



Handbook

Vipassana Meditation

for beginners



Handbook Vipassana Meditation for beginners

by **Phra Athikan Somsak Sorado**

Abbot of Wat Bhaddanta Asabharam

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SAPPA DANAM DHAMMA DANAM CHINATI

“TO OFFER DHAMMA AS A GIFT EXCEEDS

ALL KINDS OF OFFERINGS”

Preface

This is a beginners' handbook for awareness development according to the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. I have compiled here a set of instructions from my own personal experience that I have heard, read, written and taken into memory from the Tipitika and other Buddhist texts. I have received instructions from Meditation Masters of the Vipassana Lineage that I have directly and intensively put into practice. Vipassana Meditation Grandmaster Dr. Bhaddanta Asabha Mahathera was my kalyanamittata who gave instructions and interviews with good results.

The core substance of this handbook has been compiled directly from personal experience and is especially for meditators who wish to put the instructions into practice. Many meditators have provided feedback that they have greatly benefited from this handbook and that they have received good results to a certain extent. They further urged that more copies should be printed and that they were willing to sponsor the cost of printing. Before being compiled, this manual only consisted of a few pages of notes which I had distributed to meditators who came to practice. Later, all the notes were compiled into a handbook.

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For those that have yet to directly experience vipassana meditation according to the Four Foundations of Mindfulness this handbook will give instructions on what and how to physically and emotionally prepare oneself before entering into a meditation retreat. Core principles and method are elaborated – including standing, walking, sitting, lying down, lowering the body, lifting the body up, and stretching. The benefits of Vipassana Meditation are also given. This book further elaborates on bare awareness of knowing pleasant feelings, painful feelings, neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling, the bare awareness of knowing the thinking process, the five hindrances, internal sense fields, external sense fields including the bare awareness of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (mindfulness of body, feelings, thoughts and ideas), as it really is.

While reading this book, one may feel that it is not enjoyable as the handbook is filled with instructions, general principles, method of practice, and the encouragement to put instructions into direct practice; and eventually to reap the benefits of Vipassana Meditation in due course. One must put the method laid out here into practice to assure oneself that this meditation method

really works. Thus, this handbook is not a scholarly study nor a book for recreation.

Finally, it is hoped that this handbook will be a good friend for beginners and will provide a firm foundation for those who walk the path towards liberation and enlightenment. For those who see the dangers of the continued rounds of existence, Samsara, and for those on the journey towards the path toward liberation, may they all be well. May the wholesome cause and effect eventually lead them to the shore of Nibbana.

Anumodana and thank you to the translators, financial sponsors and all those involved in publishing this first edition of the Handbook of Vipassana Meditation for beginners. The opportunity in spreading the Dhamma or in freely giving the Dhamma, the Buddha has stated as being the highest act of generosity.

I hereby pay respects to the Triple Gems and may the Triple Gems offer protection to all – to be free from diseases, having wisdom and right understanding; and may all be successful in their life endeavors.

With Metta

Phra Athikan Somsak Sorado

Abbot of Wat Bhaddanta Asabharam

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How to prepare before entering into Vipassana Meditation

Many people are worried about how to prepare for entering into Vipassana Meditation, including how to enable to take it through the entire period determined. As a result of an improper preparation, some cannot meditate as well as they should. One of the concerns is if the place or training center is suitable for the practice.. It should be considered as follows::

1. not far from or close to a village or a community;
2. transport easily easy to get to;
3. be a quiet place;
4. not much noise or smell;
5. not a place busy with people coming and going;
6. not a recreation or attractive place causing the mind to be unsettled or easily bothered;
7. be full of shade of trees but sunlit, air easily ventilated, not too dry or humid;

8. less bothered by reptiles and pests;
9. in the case of monks, no problem of alms-gathering;
10. accommodation, facilities and things for living enough available such as meal, medicines and so on;
11. there is a meditation master with good moral conduct who has sufficient knowledge of the Buddhist scriptures and experience of Vipassana Meditation, and is sophisticated and able to advise the right methods of the meditation and to balance the faculties of the meditator;
12. review the regulations of the place. For instance, how often the meal is provided in a day, vegetarian or simple, whether the supplementary drink is provided or not and when it is available. Some places provide meal for the monk and meditator once a day, but some do it twice a day. Some provide the supplementary drink, while some do not. Some allow the meditator to bring the drink by himself/herself. At Wat Bhaddhata Asabharam, the meal is provided for the monk once a day and twice for the meditator; the monk receives it with the Buddhist alms bowl. And the drink is available and the meditators are allowed to bring it themselves. allowed the meditator to bring by oneself;

13. the regulation of sleeping varies from the places. Some places allow sleeping at day and meditating at night, while the others do not and have a limit to the amount of sleep, only four to six hours. So the physical and mental readiness is necessary, otherwise it will be difficult for the practice;
14. to get ready, the practice schedule should be studied. The meditator should get up early (3:30 a.m.) and go to sleep late (10:00 p.m.). Those who are inexperienced and unfamiliar to the schedule should try to practice at least 6 hours a day. While those who are experienced should meditate continuously at least 18 – 21 hours a day;
15. talking may be allowed at some places, but in the course of practice at Wat Bhaddhata Asabharam, it is prohibited if not necessary, except in the time of interview;
16. whatever activities and movements generally are proceeded in a slow mode or manner such as standing, sitting, laying down, having a meal, drinking and so on. So it is important to accept the condition since the beginning, abandon all familiarity, and aim to contemplate the activities and movements consciously in no hurry;

17. normally led by defilements, the meditator needs to contemplate all the objects attentively to keep the sense-doors (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind) away from it. Doing well from the beginning on will cause the practice to develop rapidly;
18. cut down all kinds of worries and only concentrate on the present as the past is gone and one is not able to do anything, the future has not come yet and so there is nothing to worry about. The best thing to do is to focus on the materiality and mentality currently existing. Try to recognize the truth, do not seize or foresee such things:
 - 1) Worry about residence (Āvāsaalibodha), one is worried about one's house or residence that it may be unclean or messy as there is nobody taking care of it;
 - 2) Worry about patron (Kulapalibodha), one is worried about the sponsored family or people that one respects, and afraid that one is unable to keep contact with and get support from those acquaintances;
 - 3) Worry about gains (Labhapalibodha), one is worried about the income or one's usual benefits that may be reduced or lost because of one's absence;

- 4) Worry about companions such as friends (Gaṇapalibodha) teachers, students, other acquaintances and so on;
- 5) Worry about job (Kammapalibodha), one is worried about taking care of constructions, one's job, business, career, and so on;
- 6) Worry about journey (Antadhānapalibodha), one is worried about one's planned business travel, overseas trip or vacation, and so on;
- 7) Worry about relatives (Ñātipalibodha), one is worried that during one's absence one's parents, children, wife or husband, or close relatives may get into some troubles or have some illness;
- 8) Worry about illness (Ābādhapalibodha), one is worried about the existing illness that it may become worse, or being ailing due to the change of weather;
- 9) Worry about education or teaching (Ganthapalibodha), one is worried about not being able to catch up on the class or preach to the congregation;
- 10) Worry about power (Iddhipalibodha), one is worried that one's authority will decrease or be transferred to others, or that one will lose the opportunity to succeed in any field as one is taking the course of practice, and so on.

19. when determined to take the retreat, one should be ready to the following:

- 1) leave any uniform, title, rank, pride, and so on behind, and make oneself simple;
- 2) bring enough clothing and personal articles, the layman should wear white;
- 3) bring one's bed articles such as bed and pillow, sheets or blanket, if it is not available at the place or center;
- 4) leave all accessories behind, except a timer;
- 5) do not come with a severe illness or contagious disease and bring the medicines for it; one should inform the staff or administration of the place;
- 6) refrain from any activities as regards communication such as reading, writing, listening to the radio, watching television, making phone calls; if one brings communication tools , leave them at the administration of the place;
- 7) prepare flowers, joss sticks, and candles for paying respects to the Triple Gems and the master;
- 8) do register at the administration office and study the regulations of the place.



Method of accepting the eight Precepts and meditation retreat

1. Make physical and mental readiness for a meditation retreat.
2. If possible, provide flower, joss sticks, and candle for taking the Precepts and meditation retreat.
3. Wear proper clothing (white clothes), behave well and be quiet.
4. At the place of ceremony, pay homage to the Triple Gems by raising joined hands and bowing to the ground three times, and another three times to the meditation master, then present the flower, joss sticks and candle to the master, recite the following verse of making a request for the eight Precepts:

5. **Mayan bhante, tissaranena saha, attha silani yacama.**

(O, Prosperous One, we all request for the Buddhist eight Precepts simultaneously with the three Refuges.)

Dutiyaampi, mayam bhante, tissaranena saha, attha silani yacama.

(O, Prosperous One, we all request for the Buddhist eight Precepts simultaneously with the three Refuges, for the second time.)

**Tatiyampi, mayam bhante, tissaranena saha,
attha silani yacama.**

(O, Prosperous One, we all request for the Buddhist eight Precepts simultaneously with the three Refuges, for the third time.)

6. The master recites the following passage three times, after which the lay people repeat it three times.

**Namo tassa bhagavato arahato
sammambuddhassa.**

(May veneration be presented to the Exalted One, who is an Arahanta or the Passionless One, and who attained Enlightenment by himself righteously.)

7. The master recites the Three Refuges verse line-by-line, then the lay people recite line-by-line after him:

Buddham saranam gacchami.

(I accept the Buddha as my Refuge.)

Dhammam saranam gacchami.

(I accept the Dhamma as my Refuge.)

Sangham saranam gacchami.

(I accept the Sangha as my Refuge.)

Dutiyaampi buddham saranam gacchami

(I accept the Buddha as my Refuge for the second time.)

Dutiyaampi dhammam saranam gacchami.

(I accept the Dhamma as my Refuge for the second time.)

Dutiyaampi sangham saranam gacchami.

(I accept the Sangha as my Refuge for the second time.)

Tatiyaampi buddham saranam gacchami

(I accept the Buddha as my Refuge for the third time.)

Tatiyaampi dhammam saranam gacchami.

(I accept the Dhamma as my Refuge for the third time.)

Tatiyaampi sangham saranam gacchami.

(I accept the Sangha as my Refuge for the third time.)

The master recites “**Tisaranagamanan Nitthitan.**” (“The Three Refuges end here”), then the lay people recite “**Ama bhante.**” (“Yes, Sir”)

8. The master monk recites the Eight Precepts in order, then the lay people recite in order after him:

Panatipata, veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami.

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from taking life of any living being.)

**Adinnadana, veramani sikkhapadam
samadiyami.**

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from taking what is not given.)

**Abrahma-cariya, veramani sikkhapadam
samadiyami**

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from sexual conduct.)

**Musavada, veramani sikkhapadam
samadiyami.**

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from false speech.)

**Sura-meraya-majja-pamadatthana, veramani
sikkhapadam samadiyami.**

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from intoxications causing heedlessness.)

**Vikala-bhojana, veramani sikkhapadam
samadiyami.**

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from taking food at inappropriate times.)

**Nacca-gita-vadita-visuka-dassana
malagandha-vilepana-dharana-mandana-
vighusanatthana, veramani sikkhapadam
samadiyami.**

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from dancing, singing, music, unseemly shows, from wearing of garlands, smartening with scents

and embellishment with unguents.)

**Uccasayana-mahasayane, veramani
sikkhapadam samadiyami.**

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from the use of high and large luxurious couches and beds.)

The lay people recite the following verse three times **“Imani Attha Sikkhapadani Samadiyami.”** (“I request for the acceptance of these Eight Precepts.”)

9. Make a determination to the Triple Gems by uttering the following verse:

“Imahan Bhagava Attabhavan Tumhakan Pariccayami”

(“O, Blessed One. I give up this life and body of mine to the Triple Gems-the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, to develop Vipassana Meditation.”)

10. Make a determination of being apprentice to the master monk by reciting:

“Imahan Acariya Attabhavan Tumhakan Pariccayami”

(“Teacher, I give up this body and life of mine to you, to develop Vipassana Meditation.”)

11. Make a request for Vipassana Meditation by uttering:

“Nibbanassa Mebhante Sacchikaranatthaya Kammatthanam dehi”

(“Venerable Sir, please give me meditation instructions to light the way to the paths, fruitions and Nirvana.”)

12. Make a virtue established in the mind by uttering:

“Imaya Dhammanudhammapatipattiya Rattanatayan Pujami”

(“Homage to the Triple Gems with purified Dhamma practice and veracity of mine, may I persist in mindfulness until my desire is completely fulfilled.”)



Meaning of Contemplation

Contemplation is to fix the mind on the phenomena arising in the time of practice, and observe them as they naturally are, with exertion, mindfulness (sati), concentration (Samadhi), and wisdom (pañña), without state of stare, idea, thought, and imagination in every single moment of practice.

When contemplating the rising and falling of the abdomen, the meditator may be interrupted by other objects which are more clearly perceivable. The meditator should move to contemplate those objects until they disappear or become less distinct. Then he can go back to contemplating the rising and falling of the abdomen. When the time of mindful sitting such as 5, 10, 20, 30, 45 or 60 minutes is finished, the meditator should turn to mindful walking in order to change the posture and bring balance to the controlling faculties – confidence, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom (Indriya5).

Vipassana Meditation

Vipassana Meditation was discovered by Lord Buddha, and it is the only path that leads the meditator with righteous practice to be gradually liberated from influence of defilements.

“Vipassana” is a combination of the words “Vi” and “Passana”.

“Vi” means clear, true, superb, “Passana” means seeing, direct perception and right view (wisdom). So, the meaning of “Vipassana” is as the following:

1. seeing clearly or with wisdom the materiality and mentality (rupa-nama), and the Noble Truths (Ariyasacca);
2. insight into the Three Common Characteristics – impermanence, state of suffering or being oppressed, and state of being not self (Tilakkhana), and the Dependent Origination (Paticcasamuppada);
3. seeing extraordinary or incredible things (seen while meditating).

“Kammattana” is a combination of the words “Kamma” and “Thana”.

1. “Kamma” means action or deed, this pertains to an effort to cultivate superior mental states for purifying the mind from the defilements which are the root cause of all kinds of suffering.
2. “Thana” means base or station, this pertains to the objects of Vipassana Meditation which are the Five Aggregates (Khandha 5), internal and external sense-fields (Ayatana 12), Elements (Dhatu 18), Faculties (Indriya 22), the Dependent Origination (Paticcasamuppada 12), and the Four Noble Truths (Ariyasacca 4) as a base or station for developing Vipassana Meditation in accordance with the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (Kayanupassana, Vedananupassana, Cittanupassana, and Dhammanupassana).

Contemplation of the body (kayanupassana)

Mindfulness of body here only refers to contemplating the phenomena which happen at the time of being aware of the major activities (standing, walking, sitting and sleep) and the minor activities (bending, stretching, and so on).

Standing Contemplation

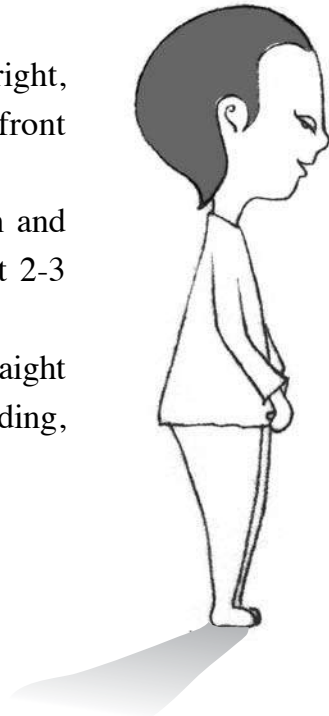
A. Principle

Ṭhito vā ṭhitomhī-ti pajānāti

“Standing, one knows one is standing”

B. Method

1. stand straight, neck upright, cross the hands at the front or the back of body;
2. have the eyes half open and keep the eyes downcast 2-3 metres ahead;
3. realize the posture of straight standing and note “standing, standing, standing”;



4. while noting in mind “standing”, the meditator must be fully aware that he or she is actually standing;
5. keep the mind on awareness of the straight body with the note.

C. What to avoid in standing contemplation

1. One should not close or let the eyes wander to other objects;
2. One should not bend the neck too much or turn the face up to look any other objects;
3. One should not contemplate the raising and falling of the abdomen (exception made if necessary);
4. One should not focus on any part of the body such as tip of foot, knee, navel, chest, head, forehead, tip of hair , and so on; on the contrary, just realize the state of standing;
5. In some meditation centers, the meditator may be advised that time used for practicing standing contemplation should tally with that spent for sitting or walking contemplation. But here the time of standing contemplation should take a very brief period of time by noting in mind “standing” for three times.

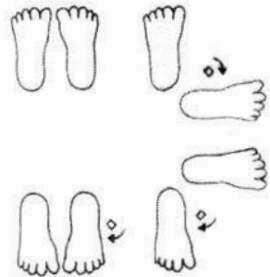
Walking

This refers to mindful walking, which is not walking for sightseeing in nature or walking for relaxing the body and the mind. But, it is walking forward and backward with awareness in order to change the posture and bring balance to the controlling faculties.



Turning

In the practice of mindful walking, turning is necessary when the meditator reaches the end of the path. It makes it possible to walk back and forth from one end to the other end of the path. If the path is short, turning may be done



more often, as is needed. For turning, the preferable way is being conscious of turning in three pairs or six steps. First the meditator turns right, then lifts the right foot, not over the ankle level, and moves it to the right for about 60 degrees (3 steps for 180 degrees) and puts it down. While lifting and moving the foot, the meditator simultaneously contemplates “turning”, while putting it down to the floor, contemplates “thus” and finishes “thus” when the whole foot touches the floor. Follow the same with the left foot

and do it three times until one faces the path again. After that, be conscious of the state of standing and note in mind “standing” three times, and “wanting to walk” three times. Later, perform mindful walking at the stage advised by the master.

A. Principle

Gaccanto vā gacchāmī-ti pajānāti
 “Walking, one knows one is walking”

B. Method of practice

1. set the eyes about 2-3 metres ahead;
2. fix the mind on the movement of the feet and being conscious;
3. “what is said” in the mind must be consistent with the movement of the body;
4. while walking, if any phenomenon which is more clearly perceivable arises in the mind, the meditator should temporarily stop walking, contemplate such phenomenon until it passes away or becomes less distinct, and resume mindful walking;
5. walk slowly but do not force the body too much. Keep the mind focused and always be continuously mindful.

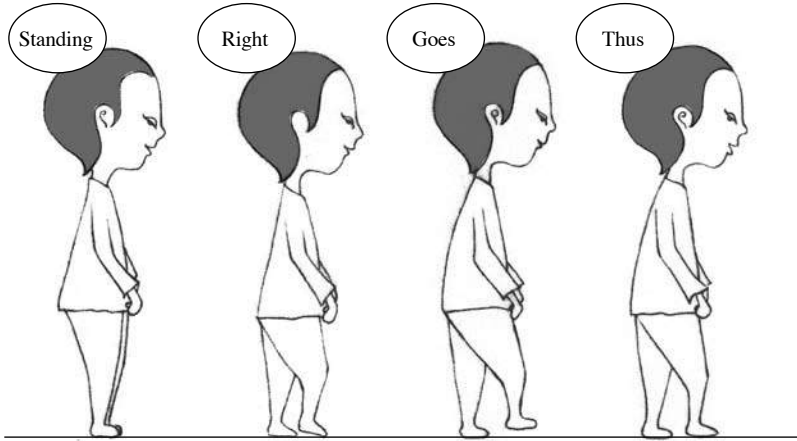
C. Things to be refrained from during mindful walking:

1. Do not close or move the eyes around for other things arousing the emotions;
2. Do not bend too much or look seriously as you would get neck ache;
3. Do not lift your face up too much or swing your arms;
4. Do not make your legs and feet too stiff;
5. Do not note what is not consistent with the state of walking;
6. Do not gaze at the feet, or contemplate the rising and falling of the abdomen.

D. Exception in some cases:

1. walk fast to avoid being sleepy;
2. walk slowly to keep your mind focused and see clearly the process of rising and passing away;
3. verbally contemplate only for gaining understanding of the practice;
4. walk and look at the nature in order to handle particular conditions;
5. do some physical exercise sometimes to get relaxed.

Walking stage 1



Note: “right”, “goes”, “thus”
 “left”, “goes”, “thus”

Method of practice:

First of all, contemplate the state of standing for three times. Keep the eyes about two metres ahead and your body and neck straight. Open just half of the eyes and cross the hands in front of or at the back of the body. Then, keep the mind on the left or right foot as you like. At the time of noting “right” in the mind, the meditator is fully conscious of the right foot. The knee would bend a little bit as it is ready to walk but does not lift the foot yet because it will repeat with the next step.

At the time of noting “goes”, the foot must move forward and the knee is kept straight and at the time of

noting “thus”, the foot must stop moving exactly. At the time the foot moves forwards, the weight of the body will be transferred to the other foot; for instance, “right-goes-thus” the weight of the body will be on the left foot and when the left foot moves, the right foot would take the body weight. The transfer of body weight will be repeated throughout the walk.

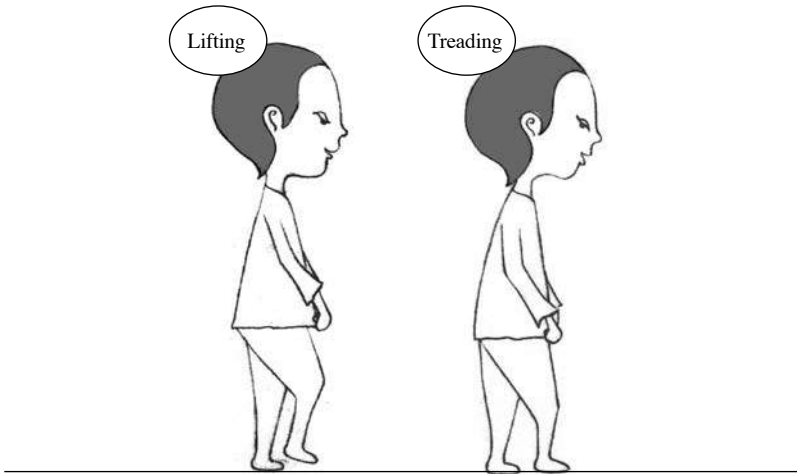
Here, the meditator does not need to separate the note into three phases: for example, “right-goes-thus” because it will repeat with the walking in the third step. The note must be continuous until the movement of the foot finishes. Walking in this stage would produce relaxation and would be like walking naturally. Do not force the body to walk too fast or too slow because the meditator could get a headache or becomes so serious and the muscles could be too tense or stiff. Walking at this stage may not be too slow because it is just to know the movement of the foot. Forcing the body too much may not be good for the meditator.

Walking at this stage would generate a feeling of relaxation. Whenever the meditator feels tense or stressed in the walking practice, consideration should be given to the causes of such feeling, for instance, gazing or concentrating too much, forcing the walk to be unnaturally slow in order to have self satisfaction, or having too much desire to achieve the result described by the instructor. These are not consistent with the reality at the time of

walking and could be the cause of being stressed or under pressure. Once it is known, start to solve it by relaxing such a feeling and try to walk more naturally.

Walking at this stage may take several days, not just one as some thought. Before shifting to the further step, one needs to consider the knowledge of “RUPA” and NAMA” in reality, that is to say the meditator must have the ability to distinguish them (namarupaparicchedanana) in order to carry out the walking and contemplation in further steps. This will enable the meditator to understand the practice and to continue the practice by himself. The meditator should continue to practice and try to instill the awareness and the wisdom by repeating the practice so that a clear knowledge will be gained. After that, a next walking exercise can be performed. To avoid mistakes, the meditator must be examined by the master with extensive interviewing, and he or she must answer the questions as experienced at the time of the practice; not giving answers from books or other persons. If the answer is taken from such sources, the chance of gaining Dhamma knowledge will be less. So, be attentive and honest.

Walking stage 2



Note: “lifting”, “treading”

Method of practice:

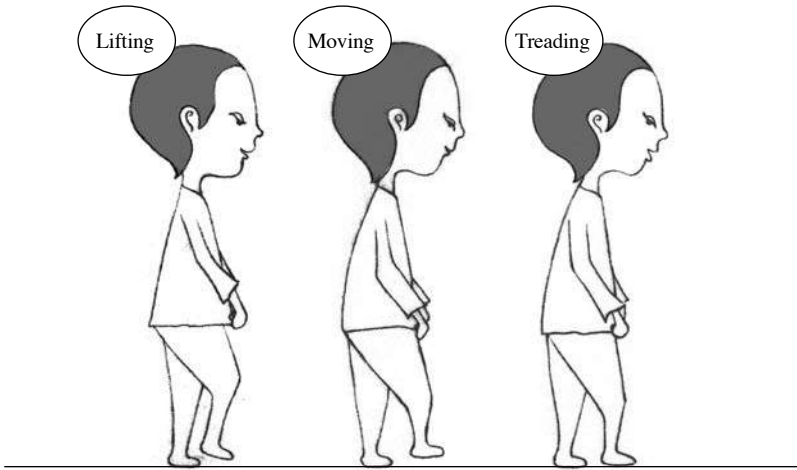
The meditator starts to contemplate the state of standing and an initial mind that is an intention to walk, move the awareness to the lifting of the left or right foot. At the time of lifting, “lifting” is noted. Noting “lifting” must finish at the same time as the end of the lifting movement. The important is that neither should the foot be lifted over the ankle level nor moved too far. While putting the foot down on the floor, note “treading” and finish it at the same time as the end of the stepping the foot on the floor. At the second stage of walking, the important point is being attentive of the lifting of the foot and the treading. Although, at the time of treading, it feels like there is a

movement of the body forwards a little bit, the meditator doesn't need to attend to it; he only needs to be mindful of the lifting and the treading of the foot.

Walking in this stage seems to be uneasy or uncomfortable or unnatural. Some masters suggest that the meditator pass into the third stage of walking. As a matter of fact, if you are more attentive to it you will discover something special because the lifting and treading of the foot are very frequent and the walk is flexible and relaxing in each lifting and treading. The duration of the walk is not fixed or certain. In accordance with the principle, the meditator must become aware of the knowledge of the causes of the "RUPA" and "NAMA" clearly (paccayapariggahanana). Only after that can the further stage of walking be allowed. In the second stage of walking, there is an additional thing, that is to say the contemplation of the initial mind or the "desire". However, the desire here is not a kind of craving, but the moral determination at the time of practicing the Four Foundations of Mindfulness which is the conduct for the purpose of deserting attachment to the Five Aggregates (Khandha 5).

As a common practice, the meditator contemplates three times before walking; for instance, "wanting to walk", "wanting to walk", "wanting to walk" or "intending to walk" and then walks.

Walking stage 3



Note: “lifting”, “moving”, “treading”.

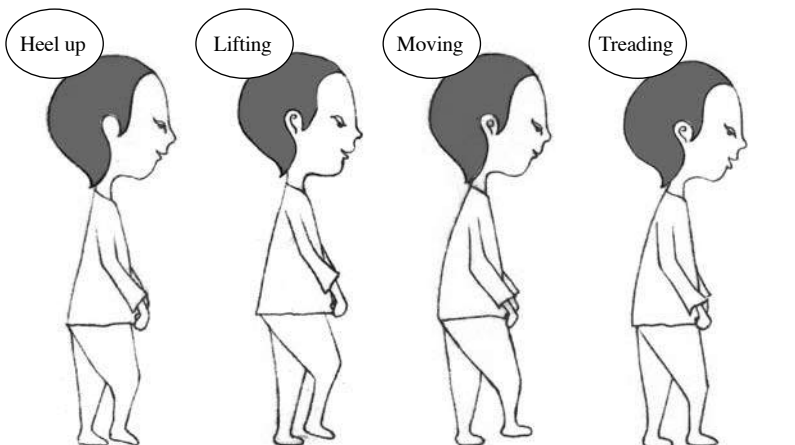
Method of practice:

After contemplating the state of standing and the intending mind three times, keep the mind on the lifting of the foot and mentally note it as “lifting”. When lifting the foot, the knee would bend a little bit and lift the heel and the tip of the foot up straight at the same time but must not be higher than the ankle level. Then, move the foot forwards slowly and note “moving”. The movement of the foot should not be too far because it will cause physical imbalance. The distance between the feet should not be more than one length of the foot. It should not be too close because it will cause staggering and the weight of the body would be unbalanced. At the end of the moving forwards,

tread the foot on the floor slowly and simultaneously note ‘treading’. The note should be finished at the end of the treading, not before or after.

The meditator at this stage of walking would have a clear mind that “RUPA” and “NAMA” which have been contemplated are impermanent or not constant. He or she also understands that they are of a suffering nature, either being impossible to permanently be in the original state or being hard to withstand or endure due to both internal and external conditions. In addition, the meditator would also experience by the true wisdom that “RUPA” and “NAMA” are “not-self” and cannot be controlled. The meditator realizes these three common or universal characteristics of “RUPA” and “NAMA”.

Walking stage 4

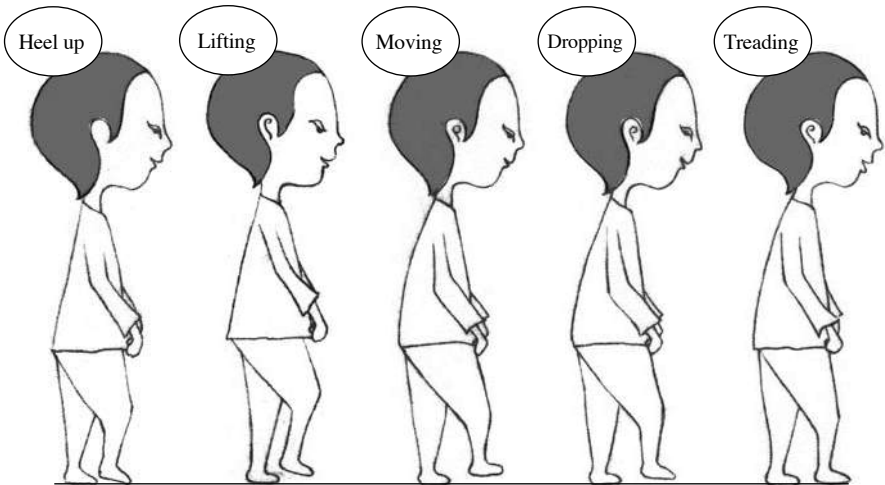


Note: “heel up”, “lifting”, “moving”, “treading”

Method of practice:

After contemplating the state of standing and the intentingmind three times, keep the mind on movement of the foot, when lift the heel up, simultaneously note “heel up”. The heel should not be lifted up higher than the level of the ankle 1. After that, lift the foot and note “lifting”. In lifting the foot, lift the tip of the foot slowly and then move the foot forwards with noting “moving”. Further, put the foot down. Be aware of the state of the foot placing on the floor and note “treading”. The note should be finished at the time of the foot on the floor completely.

Walking stage 5



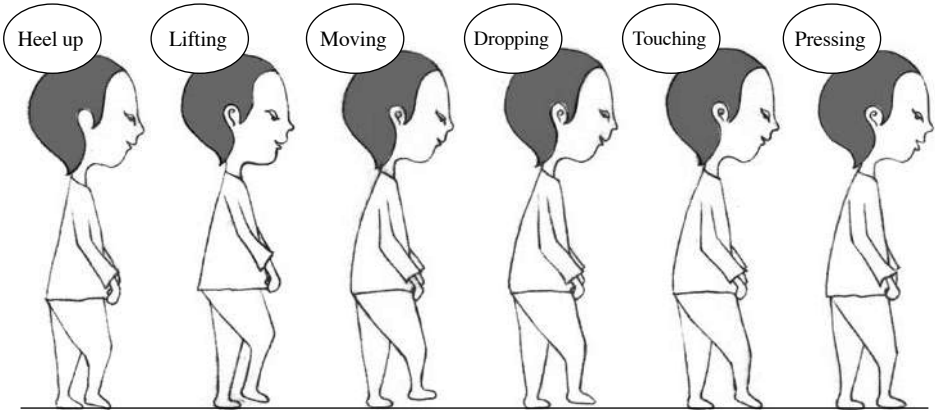
Note: “heel up”, “lifting”, “moving”, “dropping”, “treading”

Method of practice:

After contemplating the state of standing and the intending mind three times, keep the mind on the movement of lifting the heel and note it as “heel up”, not before or after lifting the heel, but exactly while lifting it.

Then, lift the foot slowly with awareness that the tip of the foot gradually liftsoff the floor and note “lifting”. Then move the foot forwards slowly with the mind on the movement and note “moving”. Then move the foot down little, in parallel position with the floor but without touching the floor yet, and note it as “dropping”. After that, put the foot down on the floor and note “treading” at the same time as the foot is treading the floor. Do not let the foot touch the floor completely before or after noting, because in that case the meditator will not get right concentration or does not keep up with the present time experience.

Walking stage 6



Note: “heel up”, “lifting”, “moving”, “dropping”, “touching”, “pressing”

Method of practice

After contemplating the state of standing and the intending mind three times, keep the mind on the movement of lifting the heel, note “heel up”. Then, lift the foot slowly with awareness that the tip of the foot gradually disconnects from the floor and note “lifting”. Proceeding, move the foot forwards and note “moving”. Then move the foot down a little bit, in parallel position with the floor but it does not touch it yet, note “dropping”. Stay mindful of the movement of the tip of the foot moving down until touching the floor and note “touching”. Then, be aware of the heel moving down slowly until touching the floor and note “pressing”. Or, be aware of the foot

moving down slowly until touching the floor, note “touching” and, when pressing the foot on the floor, note “pressing”.

Sitting Meditation



A leg is not overlap
each other



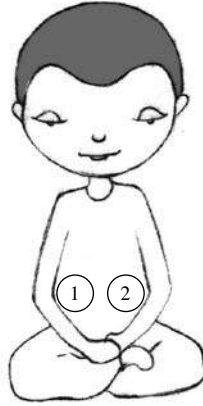
A leg is overlap
each other



Sit cross-legged

The meditators first have to select the cross-legged posture that they feel most comfortable in, place the right hand on the left hand -- the thumbs may or may not touch each other, and sit upright but not too straight. Ease up the body and mind, close the eyes softly, then acknowledge the movements of the abdomen (body) and the mind that follows the rising and the falling of the abdomen.

Sitting meditation with two-step acknowledging

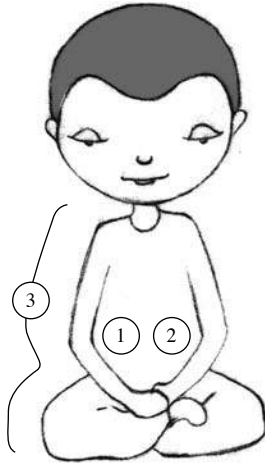


Note: 1. Rising, and 2. Falling

As acknowledging “rising”, the mind has to realize the abdomen starts rising, gradually rises, and the rising stops. Then while acknowledging “Falling”, the mind realizes the abdomen begins to fall, slowly falls, and the falling ends. The rising and falling movement must be concurrent and consistent with the word being repeated. The acknowledging words cannot be said after the actual act of rising-falling. Likewise, the acknowledging words would not be said before the act of rising-falling actually exists. The practitioner may divide the words into two syllables: “rise” “sing”, and “fall” “ling”. The syllables “sing” and “ling” are uttered as the act of rising and falling ends.

Please note: If the meditator has trouble of acknowledging the act of rising and falling, he may start from acknowledging the state of “sitting” or “touching”, which is two-step acknowledging as well.

Sitting meditation with three-step acknowledging

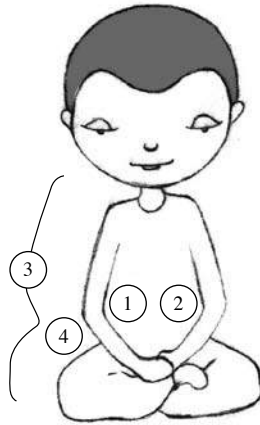


Note: 1. Rising, 2. Falling, and 3. Sitting

The meditators who have practiced the two-step acknowledging rightly and proficiently may feel able to extend the interval between falling and rising. If so, the acknowledging word “Sitting” can be added a bit rapidly, before the rising starts. The word “Sitting” would not be added if the act of rising has commenced.

Please note: Some meditators have misunderstood this as to block the rising of abdomen. This causes them to be uncomfortable, breathe with difficulty, and feel fatigued. In fact, when the meditators achieve the insight of meditation (the knowledge of contemplation on rising and falling), they may realize there is the space to add the “Sitting” acknowledging. Acknowledging the sitting is just to remind the act of sitting (the legs are crossed while the upper part is straight).

Sitting meditation with four-step acknowledging



Note: 1. Rising, 2. Falling, 3. Sitting, and 4. Touching

The meditators who have fulfilled the three-step acknowledging can also add the “Touching” acknowledging before the act of rising comes to exist. Acknowledging “Touching” in the first place is to

acknowledge only the touching of the right buttock with the floor. To acknowledge both buttocks at the same time may confuse the meditators. As the proper condition becomes obvious, the meditation instructor will then advise how to change the way of acknowledging.

A. Principles

Niseetati Panlunggang Apuchitawa U-Chung
Gayang Panitaya, Parumukang Sating U-pattapetawa
 “Sitting with the legs crossed,
 body straight, and definite mindfulness”.

B. Practice

1. Sitting with legs crossed. Keeping the back and the neck straight
2. Be mindful and acknowledge the rising and falling of the abdomen
3. Concentrate on and closely follow the rising and falling of the abdomen
4. The eyes should be closed, and then mindedly point to the navel
5. Continually acknowledge the movements of the abdomen
6. As the abdomen rises, saying in mind that “Rising”
7. As the abdomen falls, saying in mind that “Falling”

8. Acknowledging the state of rising and falling, saying acknowledging words in mind, and being actively mindful—all these should occur simultaneously

C. What should not be done during sitting meditation

1. Do not bend the body, or bend the head (except that the body is in such shape)
2. Do not utter or murmur while acknowledging the rising and falling of abdomen
3. Do not open the eyes to perceive the external circumstances
4. Do not move the body too often
5. Do not lean on the chair, the backrest, or the pillar (except for taking a break)
6. Do not use words that are not related to the actual state of the body such as the word “Putting” for acknowledging the rising of abdomen
7. Do not force the inhaling–exhaling to match the acknowledging of rising-falling. Try to acknowledge the real condition as much as possible

D. The meditators who face difficulty in acknowledging the rising-falling movements should follow the suggestions below:

1. Use the palm of the hand to softly touch the abdomen (the navel)
2. Acknowledge the movements of the abdomen. As the abdomen rises with the palm on it, say in mind “Rising”
3. Then, when the rising is slightly leaving from the palm, mindfully acknowledge “Falling”
4. Acknowledge the state of “Sitting” and “Touching” instead of the act of rising- falling, or acknowledge only the state of “Sitting” (This is recommended for those who used to practice Anapanasati before.)
5. Acknowledge the state of touching on the right buttock, which is touching the ground, and say in mind “Touching”
6. While acknowledging “Rising” and “Falling”, some meditators may not be able to say “sing” and “ling” concurrently with the real movement of abdomen. Don’t worry. Further practice to acknowledge each actual body movement. As the meditators attain adequate effort, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom, they will have no such problems anymore.
7. Loosening the clothes may make it easier to acknowledge the movement of the abdomen.
8. Lying on one’s back, overlaying the right and left hands on the abdominal surface, and then

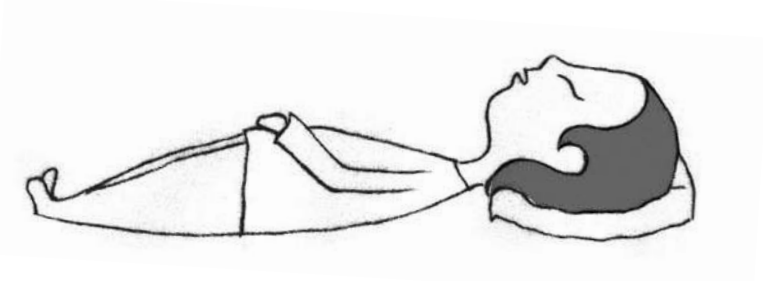
mindfully observe the act of rising-falling.

The acknowledging mentioned above is the type of body mindfulness -- be mindful of inner body. According to the Maha Satipattan Sutura, it is said in Bali “Yata Yata Wa Panassa Gayo Panihito Hoti, Tatha Tatha Nang Pachanati,” meaning that the meditator would acknowledge each real movement of body. The acknowledging of “Rising-Falling” movement is considered as Contemplation on *Vāyophoṭṭhabbarūpa*, a type of Anapanasti practice.

In other words, the acknowledging of rising-falling of abdomen is to acknowledge movement of fall (the fall in abdomen). Rising-falling is a form of ultimate truth, and the acknowledging mind therefore is ultimate truth of body/mind, which is the essence of meditation.

Contemplation of sleeping

A. Principle:



Sayāno vā sayānomhī-ti pajānāti

“Lying down, one knows one is lying down”

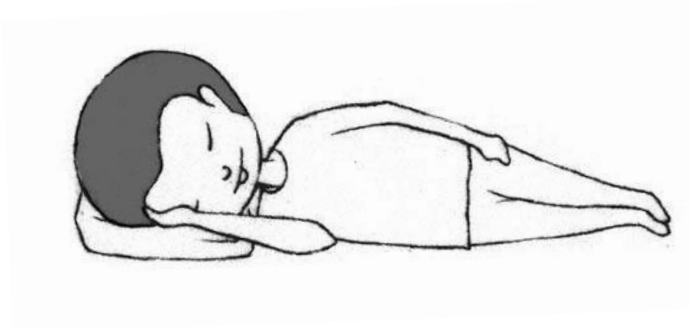
B. Method:

1. be fully aware of the body movement; again, be consistent with capitals of first letters of these sentences;
2. when you lean to lie down, note “leaning, leaning, leaning”;
3. when elbow, hip, back, head, and other parts of the body touch the floor, concurrently note “touching, touching, touching”;
4. when you lie down on the right side or flat on the floor, note “lying, lying, lying”;
5. when you lie down completely, then close the eyes and start contemplating by fixing the mind on the movement of the abdomen together with noting. When it rises, note “rising, rising, rising”. When it falls, note “falling, falling, falling”.

Alternatively, note “lying, touching” corresponding to the current condition or state until fall asleep with mindfulness. When come to be awake, resume the contemplation.

C. Things to avoid

1. while lying, open the eyes or fix the mind on the body as a focus of attention;
2. put the interest aside in whether you fall asleep with the rising or with the falling of the abdomen since it can make one nervous;
3. turn over or move the body often;
4. forcedly breathe in and out to make the abdomen rise and fall for the contemplation since it makes one tired or unable to sleep, and finally one becomes exhausted, and causes trouble for the practice of the next day.



Contemplation of other activities

A. Principle:

Abhikante paṭikkante sampajānakārī hoti, ālokite vilokite sampajānakārī hoti, sammiñjite pasārite sampajānakārī hoti, saṅghāṭipattacīvaradhāṇe sampajānakārī hoti, asite pite khāyite sāyite sampajānakārī hoti, ucārapassāvakkamme sampajānakārī hoti, gate ṭhite nisinne sutte jāgarite bhāsīte tuṅhībhāve sampajānakārī hoti.

“the meditator should be always aware of walking forward and backward, be always aware of seeing and looking, be always aware of folding and stretching, be always aware of possessing of the outer robe of a Buddhist monk and alms-bowl, be always aware of having food, drinking, chewing, and tasting, be always aware of discharging organic waste, be always aware of walking, standing, lying down, waking up, speaking, sitting and so on.”

B. Method:

1. fix the mind on the body movements, when contemplating the activities;
2. while contemplating, the mind, awareness, and noted words must come together;
3. contemplate slowly and continuously;
4. when there is an object or phenomenon arising to interrupt, concurrently contemplate as it happens

until it disappears, then resume the contemplation of the previous activity.

C. Things to be cautious about

1. do not stare at the object of attention or the body;
2. do any activity naturally, not forcedly;
3. while contemplating, do not speak out loudly or shout;
4. do not contemplate the state of rising and falling of the abdomen.

D. Exceptions

1. speak out loudly in order to understand the practice correctly;
2. do yoga or exercise to stay relaxed or alleviate drowsiness;
3. take a walk for natural sight-seeing to release emotions or relax the rigid mind.

Examples of contemplation of other activities

Method of the contemplation of having food

The meditator should contemplate the movement of the activity from the beginning to the end of the process. Start contemplating the movement of walking and taking a seat. When seeing the food, note “seeing”. When wanting to eat, note “wanting”. When touching, grasping, lifting,

and dropping the spoon, note “touching”, “grasping”, “lifting”, “dropping” respectively. When taking the food, note “taking”. When moving the spoon to the mouth, note “moving”. When opening the mouth, note “opening”. When putting the food into the mouth, note “putting”. When closing the mouth, note “closing”. When pulling the spoon out, note “pulling”. When dropping the spoon, note “dropping”. When placing the spoon down, note “placing”. When chewing, note “chewing”. When moving the tongue, note “moving”.

Try to be aware of the state that the teeth grind the food, then when swallowing, note “swallowing”, follow the movement until the food drops down into the stomach. At the beginning, the meditator probably finds it is difficult to contemplate the taste of the food, so keep following the advice of the master carefully. When the time comes, the state or condition will be experienced. The meditator contemplates the activity of having food through the entire process, then contemplates the state of standing and moving away.

Method of the contemplation of taking a shower

When taking a shower, try to contemplate the state or feeling that is obviously perceivable and contemplate only one at a time, for instance, start a contemplation of opening a restroom door. When reaching the arm to the door or doorknob, note “reaching”. When moving the

hand, note “moving”. When touching, grasping, turning, and pushing the doorknob, note “touching”, “grasping”, “turning”, and “pushing” respectively. When walking forward, note “forward”. When making a turn, note “turning”. When walking backward, note “backward”. When closing and locking the door, note “closing” and “locking”. When looking over inside, note “looking over”. When taking off the clothes, note “taking off”. Remember that whatever movement or action happens should be noted, for example, touching the faucet, turning on the heater, touching the water, opening, grasping, folding, taking, pouring, feeling cool, warm or hot, scrubbing and washing, feeling soft, hard, fresh, satisfied or unsatisfied, and so on. The meditator contemplates this activity until he leaves the restroom. It is recommended to contemplate thoroughly as much as possible.

Method of the contemplation of going up and down stairs

Whenever going up and down stairs, the meditator should attentively contemplate from the first to the last step. When getting on or, note “lifting, pressing”, then proceed walking at the stage advised by the master.

The methods to contemplate the activities of face washing, teeth brushing, drinking, washing and cleaning things, and so on are the same.

Contemplation of feelings (Vedananupassana)

Vedana, here is defined as feelings or having feelings in the course of practice, both physical and mental such as comfortable or uncomfortable physical feeling or being happy, delighted, proud of, unhappy, oppressive, angry, unsatisfied, worried, and so on. Vedana can be categorized into three types which are pleasant feeling (Sukha Vedana), unpleasant feeling (Dukkha Vedana), and indifferent feeling-- neither pleasant nor unpleasant (Adukkhamasukha Vedana). During the practice, Vedana may occur and be more perceivable than the rising and falling of the abdomen; if so the meditator should contemplate until it disappears and do the same to the others. It is important to contemplate only a single object at a time, otherwise the meditator will get confused and stressed and the practice will not go well.

In *Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta*, Lord Buddha said:

“*Sukhaṃ vā vedanaṃ vedayamāno sukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmī-ti pajānāti.*” (feeling pleasant, one knows “one is feeling pleasant.”)

“*Dukkaṃ vā vedanaṃ vedayamāno dukkaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmī-ti pajānāti.*” (feeling unpleasant, one knows “one is feeling unpleasant.”)

“Adukkhamasukham̐ vedanaṃ vedayamāno adukkhamasukham̐ vedanaṃ vedayāmī-ti pajānāti.” (feeling indifferent, one knows “one is feeling indifferent.”)

Method of practice

When having pain, note “painful, painful, painful”. Having an ache, note “aching, aching, aching”. Being numb, note “numb, numb, numb. Being stiff, note “stiff, stiff, stiff”. Being itchy, note “itchy, itchy, itchy”. Being hot, note “hot, hot, hot”, and so on.

To contemplate Vedana, great patience is needed. The less patience there is, the more one will change one’s posture, and the worse concentration will be. If there cannot be patience, the period of time for the mindful sitting would be shortened, and gradually increased three, five, and ten minutes in each. When the sitting can be taken through the whole period, the meditator should move to the mindful walking, and then resume the sitting as a recurring sequence of the practices. It is advised that mindful walking and sitting should be performed for equal periods of time since the beginning, otherwise the posture or controlling faculties (Indriya 5: confidence, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom) will be imbalanced. This contemplation is part of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness meditation named “Vedananupassana”.

How to keep the mind in place? When unpleasant feeling arise, keeping the mind indifferent is the best way. Do not wish such feeling disappeared or defeated. Do not crave to know how it continues to be or when it will disappear, just mindfully observe.

Three methods to contemplate Vedana

Confronting method: the meditator must determine to contemplate Vedana without getting discouraged, even he fears he will die. Fix the mind on the pain and go straight to the center of the most painful experience. This method demands for the greatest effort and concentration, therefore the meditator will be exhausted. However, it is a good exercise for keeping the mind in place and to get insight into the pain.

Ambush method: when the effort goes down, to restore it the meditator moves back from contemplating the pain, and resumes it when he is ready. For instance, during the mindful sitting, the pain is growing and seems to be unbearable. The meditator should move to contemplate the rising and falling of abdomen or other objects instead, but should not immediately change the posture to standing or walking.

Observing method: when the pain is growing, the meditator should not suppress or try to overcome it, but simply observe with mindfulness. For instance, only note “painful, painful, painful”, “numb, numb, numb”, “stiff,

stiff, stiff”, or “knowing, knowing, knowing”. On the other hand, the meditator possibly observes without a word noted, like a soldier observing movement of his enemy at a watchtower; there is no need to fight.



Contemplation of mind (Cittanupassana)

The mind here is a natural phenomenon or state of nature. It usually thinks and perceives objects, thus the meditator should contemplate as it really is.

To contemplate the mind one is normally fascinated by the objects whether they are near or far, and the meditator should take care here.. If a wrong practice arises, not only will the mind be confused and agitated, but the meditator will also get stressed and dizzy. This is an important problem and impediment to the meditator who lacks in knowledge to contemplate the mind.

Since the mind easily slips away from being neutral, before starting to contemplate, the meditator should keep the mind in place as if nothing has happened to establish a neutral mind, neither liking nor disliking. To realize reality as it is wise consideration is important. Do not think of or imagine anything. Simply contemplate and perceive reality as it happens, exists and passes away. Keep doing it until liberation from the attachment is achieved. Remember that the duty to think belongs to nothing, except the mind. The only thing one should do is to contemplate, not to create a new object to trouble oneself.

Method of practice

The method of contemplating the state of thinking or the mind is made up of a wide range of objects, and is as follows:

When the mind is lustful, “lustful, lustful, lustful” should be noted. If the lust happens in the state of activities such as standing, walking, sitting, and sleeping, the meditator should constantly contemplate it until it disappears. Do the same in case of hate. If contemplating well, the meditator will perceive only the state of the mind: at that moment, the meditator will be free from being self or others. In other words, the mind at the supreme state has been experienced in which the defilements cannot arise. If this happens only intermittently, it will be difficult to pass away, because lust, hate, and delusion easily arise. The meditator should contemplate fast, intensely and constantly to gain energy and lessen the gap so that the other objects scarcely interrupt.

Alternatively, the meditator may contemplate insistently, firmly, for a short period each time or in a gentle manner to remain relaxed. For instance, when thinking, note “thinking, thinking, thinking” insistently, slowly, and firmly to remain relaxed. This method is in contrast to the earlier instruction (contemplating fast, intensely, and attentively), which makes the meditator easily stressed because the mind is too oppressive.

Therefore, the proper method should be taken. A combined method sometimes can be applied to generate energy, master a conscious mind, and remain relaxed. Whatever the method is used, the basic practices are the same.

When missing, note “missing, missing, missing”

When thinking, note “thinking, thinking, thinking”.

When imagining, note “imagining, imagining, imagining”.

When irritated, note “irritated, irritated, irritated”.

When being annoyed, note “annoyed, annoyed, annoyed”.

When depressed, note “depressed, depressed, depressed”.

When empty, note “empty, empty, empty”.

When tranquil, note “tranquil, tranquil, tranquil”.

When steady, note “steady, steady, steady”, and so on.

The meditator may find that it is difficult to contemplate the mind at every single moment, sometimes well and sometimes poorly. But he/she should keep practicing and think what he/she is doing now is to pave the way for purification from the defilements.

Explained here is part of the development of mind according to the Four Foundations of Mindfulness meditation named “Cittanupassana”.

Contemplation of phenomena (Dhammanupassana)

Phenomena here refers to the objects which are perceived by, are part of, or imagined by the mind. In accordance with the conditions experienced by the meditator, it can be named as natural phenomena, which the meditator should be mindful of and simultaneously contemplate by keeping awareness at every moment as follows:

When seeing, note “seeing, seeing, seeing”. Only contemplate the silhouette of what is seen. Do not focus on the eyes or gaze at what is seen, otherwise the mind will be broken up by the defilement.

When hearing, note “hearing, hearing, hearing”. Only contemplate the state of hearing. Do not fix the mind on the ears. Only contemplate the state of the ears perceiving the sound. And remember that ears and sound exist separately.

When smelling, note “smelling, smelling, smelling”. At the beginning, simply contemplate what the nose perceives as odor; do not pay attention whether such odor is pleasant or unpleasant. When strong concentration is attained, the meditator will be able to contemplate the quality of it automatically.

When tasting, note “tasting, tasting, tasting”. At the beginning, simply contemplate what the tongue perceives

as flavor; do not recognize it in detail since doing this with insufficient concentration, agitation and stress will arise. When touching, note “touching, touching, touching”. Only contemplate when part of body is in contact with objects. For instant, when touching a cool object, note “cool, cool, cool”. When touching a hot one, note “hot, hot, hot”. When touching a soft one, note “soft, soft, soft”. And when touching a hard one, note “hard, hard, hard”.

Contemplation of hindrances (Nivarana 5)

Hindrances are natural phenomena which hold the mind back from the virtue. It is necessary to have right knowledge and contemplation for each kind of hindrances. Lacking such understanding, the hindrances will be set into the mind and be hard to work out. The mind made up of hindrances normally harms the development of the practice and morals.

The way to contemplate hindrances (Nivarana 5):

1. Sensual desire (Kamacchanda) is a cause of pleasure or satisfaction from sensual objects (form, sound, smell, taste, and touch). When feeling glad, note “glad, glad, glad”. When feeling content, note “content, content, content”. When feeling pleased, note “pleased, pleased, pleased”.

2. Illwill (Byapada) is a cause of discontent or dissatisfaction. When being frustrated, note “frustrated, frustrated, frustrated”. When being disappointed, note “disappointed, disappointed, disappointed”. When angry, note “angry, angry, angry”. When vengeful, note “vengeful, vengeful, vengeful”.
3. Sloth and torpor (Thina-middha),. The mind or mental factors diverting from mental exercises brings about drowsiness, despair, laziness, grief and so forth. When drowsy, note “drowsy, drowsy, drowsy”, “daunted, daunted, daunted”, “depressed, depressed, depressed”, “lazy, lazy, lazy”, “sad, sad, sad”. It is recommended to contemplate firmly, intensely, and continuously, comparable to repetitively thrashing a person or animal with a stick or whip until such person or animal cannot endure and finally passes away. This contemplation makes the mind and mental factors stay awake in which the discouragement and despair are lightened or eliminated. The meditator may be able to resist drowsiness by do more mindful walking more and by walking faster. When getting drowsy, it is recommended to perform mindful walking longer than sitting about fifteen to thirty minutes to alleviate drowsiness. However, to remove it, the meditator

has to keep on contemplating and to avoid creating the conditions that increase drowsiness such as having food that is difficult to digest or eating too much and so on.

4. Restlessness and anxiety (Uddhacca-kukkucca), is what most meditators are afraid of. Restlessness and thoughts are different. Thought normally comes into a form of words, sentences or short stories, while restlessness is a kind of discrete stories. It is said that thought is comparable to boiling water. When water comes to the boil, there bubbles are gradually noticed. While restlessness is comparable to water that is boiling. Thus, the meditator should be able to distinguish and straight to contemplate them. When agitated, note “agitated, agitated, agitated”, “bothered, bothered, bothered”, “annoyed, annoyed, annoyed” and “confused, confused, confused”. The contemplation should be fast, intense, precise, and continuous so that nothing can bother the meditator. On the other hand, the meditator contemplates attentively and occasionally slowly in order to remain relaxed and keep away from stress.
5. Doubt (Vicikiccha) here refers to skepticism and apprehension. When doubtful, note “doubtful, doubtful, doubtful”, “anxious, anxious, anxious”,

“worried, worried, worried” and so on. Try to contemplate corresponding to what the meditator really feels. This will make the mind fix on the objects. Expect nothing during the contemplation; keep the mind on the existing phenomenon as much as possible.

This contemplation described above is part of the development of mind in accordance with the four foundations of mindfulness meditation named “Dhammanupassana”.

To sum up, the practice of the four foundations of mindfulness meditation is to contemplate materiality and mentality (rupa-nama) as they exist. While contemplation of body (Kayanupassana) engages in materiality, contemplation of feelings (Vedananupassana) and mind (Cittanupassana) engage in mentality, and contemplation of phenomena (Dhammanupassana) engages in both materiality and mentality.

Benefits of Vipassana Meditation practice

Benefits of contemplating materiality and mentality (the highest state of mindfulness)

1. a firm and concentrated mind (momentary concentration: Khanika-samadhi);
2. mindfulness and full comprehension to eradicate view of self, being self is attained;
3. the root condition to keep away from the defilement is being built up;
4. the extraordinary knowledge of the existing moment is attained;
5. laziness is eliminated, intuitive knowledge or insight is gained;
6. liberation from the defilement is accomplished.

Benefits of contemplating sitting

1. the mind is firm and concentrated easily;
2. natural phenomena happen clearly;
3. impermanence, suffering, and being 'not self' are explicitly experienced;
4. more than in other postures the condition to reach the noble path (magga), fruition (phala), and Nibbana are developed;
5. comprehension to achieve dhamma from the basic to the highest is established.

Benefits of contemplating standing

1. incessant contemplation is possible;
2. the mind is concentrated easily;
3. unpleasant feeling rarely arises and a small space for the practice is needed;
4. in standing, the state of standing is understood instead of only the term;
5. awareness of the root conditions and their relations and nature (arise, exist, and pass away) is gained.

Benefits of contemplating walking

1. patience for a long walk is gained;
2. great effort is gained;
3. food is digested easily;
4. the air element inside the body is eliminated;
5. concentration can be held for a long period.

Benefits of contemplating sleeping

1. having no worry and sleeping easily;
2. the mind is easily concentrated;
3. being relaxed and making connection with other activities.

Benefits of contemplating other activities

1. the gaps between contemplation of primary activities is eliminated;

2. contemplation can be performed continuously;
3. energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom properly support each other;
4. Indriya 5 (confidence, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom) become balanced;
5. vigilance, a good memory and work performance are improved.

Things to be cautious about

1. be careful of drowsiness which easily arises;
2. one should not sleep too much, 6 hours is a maximum;
3. avoid being inclined to sleep, because laziness will easily arise.

Benefits of Vipassana Meditation in accordance with the four foundations of mindfulness meditation

1. physical and mental health are improved;
2. a blissful mind is gained;
3. anxiety and stress become significantly eliminated;
4. full awareness and less mistakes;
5. work performance is improved;
6. no fear as a result of mindfulness and full comprehension;
7. doing good without despair and boredom;

8. attachment becomes lightened as a result of having knowledge of noble truth of life (khandha 5);
9. avarice or covetousness (Abhijjha) and hatred (Domanassa) are alleviated or eliminated;
10. It is said that the practice enables the meditator to gain insight the four noble truths and achieve the noble path, fruition, and Nibbana in which the liberation from all defilements and sufferings can be reached in this life span. Alternatively, a reach of the noble path or fruition will be possible in 7 years for those who keep doing the meditation. In *Satipaṭṭhānasutta Majjhimanikāya Mūlapaṇṇasaka [12/103-127]*, Lord Buddha said:

“Monks, one who keeps performing the four foundations of the mindful meditation through 7 years, certainly he will achieve at least one of two conditions in this life span that is being an Arahant (the worthy one). Another is being a non-returner although one still has the attachment (of khandha 5: corporeality, sensation, perception, mental formations, and consciousness).”

“Monks, besides 7 years, one who keeps performing the four foundations of the mindful meditation through 6 years, certainly he will achieve at least one of two conditions in this life span that is being an Arahant (the worthy one).

Another is being a non-returner although one still has the attachment.”

“Monks, besides 6 years, one who keeps performing the four foundations of the mindful meditation through 5 years, certainly he will achieve at least one of two conditions in this life span that is being an Arahant (the worthy one). Another is being a non-returner although one still has the attachment.”

“Monks, besides 5 years..., besides 4 years..., 3 years..., 2 years..., 1 year..., 7 months..., 6 months..., 5 months..., 4 months..., 3 months..., 2 months..., 1 month”

“Monks, besides half a month, one who keeps performing such mindful meditation through 7 days, certainly he will achieve at least one of two conditions in this life span that is being an Arahant (the worthy one). Another is being a non-returner although one still has the attachment.”

Based on the truth above, Lord Buddha restated as following.

“Monks, this is the only path to purify all beings, to cease the grief and misery, to achieve the noble path, to enlighten Nibbana. And the path is called the four foundations of

mindfulness.”

As mentioned above, it affirms that the development of Vipassana Meditation is not too hard. Everyone can do in everyday life, only if he/she keeps observing activities and movements of whatever he/she is doing with mindfulness and full comprehension. In doing so, mindfulness and wisdom arise continually, and one's life will not be overcome by the defilements. While completing, goodness normally comes to the mind; evil keeps away from it. To keep contemplating means not only to develop but also to preserve goodness.

It is suggested that the meditator who seriously dedicates himself/herself to the practice should have a qualified master who has the knowledge and experience. That master should have practiced intensively and continuously in a retreat at least one year, and he should be able to guide and solve the problems of the meditator's practice. Furthermore, the meditator should find the proper place or training center (tranquil, comfortable to transport, with sufficient food and appropriate accommodation). Although such favorable things are found, to practice with the greatest effort is still needed, as it is worthless to practice without commitment or to temporarily

be away from the suffering. As a result of enthusiastic practice, the meditator will find testimonies as what the noble truth of the world and life are, whether the path, fruition, and Nibbana exist or not, how the extinction of the defilement and suffering is. Waste no time to ask for the answers as they are only found by doing the meditation.



Principles and method of interview

1. report the experience according to sitting practice with contemplation of the primary object of attention, the state of rising and falling of abdomen. For instance, how many stages and how long , what is known or seen. Explain thoroughly what is experienced, not thought or imagined, during contemplation. In other words, explain what happens when the materiality and mentality are noted. When the primary object of attention is reported completely, the second or the others of attention should be reported respectively. Explain what other experiences happened during contemplation of the primary one. Which of those was contemplated and what were its consequences, what form, state, condition and common characteristic was seen. Try to report the fact and be compliant with the principles of the four foundation of mindfulness meditation--the contemplation of body, feelings, mind and phenomena.
2. report the experience according to walking practice thoroughly and stay focused. Start explaining about the beginning of the walking, how many steps and how long it is performed,

what was felt, known or seen, what form, state, conditions and common characteristics were observed. Then, clearly explain what else intermittently happened during contemplation such as seeing, hearing, smelling, thinking and so on. Try to report factual and compliant with the principles of the four foundation of mindfulness meditation.

3. report the experience according to contemplation of other activities such as eating, showering, folding, stretching, cleaning one's face, tooth brushing and so on. Explain what was observed and its consequences. For instance, while doing such activities, the meditator sometimes feels tight, loose, soft, stiff, heavy, light, and so on. Explain precisely and concisely as it happened. Remember that any query not relating to the practice should not be asked; otherwise the mind will get agitated. When the interview ends, pay respect by raising joined hands and bowing to the ground three times, then keep awareness and move out slowly.

Method of leaving the meditation practice

When the course of practice is completed, before leaving for home or one's residence, the meditator should have the leaving ceremony to pay respect to his/her master as it is an opportunity for asking forgiveness from each other for what they have done unintentionally during the course of practice, which probably brings concern to the next practice.

1. prepare a pack of joss sticks, candle, and flower for asking forgiveness (if not available, one may proceed by informing the master in sitting posture together with joined hands up);
2. pay respect by bowing to the ground three times, then raise a pack of joss sticks, candle, and flower at chest and recite the following verse:

“Acariyepamadena, devarattayena katam, sabbam aparadham, khamatame bhante” (on behalf of many people, change **“khamatame bhante”** to **“khamatuno bhante”**)

(Venerable Sir, may you forgive me for any wrong I have done in thought, word or deed, intentionally or unintentionally to your face or behind your back.)

Then the master recites **“Aham khamami, tayapi me khamitappam”** (on behalf of many

people, change “khamitappam” to “tumhehipi”)

Afterward, the meditator recites “khamami bhante” (on behalf of many people, change “mi” to “ma”)

3. Then make a request for the five Precepts by reciting the following:

“Mayam bhante visum visum rakkhanatthaya tissaranena saha panca silani yacama

(O, Prosperous One, we all request for the Buddhist five Precepts simultaneously with the three Refuges, and maintain each separately.)

Dutiyaampi mayam bhante visum visum rakkhanatthaya tissaranena saha panca silani yacama

(O, Prosperous One, we all request for the Buddhist five Precepts simultaneously with the three Refuges, and maintain each separately for the second time.)

Tatiyaampi mayam bhante visum visum rakkhanatthaya tissaranena saha panca silani yacama” (for one person, change “mayam” to “aham” and “yacama” to “yacami”)

(O, Prosperous One, we all request for the Buddhist five Precepts simultaneously with the three Refuges, and maintain each separately for the third time.)

4. The master recites the following passage three times, then the meditator repeats it three times.

“Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammasambuddhassa.”

5. The master recites the Three Refuges verse line-by-line, then the meditator repeats line-by-line after him:

“Buddham saranam gacchami.

Dhammam saranam gacchami.

Sangham saranam gacchami.

Dutiyampi buddham saranam gacchami

Dutiyampi dhammam saranam gacchami.

Dutiyampi sangham saranam gacchami.

Tatiyampi buddham saranam gacchami

Tatiyampi dhammam saranam gacchami.

Tatiyampi sangham saranam gacchami.

- 1) **Panatipata, veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami.**

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from taking life of any living being.)

- 2) **Adinnadana, veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami.**

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from taking what is not given.)

- 3) **Kamesu micchacara, veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami.**

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain

from sexual misconduct.)

4) Musavada, veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami.

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from false speech.)

5) Sura-meraya-majja-pamadatthana, veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami.”

(I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from intoxications causing heedlessness.)

After that, the master will continue describing the merit of the Precepts in Pali (not to be repeated) as follows:

“Silena sugatin yanti, silena bhogasampada, silena nibbutin yanti, tasma silan visodhaye”

(All Persons of Integrity go to Happy Places (this world or heaven) because of the Precepts, enjoy the great wealth because of the Precepts, and attain Nibbana because of the Precepts. Therefore, Persons of Integrity should maintain the purity of the Precepts.)

In case of the meditator reciting the five Precepts by himself/herself, ends the acceptance for the precepts by reciting as follows for three times:

“Imani panca sikkhapadani samadiyami”

(I request for the acceptance of these five Precepts.)

The ceremony will be ended by the mater blessing. Finally, the meditator pays homage to the Buddha image three times and does the same to the master, then moves out.

Appendix



Biography

Ajahn Somsak Sorado

Place of Birth: Roi-Ed province, Thailand

Ordination: Prakonchai District, Buriram Province, Thailand

Education: Bachelor of Buddhism

Meditation experience

9 years for Samatha-Vipassana Meditation

1 year for intensive Vipassana Meditation in accordance with the four foundations of mindfulness meditation (rising-falling) under Ajahn Bhaddanta Asabha

Teaching experience:

meditation teaching Assistant of Ajahn Asabha at Vivek Asom Meditation Center for 3 years and a half in the United States on Buddhist missionary duties for 2 years

master of meditation given Sangatikan monks

master of meditation given to students (B.A., M.A., PH.D.)Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

master of the meditation class for the public

Current Status:

Abbot of Wat Bhaddanta Asabharam, Head Meditation Master at Sommit Pranee Vipassana Meditation Center, and Associate Master for Vipassana Meditation.

History of Wat Bhaddanta Asabharam

- Wat Bhaddanta Asabharam was established out of gratitude for Ajahn Bhaddanta Asabha of which the objectives are as the following:
 - to be a memorial and an acknowledgement of Ajahn Bhaddanta Asabha;
 - to publicize and carry on his Vipassana Meditation teaching;
 - to be a center of Vipassana Meditation of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness;
 - to provide services and be a meditation center for the public;
 - to be a human resource training center of Vipassana Meditation;
- 27 ½ rai of the land of Wat Bhaddanta Asabharam was donated by Veterinarian Chumrueng Panpearsilpa;
- 2 rai and 86 wah² of the land was donated and built additionally by Mrs. Kasemsri Anumbhuthra to present the stability of the temple of Buddhism;
- 10 rai and 20 wah² of the land was additionally provided in 2005;
- be acknowledged as a temple on 11 February 2003;
- buildings and facilities is available for 200 people/monks;
- Ajahn Somsak Sorado is the abbot of the temple.

Rules and regulations for the meditation retreat

- Not being of unsound mind. Having ability to control oneself and to strictly observe all the rules and regulations of the meditation center;
register at the administration;
- read and make one understands the rules and regulations in order to observe them properly;
- prepare oneself for making meditation request as informed by the staff;
- all monks have to observe before the retreat , the layman takes the Eight Precepts before taking the retreat;
- listen attentively to the meditation master and do precisely what the master advises;
- use only the meditation methods guided by the master of Wat Bhaddanta Asabharam and Sommit Pranee Vipassana Center. Do not use other methods not taught by the master of this center;
- refrain one's eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind during staying at this center;
- no reading, writing, talking, listening to the radio/music/cassette tape player, or watching television, except when allowed;
- not bringing any valuable personal belongings, the responsibility of any loss and damage is one's own;

- no gambling, lottery and fortune telling, or performing black magic;
- no consuming any kinds of illegal addictive substances;
- having interview only with the master, no consulting with any fellow meditators;
- no leaving the compound of the Meditation Center during the retreat; if needed, one should ask the permission from the master and inform the administration;
- please keep room or residence and place for practice clean and tidy;
- those who want to stay longer than 15 days have to make a special request to the master, for those who are granted the permission, they have to inform the administration every 120 days;
- at the end of the retreat, please return room keys to the administration and inform about leaving the center.

Note: All rules and regulations must be observed strictly.
In case of not being able to follow it, individual judgment will be made.

Schedule for the meditator

- 3:30 - 04:00 wake up/shower
- 04:00 - 06:45 morning chanting (only Buddhist holy days) /walking/sitting meditation (all together)
- 06:30 - 08:30 breakfast/contemplation of routine activities
- 08:30 - 10:30 walking/sitting meditation
- 10:30 – 12:00 lunch/ contemplation of routine activities
- 12:00 – 13:00 contemplation of routine activities
- 13:00 – 17:00 walking/sitting meditation (all together)
- 17:00 – 18:00 shower
- 18:00 – 20:00 evening chanting/listening to Dhamma talk
- 20:00 – 22:00 walking/sitting meditation
- 22:00 – 03:30 rest

Verse of merit sharing

Idhañ me puññabhāgañ sabba sattānañ demi.

“May this merit accrue to my parents, teachers and preceptors, those who I am obliged or indebted to, enemies, ghosts, heavenly beings, and for receiving this merit, may suffering of all beings come to an end and happiness enhance progressively.”



References

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