

# Vipassana Meditation

Vi - Passana :

Vi means “clearly”

Passana means “seeing”

Therefore, Vipassana means to see things clearly or to see things as they truly are. It is to attain the Insights of the true nature of reality or existence through clearly perceiving anicca, dukkha, anatta. Therefore it is also called “Insight Meditation”.

## The practice of Vipassana meditation.

- Be aware of the body.
- Be aware of feelings.
- Be aware of the mind.
- Be aware of mental qualities.

To be practiced in the Four Postures :

Sitting – Standing – Walking – Lying down

This practice is outlined in the Satipatthana Sutta :

Digha Nikaya 22 and Majjhima Nikaya 10.

## Satipatthana Sutta

There is, monks, this one way to the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow, for the right path, for the realization of Nibbana; that is to say the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

What are the four? The monk contemplates :

- A. Body as body,**
- B. Feelings as feelings,**
- C. Mind as mind,**
- D. Mental qualities as mental qualities;**

ardent, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside hankering and fretting for the world.

### **A. Body – *Kayanupassana***

#### **1. Mindfulness of Breathing**

Knowing the qualities of the breath, being conscious of the whole body, or calming the body.

#### **2. Mindfulness of the Four Postures**

Being aware of the postures of walking, sitting, standing and lying down.

### **3. Clear Comprehension**

Being aware and mindful of all actions and activities such as bending and stretching; eating and drinking, chewing and savouring; excreting and urinating; falling asleep and waking up, etc.

### **4. Mindfulness of the 32 Parts of the Body**

Reviewing the body from the soles up and the scalp down, knowing the parts clearly as separate identities. The body is seen as enclosed by the skin and full of impurities.

### **5. Mindfulness of the Four Elements**

Reviewing the body in terms of the earth, water, fire and air elements.

### **6. Nine Cemetery Contemplations**

Comparing the body with a corpse and reflecting “this body is of the same nature, will become like that, is not exempt from that fate”, with each type of corpse in turn.

## **B. Feelings – Vedananupassana**

Knowing and being aware of the different feelings :

- Pleasant feelings
- Painful feelings
- Neither pleasant nor painful (neutral) feelings.

## **C. Mind – Cittanupassana**

Knowing and being aware of the different states of mind :

### **1. Ordinary**

Lustful or free from lust, hating or free from hating, deluded or undeluded, contracted (by sloth & torpor) or distracted (by restlessness & worry).

### **2. Higher**

Developed or undeveloped (in meditation), concentrated or unconcentrated, liberated or unliberated.

## **D. Mental qualities – Dhammanupassana**

### **1. The Five Hindrances**

Knowing if the Hindrances are present or absent, how it arises and is abandoned, and how it does not arise in the future. (Sensual desire, ill-will, sloth & torpor, restlessness & worry, sceptical doubt).

### **2. The Five Aggregates of Grasping**

Knowing of the Aggregates are arising or disappearing. (Form, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, consciousness).

### 3. The Six Internal and External Sense Bases

Knowing the sense door and its object and what fetter arises dependent on the two, its arising, abandonment and non-arising. (Eye & forms, ear & sounds, nose & smells, tongue & tastes, body & tangibles, mind & thoughts).

### 4. The Seven Factors of Enlightenment

Knowing if a factor is present or absent, it arising and development. (Mindfulness, investigation, effort, joy, tranquility, concentration, equanimity).

### 5. The Four Noble Truths

Contemplating the Four Noble Truths, dukkha, the cessation of dukkha and liberation, by the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path.

## Conclusion of the Satipatthana Sutta

Practice of these Four Foundations will bring one of two results :

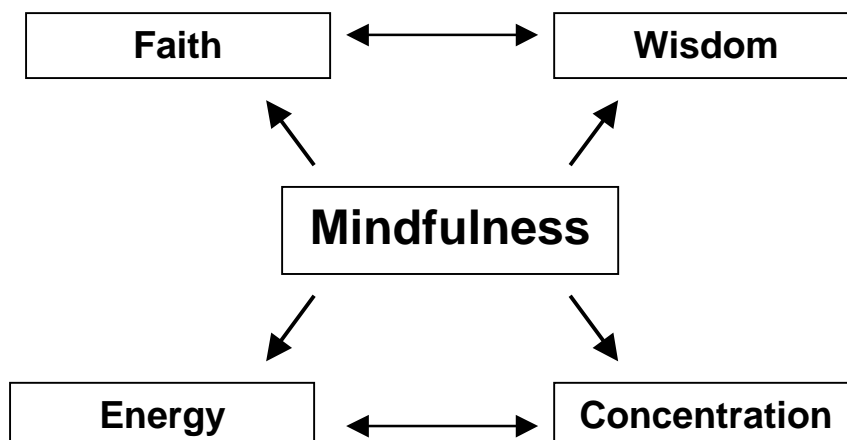
1. Arahantship in this life or,
2. The state of Non-Returner

The results will come in 7 years, 6 years... 2 years, 1 year, 7 months, 6 months... 2 months, 1 month, or 1 week.

## Mindfulness and the Five Powers of Enlightenment

Faith (saddha) must always be balanced with wisdom (panna) and vice-versa. Concentration (samadhi) must always be balanced with energy (viriya) and vice-versa.

However, mindfulness (sati) need not be balanced with any other factor. The more sati there is, the better.



## The importance of Mindfulness

King Pasenadi : "Is there any one quality that keeps both kinds of benefit secure - benefits in this life and benefits in lives to come?"

The Buddha : "Mindfulness is the one quality that keeps both kinds of benefit secure - benefits in this life and benefits in lives to come."

Appamada Sutta SN 3.17

Mindfulness is developed through the practice of Vipassana meditation which was taught to us by the Buddha in the Satipatthana Sutta.

It is one of the factors of the Noble Eightfold Path and enables penetrating insight into the true nature of reality leading to liberation from Samsara and to the enduring peace and happiness of Nibbana.

The Satipatthana Sutta is therefore one of the most important discourses of the Buddha.

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## The Five Hindrances – Panca nivarana

1. Sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*) : Craving for pleasure to the senses.
2. Anger or ill-will (*byāpāda, vyāpāda*) : Feelings of malice directed toward others.
3. Sloth-torpor or boredom (*thīna-middha*) : Half-hearted action with little or no concentration.
4. Restlessness-worry (*uddhacca-kukkucca*) : The inability to calm the mind.
5. Doubt (*vicikicchā*) : Lack of conviction or trust.

## The Seven Factors of Enlightenment - Satta bojjhanga

1. Mindfulness (*sati*) to be aware and mindful in all activities and movements both physical and mental
2. Investigation (*dhamma vicaya*) into the nature of Dhamma
3. Energy (*virīya*)
4. Joy or rapture (*Pīti*)
5. Tranquillity (*passaddhi*) of both body and mind
6. Concentration (*samadhi*) a calm, one-pointed state of concentration of mind
7. Equanimity (*upekkha*), to be able to face life in all its vicissitudes with calm of mind and tranquillity, without disturbance.

## **32 Parts of the Body**

Hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin;  
Flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys;  
Heart, liver, intestines, spleen, lungs;  
Bowels, stomach, undigested food, feces, brain;  
Bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fats;  
Tears, grease, saliva, mucus, oil of the joints, urine.

## Satipatthana Sutta: Frames of Reference

MN 10 PTS: M i 55

translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

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I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in the Kuru country. Now there is a town of the Kurus called Kammasadhamma. There the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Monks."

"Lord," the monks replied.

The Blessed One said this: "This is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of pain & distress, for the attainment of the right method, & for the realization of Unbinding — in other words, the four frames of reference. Which four?"

"There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself — ardent, alert, & mindful — putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings... mind... mental qualities in & of themselves — ardent, alert, & mindful — putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

### **A. Body - *Kayanupassana***

"And how does a monk remain focused on the body in & of itself?"

#### **[1] Mindfulness of Breathing**

"There is the case where a monk — having gone to the wilderness, to the shade of a tree, or to an empty building — sits down folding his legs crosswise, holding his body erect and setting mindfulness to the fore [lit: the front of the chest]. Always mindful, he breathes in; mindful he breathes out.

"Breathing in long, he discerns that he is breathing in long; or breathing out long, he discerns that he is breathing out long. Or breathing in short, he discerns that he is breathing in short; or breathing out short, he discerns that he is breathing out short. He trains himself to breathe in sensitive to the entire body and to breathe out sensitive to the entire body. He trains himself to breathe in calming bodily fabrication and to breathe out calming bodily fabrication. Just as a skilled turner or his apprentice, when making a long turn, discerns that he is making a long turn, or when making a short turn discerns that he is making a short turn; in the same way the monk, when breathing in long, discerns that he is breathing in long; or breathing out short, he discerns that he is breathing out short... He trains himself to breathe in calming bodily fabrication, and to breathe out calming bodily fabrication.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the body

in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

## **[2] Mindfulness of the Four Postures**

"Furthermore, when walking, the monk discerns that he is walking. When standing, he discerns that he is standing. When sitting, he discerns that he is sitting. When lying down, he discerns that he is lying down. Or however his body is disposed, that is how he discerns it.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

## **[3] Clear Comprehension**

"Furthermore, when going forward & returning, he makes himself fully alert; when looking toward & looking away... when bending & extending his limbs... when carrying his outer cloak, his upper robe & his bowl... when eating, drinking, chewing, & savoring... when urinating & defecating... when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, & remaining silent, he makes himself fully alert.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

## **[4] Mindfulness of the 32 Parts of the Body**

"Furthermore...just as if a sack with openings at both ends were full of various kinds of grain — wheat, rice, mung beans, kidney beans, sesame seeds, husked rice — and a man with good eyesight, pouring it out, were to reflect, 'This is wheat. This is rice. These are mung beans. These are kidney beans. These are sesame seeds. This is husked rice,' in the same way, monks, a monk reflects on this very body from the soles of the feet on up, from the crown of the head on down, surrounded by skin and full of various kinds of unclean things: 'In this body there are head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, gorge, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, skin-oil, saliva, mucus, fluid in the joints, urine.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

## **[5] Mindfulness of the Four Elements**

"Furthermore...just as a skilled butcher or his apprentice, having killed a cow, would sit at a crossroads cutting it up into pieces, the monk contemplates this very body — however it stands, however it is disposed — in terms of properties: 'In this body there is the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, & the wind property.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

## **[6] The Nine Cemetary Contemplations**

"Furthermore, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground — one day, two days, three days dead — bloated, livid, & festering, he applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate'...

"Or again, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground, picked at by crows, vultures, & hawks, by dogs, hyenas, & various other creatures... a skeleton smeared with flesh & blood, connected with tendons... a fleshless skeleton smeared with blood, connected with tendons... a skeleton without flesh or blood, connected with tendons... bones detached from their tendons, scattered in all directions — here a hand bone, there a foot bone, here a shin bone, there a thigh bone, here a hip bone, there a back bone, here a rib, there a breast bone, here a shoulder bone, there a neck bone, here a jaw bone, there a tooth, here a skull... the bones whitened, somewhat like the color of shells... piled up, more than a year old... decomposed into a powder: He applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the body in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

## **B. Feelings - Vedananupassana**

"And how does a monk remain focused on feelings in & of themselves? There is the case where a monk, when feeling a painful feeling, discerns that he is feeling a painful feeling. When feeling a pleasant feeling, he discerns that he is feeling a pleasant feeling. When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he discerns that he is feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.



"When feeling a painful feeling of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a painful feeling of the flesh.' When feeling a painful feeling not of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a painful feeling not of the flesh.' When feeling a pleasant feeling of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a pleasant feeling of the flesh.' When feeling a pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a pleasant feeling not of the flesh.' When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh.' When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he discerns, 'I am feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on feelings in & of themselves, or externally on feelings in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on feelings in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to feelings, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to feelings, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to feelings. Or his mindfulness that 'There are feelings' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on feelings in & of themselves.

### **C. Mind - Cittanupassana**

"And how does a monk remain focused on the mind in & of itself? There is the case where a monk, when the mind has passion, discerns that the mind has passion. When the mind is without passion, he discerns that the mind is without passion. When the mind has aversion, he discerns that the mind has aversion. When the mind is without aversion, he discerns that the mind is without aversion. When the mind has delusion, he discerns that the mind has delusion. When the mind is without delusion, he discerns that the mind is without delusion.

"When the mind is constricted, he discerns that the mind is constricted. When the mind is scattered, he discerns that the mind is scattered. When the mind is enlarged, he discerns that the mind is enlarged. When the mind is not enlarged, he discerns that the mind is not enlarged. When the mind is surpassed, he discerns that the mind is surpassed. When the mind is unsurpassed, he discerns that the mind is unsurpassed. When the mind is concentrated, he discerns that the mind is concentrated. When the mind is not concentrated, he discerns that the mind is not concentrated. When the mind is released, he discerns that the mind is released. When the mind is not released, he discerns that the mind is not released.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the mind in & of itself, or externally on the mind in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the mind in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the mind, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the mind, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the mind. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a mind' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by

(not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the mind in & of itself.

#### **D. Mental Qualities - Dhammanupassana**

"And how does a monk remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves?

[1] "There is the case where a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the *five hindrances*. And how does a monk remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five hindrances? There is the case where, there being sensual desire present within, a monk discerns that 'There is sensual desire present within me.' Or, there being no sensual desire present within, he discerns that 'There is no sensual desire present within me.' He discerns how there is the arising of unarisen sensual desire. And he discerns how there is the abandoning of sensual desire once it has arisen. And he discerns how there is no future arising of sensual desire that has been abandoned. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining hindrances: ill will, sloth & drowsiness, restlessness & anxiety, and uncertainty.)

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on mental qualities in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five hindrances.

[2] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the *five clinging-aggregates*. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five clinging-aggregates? There is the case where a monk [discerns]: 'Such is form, such its origination, such its disappearance. Such is feeling... Such is perception... Such are fabrications... Such is consciousness, such its origination, such its disappearance.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the mental qualities in & of themselves, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five clinging-aggregates.

[3] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the *sixfold internal & external sense media*. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the sixfold internal & external sense media? There is the case where he discerns the eye, he discerns forms, he discerns the fetter that

arises dependent on both. He discerns how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter. And he discerns how there is the abandoning of a fetter once it has arisen. And he discerns how there is no future arising of a fetter that has been abandoned. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining sense media: ear, nose, tongue, body, & intellect.)

"In this way he remains focused internally on the mental qualities in & of themselves, or focused externally... unsustained by anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the sixfold internal & external sense media.

**[4]** "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the *seven factors for Awakening*. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the seven factors for Awakening? There is the case where, there being mindfulness as a factor for Awakening present within, he discerns that 'Mindfulness as a factor for Awakening is present within me.' Or, there being no mindfulness as a factor for Awakening present within, he discerns that 'Mindfulness as a factor for Awakening is not present within me.' He discerns how there is the arising of unarisen mindfulness as a factor for Awakening. And he discerns how there is the culmination of the development of mindfulness as a factor for Awakening once it has arisen. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining factors for Awakening: analysis of qualities, persistence, rapture, serenity, concentration, & equanimity.)

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally... unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the seven factors for Awakening.

**[5]** "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the *four noble truths*. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the four noble truths? There is the case where he discerns, as it has come to be, that 'This is stress.' He discerns, as it has come to be, that 'This is the origination of stress.' He discerns, as it has come to be, that 'This is the cessation of stress.' He discerns, as it has come to be, that 'This is the way leading to the cessation of stress.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on mental qualities in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the four noble truths...

## **E. Conclusion**

"Now, if anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for seven years, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here & now, or — if there be any remnant of clinging/sustenance — non-return.

"Let alone seven years. If anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for six years... five... four... three... two years... one year... seven months... six months... five... four... three... two months... one month... half a month, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here & now, or — if there be any remnant of clinging/sustenance — non-return.

"Let alone half a month. If anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for seven days, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here & now, or — if there be any remnant of clinging/sustenance — non-return.

"This is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of pain & distress, for the attainment of the right method, & for the realization of Unbinding — in other words, the four frames of reference.' Thus was it said, and in reference to this was it said."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words.