

AGAINST THE STREAM

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“Do not be satisfied with hearsay or with tradition or with legendary lore or with what has come down in scriptures or with conjecture or with logical inference or with weighing evidence or with liking for a view after pondering over it or with someone else’s ability or with the thought “The monk is our teacher.” When you know in yourselves: “These things are wholesome, blameless, commended by the wise, and being adopted and put into effect they lead to welfare and happiness,” then you should practice and abide in them...” – The Buddha

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Over the past three decades, mindfulness-based interventions have spread rapidly through the fields of medicine, mental health, and education as a way to reduce toxic stress and impulsivity and increase emotion regulation, executive function, empathy and overall well being. Mindfulness as a psychological concept is the focusing of attention and awareness. Mindfulness is fundamentally a science of attention training. It is the practice of bringing attention to the direct experience of what is happening “right now”. Sustained practice cultivates the ability to “drop beneath” compulsive thinking and emotional reactivity into a more direct experience of feeling and sensation. The fruition of practice is a sense of being less “scattered”, less caught up in ‘doing’ and in ‘fixing’, and less likely to get locked into fixed afflictive patterns. Modern day applications of mindfulness maintain origins stemming from the concepts, techniques, and contemplative framework outlined in the Buddhist discourse known as the Satipatthana Sutta (circa 6th-4th century BCE). In the West, Jon Kabat-Zinn has brought mindfulness practice to the forefront of secular fields of interest: mental health, education, and life-wellness. Clinical psychology and psychiatry since the 1970s have developed a number of therapeutic applications based on mindfulness for helping people suffering from a variety of psychological conditions, and research has found therapy based on mindfulness to be effective, particularly for reducing anxiety, depression, and stress.

What is Mindfulness Meditation?

Mindfulness meditation is a focused awareness of what is happening in the present moment experience. By definition, it is the ability to objectively monitor the arising and passing of thoughts, emotions, and sensations, within the framework of present-time awareness. With mindfulness we look at the whole range of experiences: the pleasant, the unpleasant, and the neutral. Ultimately, we are attempting to create and sustain a non-interfering, investigative attention of what is happening in our experience, as it is happening.

As we begin to practice moment-to-moment awareness, we start to develop insight into how our body, heart, and mind are interwoven and ultimately affected by our day-to-day internal and external experiences. The moment-to-moment awareness cultivated in mindfulness practice is

assisted by practicing with an attitude of *non-judgment*, *non-comparing*, and *non-identification*, which serve as the foundation for a more objective, observational, and less self-enmeshed understanding of our experience. This type of a non-interfering vantage point allows us to clearly see our most ingrained habitual patterns, develop patience and tolerance for these patterns, and ultimately learn to meet every part of our experience with a balanced, wise, skillful, or appropriate response.

1. Non-judging: The tendency of the mind is to be constantly assessing our experience, others and ourselves. We see that we judge, A LOT. When we practice mindfulness meditation we often put a label of “good” or “bad” on everything that happens. Simply by noticing that judgment is arising we can reduce our attachment to our perceptions, opinions, views and beliefs and our habitual identifications with the mind. We get to take a break. We can try something different. This helps us to begin to take a more objective and easeful attitude towards our experience.

2. Non-comparing: With this very common tendency of judging we see very quickly that there is a strong mental habit to compare. We compare others to ourselves, we compare the past against what we perceive the future to hold, we compare what we used to be like to how we are like now...and on and on it goes. It can be endless if we aren't careful. If we can become mindful and creative in our awareness we can find others ways to view things. Simply by noticing that comparing is happening we get a chance to investigate the intentions behind it and try something else...or at least let go of it.

3. Non-identification: We have a strong tendency to take all of our experience very personally, “my thoughts, my feelings, my worries and so on.” Mindfulness is encouraging us to take another view: just thoughts, just feelings, just worries-not mine, not me. This can be hard to do but it's very possible and is actually quite a radical shift in our perspective. There is a lot of freedom in taking this view. This radical shift in perspective helps us to maintain an objective viewpoint, at least some of the time. It takes some patience and humility to do this; but when practiced for some time its really not so difficult. Acknowledging that thoughts are arising objects of experience rather than a subjective narrative of life drastically changes our relationship to the thinking mind.

Mindfulness terminology: Awareness and Attention.

Two key terms that are used when discussing mindfulness are “awareness and attention”. The proper understanding and use of these words is of key importance when outlining the mindfulness practice.

Mindfulness practice instructions will often use the words attention and awareness interchangeably, which colloquially speaking does work, but is not entirely true. For example, imagine that you are overlooking a field from a hilltop; all of what you are taking in can be experienced within the container of awareness. Awareness is panoramic. Now, if you pick up a pair of binoculars and focus in on a tree, a flower or a deer that can be understood as attention. Awareness is wide, attention is narrow. Awareness is open, attention is focused.

1- Awareness: Awareness can be described as the container that holds our experience. Inside the container of awareness we have the full range of moment-to-moment experience. We have body sensations and the breath; we have pleasant and unpleasant sensation/feeling tones, mind states, emotions, perceptions and a wide range of mental activities and constructs. So if we look and see, there is a lot of stuff going on in each moment of our lives. Awareness is just described as the container that holds all of these different and constantly changing experiences. Mindfulness is what is able to see the entire container for what it is; an ever changing flow of causes and conditions.

2- Attention: Attention refers to what it is inside of the container that we focus on in any given moment. There is often an element of choice involved with attention. In some cases our attention is constantly moving around and wandering about. The mind pulls our attention in all types of directions and we usually just follow it unconsciously; this activity is called “discursive thought”. One of the root skills we establish within mindfulness is placing the attention on a specific location. In most cases we focus on the body and breath because there is no planning, remembering, judging, assessing or any stories involved with the body and breath; they are bland and simple. There is also no notion of past or future with the physical experience of the breathing body, and this is quite helpful to establish contact with the present moment. Practicing with body/breath awareness over the course of even 10-15 minutes will give rise to relaxation, concentration and mental calm.

Mindfulness meditation is two-fold: Two key aspects of Mindfulness are concentration and investigation.

1. Concentration- Concentration is the ability to remain focused for a sustained period of time on a single object. By placing our attention on a simple meditation object, such as the body or breath, the mind will settle and relax. Concentration leads to calmness and stillness of body and mind. This sets up the stage for investigative attention.

2. Investigation/Inquiry- Once the mind begins to settle we can start to investigate “what” is actually happening within our experience. We quickly see that most of the time we are thinking about the past or the future, we worry and plan, we remember and regret and we indulge in nostalgia. We calculate, analyze, criticize, compare and judge. This simple quality of mindful investigation brings our attention into the direct experience of what “is”, instead of the intellectual experience that is wrapped up in thoughts and stories. Meditative inquiry enables us to look deeply into what is happening in each moment and see its changing and conditional nature without having to get involved with the content. We can start to look at our experience objectively rather than subjectively. My thoughts become just thoughts; my worries become just worries; my mind becomes just mind and so on. As we become familiar with the actual mechanics of the working mind we begin to take our experience less “personally”.

Investigation leads to Insight – So, what is Vipassana or Insight Meditation?

Through mindfulness practice, we can begin to accept more fully the ups and downs that life has to offer, and will always offer. As our practice deepens, we develop greater emotional balance in the face of change, difficulties, pressures, anxieties and stress. We do not seek to push away,

avoid, or get rid of life's difficulties altogether, nor do we seek to cling to and identify ourselves with every single pleasant and unpleasant moment of experience. Instead, we begin to inhabit a curious and investigative attitude towards our lives. We practice self-inquiry and investigate the ways in which we unintentionally and intentionally generate stress. Through insight, we learn to become creative participants in an ever-changing dynamic life experience, rather than rule-obsessed on-lookers, rigidly attempting to control and manufacture the world to our liking.

Contemplation

The Satipatthana discourse emphasizes the importance of *contemplation* as a means for developing insight. Contemplation can be defined as the action of looking thoughtfully at something for a long time. In Pali Sanskrit, the language of the Satipatthana Sutta, the corresponding word for contemplation is *anupassati*, which actually translates to mean, “to repeatedly look at.”

In this way, through mindfulness practice, we are repeatedly looking into the present moment experience (specifically into our Body sensations, Feeling impressions, and Mental attitudes and patterns, i.e. the Four Foundation of Mindfulness) in order to deepen our knowing of specific insights. This knowing can start as a conceptual study and understanding of these key insights—namely Impermanence, Dukkha, and Not-Self—but eventually leads to a perceptual knowing of these insights that, as the Buddha points out, is not “confined by thought,” but instead, “sensed by the wise.” In other words, these insights come to form a *ground* or foundation from which we live our lives, rather than a mere conceptual philosophy that we subscribe to. By living according to these insights, we learn to inhabit an integrated and realistic perspective of a life that is free from the stress that is the result of our usual reactive, automatic, and inflexible relationship to a desire-craving and pain-avoidant nervous system. We learn to utilize these insights as a means of developing an appropriate response to life's inherent sorrows and joys, rather than getting caught up in the stressful push and pull of such dynamic forces.

“What is needed is knowledge of things as they really are. Not merely conceptual knowledge, knowledge as idea, but perceptual knowledge, a knowing which is also a seeing (seeing for yourself). This type of seeing, develops into wisdom and enables us to grasp things as they are in actuality, directly and immediately, free from the screen of ideas, views, and assumptions our minds ordinarily set up between themselves and the real.” – Bhikkhu Bodhi

3 Marks of Existence:

1. Dukkha – Not adequately translated into English. Dukkha can be described as the unsatisfactoriness, stressfulness, or the sense of bumpiness that is inherent in a life.

Birth is dukkha. Ageing is dukkha. Sickness is dukkha. Death is dukkha. Encountering what is not dear is dukkha, separation from what is dear is dukkha, not getting what one wants is dukkha. This psycho-physical experience of being alive is dukkha.

Buddhist practice invites us to take up a seat in the middle of our lives. As we practice mindfulness, we are tasked with the responsibility of turning towards and directly experiencing

the totality of our lives—for good, bad, or indifferent. This means, we must begin to confront what is difficult, what is hard, what is stressful, what is *dukkha*. This practice is very counter to our natural tendency to fix, manage, and control away the stressful areas of life. As we begin to calm the mind and investigate our psycho-physical condition—i.e. being human—we peer into, what Carl Jung refers to as “the shadow” side of our experience. There are many gifts to be uncovered within our shadows; however, there are also many painful parts that we have intentionally kept out of reach of our daily awareness. As we uncover these parts of ourselves, it is normal to experience overwhelm, reactivity, doubt, fear, and a whole variety of unpleasant emotions and mental states. We must learn to embrace and welcome these most difficult parts of ourselves in order to transform our relationship to them. After all, it is not the *dukkha* that is the problem, it is our relationship to it.

“People have suffered in one place, so they go somewhere else. When they have suffered there, they run off again. They think they are running away from suffering, but they are not. It goes with them. They carry suffering around without knowing it. If we don’t know suffering, then we can’t know the cause of suffering. If we don’t know the cause of suffering, then we can’t know its release.” – Ajahn Chah

As we sit in meditation and gain insight into the stress of our mind-body process, we learn to *embrace* and *care for* what is stressful, rather than run, avoid, or attempt to change it. We develop tolerance, mercy, empathy, forgiveness, and ultimately compassion.

2. Impermanence (Pali Sanskrit = “Anicca”) – Everything changes. Nothing is permanent. We know this, right?

Conceptually, we know impermanence. We know that things, everything, changes. Even on a molecular level, change is an on-going thread of existence. However, when we experience pain, discomfort, grief, and irritability, we become overwhelmed with emotion and get lost in stories about our pain. Our mind and emotional experience fixes us to the pain. It tells us that the pain is permanent, even though “we know,” at least conceptually, that the pain is in flux, changing, impermanent. We forget that life is fluid. Life is experienced as a dynamic process: a verb, not a noun. Even chronic pain fluctuates. Even chronic depression has varying degrees of depth and texture. If we reduce experience to a single feeling, sensation, emotion, or thought, we will fixate, obsess, and trap ourselves by clinging to something that is inherently changing. On the other hand, we tend to cling to life’s joys, pleasures and excitement, hoping and demanding that they will last forever. In this way, when we lose “the job, the girlfriend, the career, or the popularity,” we suffer. We suffer because we cling to impermanent experiences.

Through mindfulness, we begin to see that these “Marks of Existence” are interrelated. Part of the *dukkha* of our lives is that our lives are constantly changing. We cannot *always* pin down pleasure or make the pain go away, and this is stressful.

Through mindfulness practice, we become intimate with change. We learn to live in the flow of life’s dynamic nature, rather than searching for a lasting and permanent experience to call home. Instead of getting caught up in predicting the changes in life, we begin to live more fully in the process itself. We begin to ask ourselves, what is it like here? Right now, it’s like this!

3. Not-Self (Pali Sanskrit = “Anatta”)

Perhaps one of the Buddha’s most over-dramatized teachings is his teaching on Anatta, or “Not-Self.” From a practical standpoint, this insight builds off of the context previously provided when looking at the Mark of Impermanence. Because all things (even at the molecular level) are impermanent, this means that everything that we identify as our SELVES is also impermanent. Our bodies change, our feelings change, our perceptions change, our inclinations change, our mental awareness changes, and our relationship to our environments change. In this way, there is no eternal or permanent part of our selves that remains unchanged; we are ultimately a self-in-process.

Because who we are is constantly changing, we often get overwhelmed with attempting to fix our identity to a specific set of conditions in hopes of finding lasting security, or a ground to stand on. For example, in the United States, we commonly define ourselves by our career, our marriage, our money, or other temporary signifiers of success, popularity, or praise. As the Buddhist scholar, Stephen Batchelor writes, we have an unintentional, but inborn tendency to identify and fix our *selves* to a *place*. The problem is that, like all things, our place is constantly changing. There is no firm ground on which we can stand. There is no thing that we can then say, ‘I am entirely this’ or, ‘I will always be this.’ Until we learn to embrace the fluidity of our self identify, we will continue to suffer over the many identities that come in go throughout our lifetime. After all, even in the end, the body will die.

“... People are blinded to the fundamentally unpredictable and insecure nature of their existence by attachment to their *place*. One’s place is that to which one is most strongly bound. It is the foundation on which the entire edifice of one’s identity is built. It is formed through identification with a physical location and social position, by one’s religious and political beliefs, through that instinctive conviction of being a solitary ego. One’s place is where one stands, and whence one takes a stand against everything that seems to challenge what is “mine.” This stance is your posture vis-à-vis the world: it encompasses everything that lies on this side of the line that separates “you” from “me.” Delight in it creates a sense of being fixed and secure in the midst of an existence that is anything but fixed and secure. Loss of it, one fears, would mean that everything one cherishes would be overwhelmed by chaos, meaninglessness, or madness.”

- Stephen Batchelor

4 Applications of Mindfulness:

1. Bare Attention – Bare attention can also be referred to as *simple awareness*. In Buddhist psychology, attention is present in every mind moment. In the application of *bare attention* or *simple awareness* we simply practice tuning into where our attention is currently.

2. Protective Awareness – Mindfulness also has the purpose of helping us to guard our senses from what leads to harmful, overwhelming, or stressful results. By practicing mindfulness, we start to see that we have the ability to *choose* what we pay attention to. In this way, we are heeding the Buddha’s advice to be very *careful* about where we place our attention. We want to guard the mind from consuming too much resentment, lust, greed, craving, self-centeredness, etc. We are

sensitive beings, and we are ultimately affected by what we pay attention to. In this way, we learn to take responsibility for where we place our attention.

3. Introspective Awareness – When the protective awareness fails, *introspective awareness* is the type of awareness that has the ability to look into the mind (i.e. 3rd Foundation of Mindfulness) and see if there are any unwholesome qualities that have taken root “in” the mind. We ask ourselves the question, ‘Is there fear, anger, judgment, self-hatred, or doubt in my mind right now?’ This application of mindfulness is in contrast to our more usual tendency to obsessively look for the external cause of the fear, anger, judgment, or self-hatred. When unwholesome qualities have taken root in the mind, we usually react to these afflictive *attitudes* of mind (fear, anger, lust, etc) by ruminating and obsessing over identifying their cause, rather than acknowledging that they are, in fact, simply a passing *attitude or state*. Because introspective awareness requires us to directly observe the mind’s passing attitudes, it is probably one of the more difficult applications of mindfulness to employ.

“This non-interfering quality of *sati* is required to enable one clearly to observe the building up of reactions and their underlying motives. As soon as one becomes in any way involved in a reaction, the detached observational vantage point is immediately lost. The detached receptivity of *sati* enables one to step back from the situation at hand and thereby to become an unbiased observer of one’s subjective involvement and of the entire situation... Maintaining the presence of *sati* in this way is closely related to the ability to tolerate a high degree of “cognitive dissonance”, since witnessing of one’s own shortcomings ordinarily leads to unconscious attempts at reducing the resulting feeling of discomfort by avoiding or even altering the perceived information” – Analayo

In this sense, introspective awareness is a great way to build-up inner resources and tolerance for the mental and emotional states that more commonly trigger overwhelm and reactivity.

4. Intentionally Forming Concepts – This is the application of mindfulness where we intentionally use our thinking capacity to reflect on concepts or ideas that assist the development of insight and wellbeing: death contemplation, heart practices, contemplation of the anatomical parts of the body, etc.

Kind-Awareness

“The object of attention is not important. The observing mind that is working in the background to be aware is more important. What’s important is the condition of the mind into which the experience arises. If the observing is done with the right attitude, the object will be the right object. Only when there is faith, will effort arise, only when there is effort, will mindfulness be continuous. Only when mindfulness is continuous will concentration become established. Only when concentration is established, will you know things as they really are. And when you start to know things as they really are, faith will grow stronger.” - Sayadaw U Tejaniya

3 Applications of Metta:

Purification – to uproot the unwholesome qualities of the mind

Cultivation – to build up the wholesome qualities of mind

Concentration – to ease and calm the mind, or settle the mind down

Metta Sutta

This is what should be done
 By those who are skilled in goodness,
 And who know the path of peace:
 Let them be able and upright,
 Straightforward and gentle in speech.
 Humble and not conceited,
 Contented and easily satisfied.
 Unburdened by duties and frugal in their ways.
 Peaceful and calm, and wise and skillful,
 Not proud and demanding in nature.
 Let them not do the slightest thing
 that the wise would later reprove.
 Wishing in gladness and in safety,
 May all beings be at ease.
 Whatever living beings there may be;
 Whether they are weak or strong, omitting none,
 The great or the mighty, medium, short or small,
 The seen and the unseen,
 Those living near and far away,
 Those born and to-be-born,
 May all beings be at ease!
 Let none deceive another,
 Or despise any being in any state.
 Let none through anger or ill will,
 Wish harm upon another.
 Even as a mother protects with her life,
 Her child, her only child,
 So with a boundless heart
 Should one cherish all living beings;
 Radiating kindness over the entire world:
 Spreading upward to the skies,
 And downward to the depths;
 Outward and unbounded,
 Free from hatred and ill-will.
 Whether standing or walking, seated or lying down,
 Free from drowsiness,
 One should sustain this recollection.
 This is said to be the sublime abiding.
 By not holding to fixed views,
 The pure-hearted one, having clarity of vision,
 Being freed from all sense desires,
 Is not born again into this world.

- The Buddha

The Satipatthana Sutta

Translated by Bhikkhu Analayo

Thus I have heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living in the Kuru country at a town of the Kurus named Kammasadhamma. There he addressed the monks thus: “Monks.” “Venerable sir,” they replied. The Blessed One said this:

[Direct Path]

“Monks, this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of *dukkha* and discontent, for acquiring the true method, for the realization of *Nibbana*, namely, the four *Satipatthanas*.

[Definition]

“What are the four? Here, monks, in regard to the body a monk abides contemplating that body, diligent, clearly knowing, and mindful, free from desire and discontent in regard to the world. In regard to feelings he abides contemplating feelings diligent, clearly knowing, and mindful, free from desire and discontent in regard to the world. In regard to the mind he abides contemplating the mind, diligent, clearly knowing, and mindful, free from desire and discontent in regard to the world. In regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating the *dhammas*, diligent, clearly knowing, and mindful, free from desire and discontent in regard to the world.

[Breathing]

“And how, monks, does he in regard to the body abide contemplating the body? Here, gone to the forest, or to the root of a tree, or to an empty hut, he sits down; having folded his legs crosswise, set his body erect, and established mindfulness in front of him, mindful he breathes in, mindful he breathes out.

“Breathing in long, he knows ‘I breathe in long,’ breathing out long, he knows ‘I breathe out long.’ Breathing in short, he knows ‘I breathe in short,’ breathing out short, he knows ‘I breathe out short.’ He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body,’ he trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body.’ He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in calming the bodily formation,’ he trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out calming the bodily formation.’

“Just as a skilled turner or his apprentice, when making a long turn, knows ‘I make a long turn,’ or when making a short turn knows ‘I make a short turn’ so too, breathing in long, he knows ‘I breathe in long,’ ... (continue as above).

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body internally, or he abides contemplating the body externally, or he abides contemplating the body both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising in the body, or he abides contemplating the nature of passing away in the body. Mindfulness that ‘there is a body’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world.

“That is how in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body.

[Postures]

“Again, monks, when walking, he knows ‘I am walking’; when standing, he knows ‘I am standing’; when sitting, he knows ‘I am sitting’; when lying down, he knows ‘I am lying down’; or he knows accordingly however his body is disposed.

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in the body. Mindfulness that ‘there is a body’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. That too is how in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body.

[Activities]

“Again, monks, when going forward and returning he acts clearly knowing; when looking ahead and looking away he acts clearly knowing; when flexing and extending his limbs he acts clearly knowing; when eating, drinking, consuming food, and tasting he acts clearly knowing; when defecating and urinating he acts clearly knowing; when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, and keeping silent he acts clearly knowing.

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in the body. Mindfulness that ‘there is a body’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. That too is how in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body.

[Anatomical Parts]

“Again, monks, he reviews this same body up from the soles of the feet and down from the top of the hair, enclosed by skin, as full of many kinds of impurity thus: ‘in this body there are head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, bowels, mesentery, contents of the stomach, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, spittle, snot, oil of the joints, and urine.’

“Just as though there were a bag with an opening at both ends full of many sorts of grain, such as hill rice, red rice, beans, peas, millet, and white rice, and a man with good eyes were to open it and review it thus: ‘this is hill rice, this is red rice, these are beans, these are peas, this is millet, this is white rice’; so too he reviews this same body... (continue as above)

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in the body. Mindfulness that ‘there is a body’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. That too is how in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body.

[Elements]

“Again, monks, he reviews this same body, however it is placed, however disposed, as consisting of elements thus: ‘in this body there are the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element’.

“Just as though a skilled butcher of his apprentice had killed a cow and was seated at a crossroads with it cut up into pieces; so too he reviews this same body... (continue as above).

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in the body. Mindfulness that ‘there is a body’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. That too is how in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body.

[Corpse in Decay]

“Again, monks, as though he were to see a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground – one, two, or three days dead, bloated, livid, and oozing matter being devoured by crows, hawks, vultures, dogs, jackals, or various kinds of worms ... a skeleton with flesh and blood, held together with sinews ... a skeleton without flesh and blood, held together with sinews ... disconnected bones scattered in all directions ... bones bleached white, the color of shells ... bones heaped up, more than a year old ... bones rotten and crumbling to dust – he compares this same body with it thus: ‘this body too is of the same nature, it will be like that, it is not exempt from that fate.’”

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in the body. Mindfulness that ‘there is a body’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. That too is how in regard to the body he abides contemplating the body.

[Feelings]

“And how, monks, does he in regard to feelings abide contemplating feelings?”

Here, when feeling a pleasant feeling, he knows ‘I feel a pleasant feeling’; when feeling an unpleasant feeling, he knows ‘I feel an unpleasant feeling’; when feeling a neutral feeling, he knows ‘I feel a neutral feeling.’

“When feeling a worldly pleasant feeling, he knows ‘I feel a worldly pleasant feeling;’ when feeling an unworldly pleasant feeling, he knows ‘I feel an unworldly pleasant feeling;’ when feeling a worldly unpleasant feeling, he knows ‘I feel a worldly unpleasant feeling;’ when feeling an unworldly unpleasant feeling, he knows ‘I feel an unworldly unpleasant feeling;’ when feeling a worldly neutral feeling, he knows ‘I feel a worldly neutral feeling;’ when feeling an unworldly neutral feeling, he knows ‘I feel an unworldly neutral feeling.’

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the feelings he abides contemplating feelings internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in feelings. Mindfulness that ‘there is feeling’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world.

“That is how in regard to feelings he abides contemplating feelings.

[Mind]

“And how, monks, does he in regard to the mind abide contemplating the mind?”

“Here he knows a lustful mind to be ‘lustful’, and a mind without lust to be ‘without lust’; he knows an angry mind to be ‘angry’, and a mind without anger to be ‘without anger’; he knows a deluded mind to be ‘deluded’, and a mind without delusion to be ‘without delusion’; he knows a contracted mind to be ‘contracted’, and a distracted mind to be ‘distracted’; he knows a great mind to be ‘great’, and a narrow mind to be ‘narrow’; he knows a surpassable mind to be ‘surpassable’, and an unsurpassable mind to be ‘unsurpassable’; he knows a concentrated mind to be ‘concentrated’, and an unconcentrated mind to be ‘unconcentrated’; he knows a liberated mind to be ‘liberated’, and an unliberated mind to be ‘unliberated.’

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the mind he abides contemplating the mind internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in regard to the mind. Mindfulness that ‘there is a mind’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world.

“That is how in regard to the mind he abides contemplating the mind.

[Hindrances]

“And how, monks, does he in regard to *dhammas* abide contemplating *dhammas*? Here in regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the five hindrances. And how does he in regard to *dhammas* abide contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the five hindrances?”

“If sensual desire is present in him, he knows ‘there is sensual desire in me;’ if sensual desire is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no sensual desire in me;’ and he knows how unarisen sensual desire can arise, how arisen sensual desire can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed sensual desire can be prevented.

“If aversion is present in him, he knows ‘there is aversion in me;’ if aversion is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no aversion in me;’ and he knows how unarisen aversion can arise, how arisen aversion can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed aversion can be prevented.

“If sloth-and-torpor is present in him, he knows ‘there is sloth-and-torpor in me;’ if sloth-and-torpor is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no sloth-and-torpor in me;’ and he knows how unarisen sloth-and-torpor can arise, how arisen sloth-and-torpor can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed sloth-and-torpor can be prevented.

“If restlessness-and-worry is present in him, he knows ‘there is restlessness-and-worry in me;’ if restlessness-and-worry is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no restlessness-and-worry in me;’ and he knows how unarisen restlessness-and-worry can arise, how arisen restlessness-and-worry can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed restlessness-and-worry can be prevented.

“If doubt is present in him, he knows ‘there is doubt in me;’ if doubt is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no doubt in me;’ and he knows how unarisen doubt can arise, how arisen doubt can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed doubt can be prevented.

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in *dhammas*. Mindfulness that ‘there are *dhammas*’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world.

“That is how in regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the five hindrances.

[Aggregates]

“Again, monks, in regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the five aggregates of clinging. And how does he in regard to *dhammas* abide contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the five aggregates of clinging?”

Here he knows, ‘such is material form, such its arising, such its passing away; such is feeling, such its arising, such its passing away; such are volitions, such their arising, such their passing away; such is consciousness, such its arising, such its passing away.’

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in *dhammas*. Mindfulness that ‘there are *dhammas*’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world.

“That is how in regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the five aggregates of clinging.

[Sense-Spheres]

“Again, monks, in regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the six internal and external sense-spheres. And how does he in regard to *dhammas* abide contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the six internal and external sense-spheres?

“Here he knows the eye, he knows forms, and he knows the fetter that arises dependent on both, and he also knows how an unarisen fetter can arise, how an arisen fetter can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed fetter can be prevented.

“Here he knows the ear, he knows sounds, and he knows the fetter that arises dependent on both, and he also knows how an unarisen fetter can arise, how an arisen fetter can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed fetter can be prevented.

“Here he knows the nose, he knows odors, and he knows the fetter that arises dependent on both, and he also knows how an unarisen fetter can arise, how an arisen fetter can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed fetter can be prevented.

“Here he knows the tongue, he knows flavours, and he knows the fetter that arises dependent on both, and he also knows how an unarisen fetter can arise, how an arisen fetter can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed fetter can be prevented.

“Here he knows the body, he knows tangibles, and he knows the fetter that arises dependent on both, and he also knows how an unarisen fetter can arise, how an arisen fetter can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed fetter can be prevented.

“Here he knows the mind, he knows mind-objects, and he knows the fetter that arises dependent on both, and he also knows how an unarisen fetter can arise, how an arisen fetter can be removed, and how a future arising of the removed fetter can be prevented.

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in *dhammas*. Mindfulness that ‘there are *dhammas*’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world.

“That is how in regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the six internal and external sense-spheres.

[Awakening Factors]

“Again, monks, in regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the seven awakening factors. And how does he in regard to *dhammas* abide contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the seven awakening factors?

“Here, if the mindfulness awakening factor is present in him, he knows ‘there is the mindfulness awakening factor in me’; if the mindfulness awakening factor is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no mindfulness awakening factor in me’; he knows how the unarisen mindfulness awakening factor can arise, and how the arisen mindfulness awakening factor can be perfected by development.

“If the investigation-of-*dhammas* awakening factor is present in him, he knows ‘there is the investigation-of-*dhammas* awakening factor in me’; if the investigation-of-*dhammas* awakening factor is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no investigation-of-*dhammas* awakening factor in me’; he knows how the unarisen investigation-of-*dhammas* awakening factor can arise, and how the arisen investigation-of-*dhammas* awakening factor can be perfected by development.

“If the energy awakening factor is present in him, he knows ‘there is the energy awakening factor in me’; if the energy awakening factor is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no energy awakening factor in me’; he knows how the unarisen energy awakening factor can arise, and how the arisen energy awakening factor can be perfected by development.

“If the joy awakening factor is present in him, he knows ‘there is the joy awakening factor in me’; if the joy awakening factor is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no joy awakening factor in me’; he knows how the unarisen joy awakening factor can arise, and how the arisen joy awakening factor can be perfected by development.

“If the tranquility awakening factor is present in him, he knows ‘there is the tranquility awakening factor in me’; if the tranquility awakening factor is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no tranquility awakening factor in me’; he knows how the unarisen tranquility awakening factor can arise, and how the arisen tranquility awakening factor can be perfected by development.

“If the concentration awakening factor is present in him, he knows ‘there is the concentration awakening factor in me’; if the concentration awakening factor is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no concentration awakening factor in me’; he knows how the unarisen concentration awakening factor can arise, and how the arisen concentration awakening factor can be perfected by development.

“If the equanimity awakening factor is present in him, he knows ‘there is the equanimity awakening factor in me’; if the equanimity awakening factor is not present in him, he knows ‘there is no equanimity awakening factor in me’; he knows how the unarisen equanimity awakening factor can arise, and how the arisen equanimity awakening factor can be perfected by development.

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in *dhammas*. Mindfulness that ‘there are *dhammas*’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world.

“That is how in regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the seven awakening factors.

[Noble Truths]

“Again, monks, in regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the four noble truths. And how does he in regard to *dhammas* abide contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the four noble truths?

“Here he knows as it really is, ‘this is dukkha’; he knows as it really is, ‘this is the arising of dukkha’; he knows as it really is, ‘this is the cessation of dukkha’; he knows as it really is, ‘this is the way leading to the cessation of dukkha.’

[Refrain]

“In this way, in regard to the *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* internally... externally ... both internally and externally. He abides contemplating the nature of arising ... of passing away ... of both arising and passing away in *dhammas*. Mindfulness that ‘there are *dhammas*’ is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and continuous mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world.

“That is how in regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas* in terms of the four noble truths.

[Prediction]

“Monks, if anyone should develop these four *satipatthanas* in such a way for seven years, one of two fruits could be expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, or, if there is a trace of clinging left, non-returning. Let alone seven years ... six years ... five years ... four years ... three years ... two years ... one year ... seven months ... six months ... five months ... four months ... three months ... two months ... one month ... half a month ... if anyone should develop these four *satipatthanas* in such a way for seven days, one of two fruits could be expected for him: either knowledge here and now, or, if there is a trace of clinging left, non-returning. So it was with reference to this that it was said:

[Direct Path]

“Monks, this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of *dukkha* and discontent, for acquiring the true method, for the realization of *Nibbana*, namely, the four *satipatthanas*.”

That is what the Blessed One said. The monks were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

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Satipattana translation from Bhikkhu Analayo

Metta Sutta translation from Sharon Salzberg, *Lovingkindness*