling is for the abandonment of the perversion of happiness

The contemplation of mind is for the abandonment of the perversion of permanence

The contemplation of dhammas is for the abandonment of the perversion of self

Lord Buddha established the principles of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness related to the abandonment of the Four Perversions in a “cause-and-effect” manner: the former being the cause, the later the result. Consequently, as the practitioner develops a proper understanding in line with the intrinsic nature of things (*sabhāva-dhamma*), the wrong understanding that is causing the perversion—which is dependent on *nāma-rūpa*—will decrease gradually until it is completely eradicated.

Perversion, both as the constituent part of a system (*anga-dhamma*) and as an object (*ārammana*), can be eradicated neither through Morality (*sīla*) nor Tranquility (*samādhi*) Practices. It can only be eradicated through Insight Practice (*vipassanā*), because *vipassanā* (insight-wisdom) alone is able to penetrate into the truth of *nāma-rūpa*. Therefore, to develop Insight it is necessary to learn and study in order to develop a good understanding of *nāma-rūpa* so to be able to apprehend the truth of *nāma-rūpa*.³³ But as mentioned earlier, the methodology for apprehending *nāma-rūpa* has to be in line with the principles of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

³² See foot note no. 19

³³ “Apprehending the truth” is not theoretical, it is “*experimental*”—it depends on what is immediately felt (purely cognized) not on language, verbalization, conceptualization, thinking, etc.

Moreover, developing the Foundations of Mindfulness is nothing other than developing the Noble Eightfold Path (*magga* 8). The development of the Noble Eightfold Path is the development of *sīla-samādhi-pāññā* (morality, concentration and wisdom).

Practicing by oneself

The *yogi* (*Dhamma* practitioner) must be familiar with the following four tasks concerning his duty in the practice on his own:

- 1 he must be on his own, eat on his own, and sleep on his own
- 2 he must not talk nor converse about unnecessary things; but if talking happens to be *necessary*, he must have mindfulness while doing it; too much talking is a cause for wandering mind/restlessness (*uddhacca*) to multiply
- 3 sleeping must be moderate, if it is not necessary to sleep during the daytime he should avoid it; too much sleep is a cause for sloth & torpor, when these hindrances become too strong the mind loses perseverance, and then concentration and wisdom (*samādhi* and *pāññā*) have no chance to arise
- 4 he must keep himself away from the “obstacles” (*palibodha*), which are all various kinds of worries and concerns³⁴. In the context of not doing what is not necessary, when developing *khamatthāna*,³⁵ it means to do only that which is genuinely necessary: eating, bathing, defecating, urinating, and sitting, lying down, standing and walking... such kinds of things. Letting the mind follow unnecessary objects is opening the door to defilements—covetousness and unpleasant mental feeling [*abhijjā* and *domanassa*—] to arise and dominate

Once these elementary tasks altogether have been understood, the practitioner can proceed with the development of Insight (*vipassanā*).

As it was mentioned at the beginning, to develop Insight is about fully understanding *nāma-rūpa* itself, because all mental defilements and pollutants (*kilesas* and *āsavas*) depend for their arising just on this, our very own *nāma-rūpa*, having as a basis *not-knowing* regarding the truth of *nāma-rūpa*. *Not-knowing* is because *not-contemplating*. For this reason, when doing *vipassanā*, it is indispensable to contemplate *nāma* and *rūpa* in order to know them as they really are: impermanent, etc. When one knows the truth of *nāma-rūpa* already, the love, yearning and infatuation with *nāma-rūpa* due to wrong understanding will cool down. Also the wish to be born will come to an end as a result of seeing the harm and danger inherent in life (i.e. birth). One will gradually get beyond this whole mass of suffering.

According to that which Lord Buddha teaches in the Discourses (*sutta*), suffering as a Noble Truth is: *jāti*, *jarā*, *marana* (*birth*, *old age* and *death*), *soka*, *parideva*, *dukkha*, *domanassa*, *upāyāsa* (*sorrow*, *lamentation*, *bodily and mental pain*, *grief* and *despair*); *appīyehi sampayogo* (*contact with what is disliked*), *piyehi vippayogo* (*separation from what is liked*), *yampīcchang na labhati* (*and not to get what one wants*); *sankhiteṇa pancha-upādāna-khandā dukkha* (*in short, the five aggregates themselves because they themselves are suffering*). These eleven elements altogether are mentioned in the way of the Discourses. But the truth of suffering mentioned in the Discourses is not at all different from the one mentioned in the *Paramattha*³⁶ because the characteristics and manifestations of the intrinsic nature (*sabhāva*) of phenomena are mentioned in the Discourses too. For example, “*jāti pi dukkha*” means “arising (birth) is suffering”, etc.

Now, if we happen to question such “arising (*jāti*)” – in the sense of “whose birth (*jāti*) is that?” or “who is born (*jāti*) to get a life (birth)?” – the truth of suffering mentioned here in the way of the Discourses means it is the birth of consciousness, mental concomitants, and materiality (*citta*, *cetasika* and *rūpa*), which is no other than the truth of suffering in terms of ultimate truth (*paramattha*). The same applies to the intrinsic nature (*sabhāva*) of old age (decay) and death: Who decays? Consciousness, mental concomitants and materiality. Who dies? Consciousness, mental concomitants and materiality.

The remaining [eight] components of the Noble Truth of Suffering—sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, contact with what one doesn’t like, separation from what one likes, and not getting what one wants—mentioned in this way [the way of the Discourses], are in themselves the manifestations of [in *Abhidhamma* terminology] lust, aversion and unpleasant feeling (*rāga*, *dosa*, and *dukkha-vedanā*). Lord Buddha ends up summarizing this as the *dukkha* derived from the five aggregates-of-attachment (*upādāna-khandha*), that is to say, from *citta*, *cetasika* and *rūpa*.

³⁴ Such as to forget, before going into seclusion, to pay a bill or leave food to the dog, etc.

³⁵ In this case “developing *khamatthāna*” means to cultivate the mind to know the present object with frequency

³⁶ “*Paramattha*” is used here to refer to the *Abhidhamma*—the *Abhidhamma* is comprised solely of *paramattha(s)* (ultimate realities), it is the systematic classification of such, while the Discourses (*sutta*) otherwise mention these realities in terms of “persons” and “things”

[Interrelation]

The practitioner must not worry that by only contemplating the body he will not be able to eradicate defilement or attain path-and-result (*magga-phala*). He needs not to worry that by contemplating the body the other three objects of contemplation will not be seen: feeling, mind and mind-objects. In fact, by contemplating the body, also feeling, mind and mind-objects will be seen, because the Four Foundations of Mindfulness are all *interrelated* between themselves.

At the moment of contemplating the postures, stiffness and/or aching as a result of lying down, standing, sitting, or walking for some time will surely appear. The state of stiffness and/or aching is *dukkha-vedanā* (unpleasant feeling). At the moment of contemplating the posture and stiffness and/or aching arises, dislike for that unpleasant feeling will surely present itself. When the posture has just been changed, the unpleasant feeling disappears: satisfaction with *sukha-vedanā* (pleasant feeling) will surely present itself. At the moment of contemplating the postures, the heart/mind will surely wander away: thinking, recalling, drifting—a bit about this, a bit about that. Sometimes the mind will follow objects of the past: recalling stories which have already passed. Other times it will think about the future: planning to do generous deeds—supporting a monastery, giving robes to the monks, building a Buddha image, building a *kuti* for *khamatthāna* (meditation hut)...—thinking all sorts of stories... planning to tell your father, mother, and/or relatives, to come to meditate... etc. This shows how defilement is always pulling away from the present object. The present object is extremely important. When the hindrances (*nīvaranas*) are happening like this, the mind cannot establish itself with *rūpa*, which is the present condition that is taking place; thus one cannot have *present object*, the mind cannot stay fixed.³⁷ Thinking and *feeling* (immediate cognition) still cannot be differentiated.

1 Contemplating the postures is classified as **kāyanupassanā**.³⁸

2 When there arises stiffness and/or aching, or *sukha-vedanā* (pleasant feeling), if wisdom sees this and recognizes it distinctly as a *rūpa* or a *nāma*, it is then classified as **vedānāupassanā** [*contemplation of feeling*].

3 When one is stiff and/or sore dissatisfaction arises (i.e. *dosa*). Just as one changes into the new posture, the aching is healed, satisfaction arises (*lobha*-mind arises). At the moment that the mind is *dosa* or *lobha* (irritated or greedy), if one understands this with the wisdom that knows it as a *nāma*, it is then classified as **cittānupassanā** [*contemplation of mind*].

4 At the moment of thinking about something or drifting away, and one becomes aware of it, one does not like it. Other times one does, which is when one wants to continue the story until the end before coming back to see the *rūpa*. Sleepiness, depression, discouragement, may also arise; or other times doubt: “Did the Awakened One really existed? Is the ‘Unconstructed’³⁹ something real?” If these objects are contemplated with the wisdom that knows them as *nāma*, it is then classified as **dhammanupassanā** [*contemplation of dhammas*].⁴⁰

So the practitioner doesn’t have to worry that by only contemplating *rūpa* the defilements would not be eradicated. By only contemplating *rūpa* one can also see feeling, mind, and *dhammas*; by only contemplating *rūpa* one can attain path-and-fruit and *Nibbāna* if the practitioner brings about the correct causes in line with the principles of practice until wisdom arises. All the classificatory categories just mentioned are **interrelated**. The reason Lord Buddha distinguishes four different foundations for developing mindfulness (*satipatthāna* 4) is that different beings have different preferences and different dispositions.

Lord Buddha’s advice for the practitioner:

- 1 not to do anything that will deteriorate the mental development
- 2 not to talk nor socialize with anybody
- 3 not to associate with anyone whether they are practicing mental development or not
- 4 not to give more importance to sleep than to develop the Foundations of Mindfulness
- 5 not to delight in the taste of food
- 6 to seriously keep restraint (*samvara*) coupled with sense-restraint (*samvara-indriya*)

Auxiliary Reasoning

At the moment of contemplating one needs to apply observation, *sikkhati*, at all times, as well as to be aware of *oneself*—what/who is *oneself*? *Oneself* is the one who contemplates [the *nāma* that contemplates]—

³⁷ This mentions only to let the practitioner know the fact—by no way it means that the practitioner should begin to do something (about it), i.e. *try to change the fact*. This practice is purely about becoming familiar with facts, about acknowledging reality (as it is)—not changing it! *Just to know is enough* (as opposite to not-knowing); anything extra apart from this means one is already *doing*, i.e. fabricating, intervening

³⁸ **Kāyanupassanā** = *kāya-anupassanā*. *Kāya* = body. *Anupassanā* = contemplation

³⁹ *Nibbāna* is the Unconstructed because it is the tranquillising of the constructing activities and thus of personality factors they construct. See the Glossary under *Nibbāna*

⁴⁰ See foot note no. 19

and also one has to know what *rūpa* is being contemplated, such as sitting-*rūpa*, etc. Most practitioners tend to passively contemplate and know it is *rūpa*, without knowing what *rūpa* it is; because at the moment of contemplating they don't become receptive to what *rūpa* or what *nāma* is being contemplated. They know passively (non-consciously or unaware of *themselves*), that is, without knowing who/what contemplates. Their minds aim knowing at the *rūpa*, grasping at the *mode*, without knowing what *rūpa* that *mode* is. If it's like this, the various *rūpas* and *nāmas* cannot be distinguished, cannot be scattered out, because they are like adhered to each other clustered in a lump.

If one goes on in this way, the heart/mind becomes peaceful and still, this is calmness (*samādhi*), but that's all, nothing more. Calm—concentration or tranquility—is when the mind does not go anywhere and the awareness “is kept [inside] in the heart/mind”. This matter is of vital importance: *samādhi* (calm) is misleading in that it leads one to suppose that one is achieving this and that level (of insight-knowledge). If somebody would say that that isn't the way of vipassanā, the practitioner would probably get annoyed right away. It is precisely for this reason, that the *one who knows* (the good/true friend, the instructor: *kalyānamitta*) would rather not speak, not telling the practitioner that what he's doing is not yet correct—to keep neutral is equal to take care of the practitioner's confidence (*saddhā*). But the consequences could perhaps be detrimental for the practitioner himself: he might even insult the teacher thinking that he does not have the knowledge that he himself has because he doesn't say anything, so he would then build up more unskillful action (*akusala-kamma*).⁴¹ Particularly if the teacher is a person possessing special virtue (*guna-dhamma*) of a higher type that action will become an obstruction, not giving mindfulness-wisdom (*sati-paññā*) the opportunity to contemplate the rationale of the practice that allows insight into truth in a theoretical level as mentioned in the scriptures. When the practitioner cannot access truth through the study of the scriptures, it's hopeless to try to get the practice in the right course—it all ends up in wrong view (*micchā-ditthi*). It is important at an initial stage to have knowledge of the scriptures (*pariyatti*: theoretical understanding of Dhamma); when one applies this correct understanding to the practice (*patipatti*), then the practice will be fruitful—sometimes more, sometimes less—and surely one will get some flavor, some feeling, that one has never gotten before.

For the most part, practitioners aim for the result—they want a result. As for the cause [of the result] they don't really care too much. Thus when they start to practice they have a tendency to “make arrangements” [prepare, get things ready] hoping to see things as they have heard they should be, and as they themselves somehow think they should be. At some places they are taught to force and to control. So they make an effort to force and to control—now they make an effort to force; now they make an effort to control—after doing this for some time they have no idea of how to practice at all. If they never had an understanding of the correct justification—logic or rationale—of the practice, their practice will deteriorate right away.

If they, who in the past have already discovered the correct contemplation, just let go of this “arranging things” [fabricating], they would see the objects of contemplation that they have seen before show up by themselves due to the familiarity they carry along by their previous [correct] training. In fact, one comes to train in order to allow the correct understanding to arise (by itself) from the training—it's not that it arises from our **doing**, i.e. because one makes it happen. If one brings in “oneself” to **do**, the correct knowledge does not arise. It cannot arise because the *self* (*attā*) got in the way. There must *not be a self* (*anattā*) so that the correct knowledge may be able to arise. **Doing** *kammattāna* [fabricating] is not difficult at all, but **not doing** [not fabricating]—that is extraordinarily difficult! Whoever comes to practice, comes to practice aiming to **do** [fabricate] something; and if on top of that they have been taught to practice in the “**doing**-something way”, they will **do** it **BIG** for sure.

“Um... coming to practice and not allowed to **do**, then why to come at all?” There are actually some people who think like that. Nevertheless, by the abovementioned truth of the cause and the effect,⁴² there is a task here. However, this task is not a **doing**-task, but a seeing-task. One watches whatever there is, like when seeing somebody else.⁴³ One sees with the heart/mind. One sees but also observes. One does it without wishing to do it right and without worrying that it might end up wrong. One just works on bringing about the correct cause(s) by following the logical instructions: the place that defilement depends on for its occurrence is the place where one has to learn to recognize it. One practices like this until defilement has no place to depend on, until *rūpa-nāma* is known as such so it becomes one's teacher. Just then is when **vipassanā** must surely happen. I see it not difficult at all—one makes it difficult.

⁴¹ An unwholesome/harmful/incorrupt action (not conducing to well-being or to the end of suffering)—popularly speaking: “bad karma”. See the Glossary under “*kamma*”

⁴² **cause** = correct understanding; **effect** = correct contemplation (correct contemplation = not doing, not forcing, not controlling, not (over)focusing, not grasping, *not trying*)

⁴³ This suggests that when one sees somebody else there is less inclination to *take it* (so) *personally* as opposed to when watching oneself. Seeing somebody else is more of an *impersonal situation*. When *nāma-rūpa* becomes the object (of observation) is like seeing somebody else, instead of the usual *me* or *mine*, *myself* or *I*