

# Insight Journal

Spring 2004

## Teacher Interview:

Trudy Goodman

## Fear, Pain and Trust

Joseph Goldstein

## The Fourth Foundation

Andrew Olendzki

## All About Change

Thanissaro Bhikkhu

## Dharma Poems

From the Community

## Teaching Meditation to Children

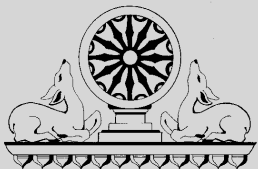
Sumi Loundon

## Crossing the Rohini

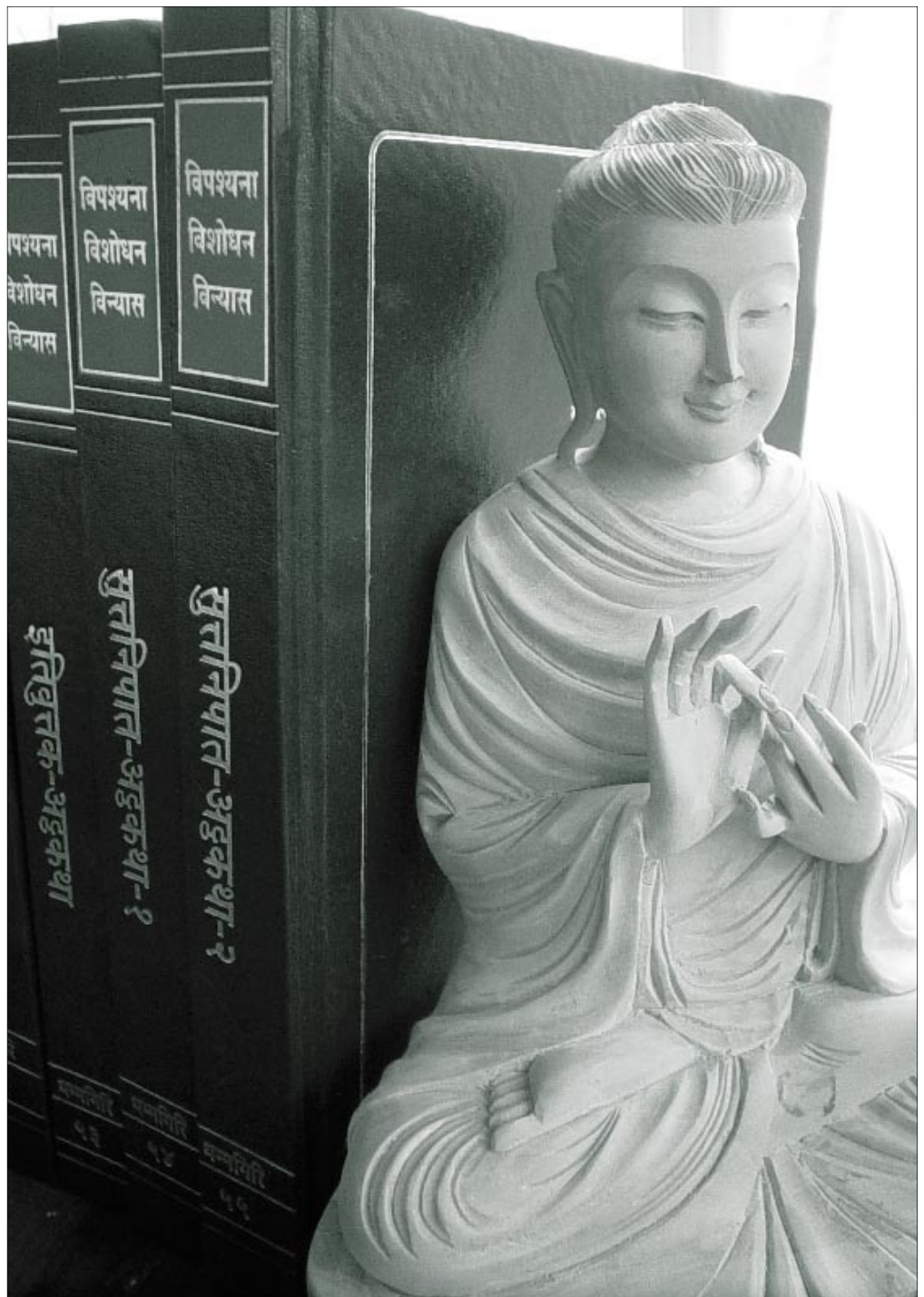
Pali Poetry

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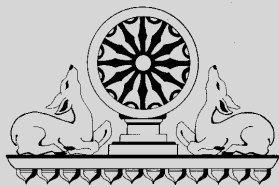
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Address: 149 Lockwood Rd.  
Barre, MA 01005  
Phone: (978) 355-2347  
Fax: (978) 355-2798  
E-Mail: [bcbs@dharma.org](mailto:bcbs@dharma.org)  
Web Site: [www.dharma.org](http://www.dharma.org)

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Editor: Andrew Olendzki

Managing Editor: Mu Soeng

Editorial Assistance: Sumi Loundon

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Insight involves an intuition of mind and heart that takes us beyond knowledge toward wisdom. It has to do with deeply understanding the nature of things, rather than knowing a lot about them.

In the Buddhist tradition wisdom is nurtured by the deep investigation of experience. This involves the careful integration of both study and practice—the study of Buddha’s teachings (Dhamma), and the practice of meditation.

This journal is dedicated to exploring some of the insights that such a balanced inquiry uncovers about our ourselves, our world, and our fellow beings. Please join us.

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## Volume 22 Spring 2004

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|    |                   |                                 |                    |
|----|-------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| 3  | EDITOR'S ESSAY    | The Non-Pursuit of Happiness    |                    |
| 4  | TEACHER INTERVIEW | Sharing What You Love           | Trudy Goodman      |
| 9  | DHARMA TALK       | Fear, Pain and Trust            | Joseph Goldstein   |
| 13 | SUTTA STUDIES     | The Fourth Foundation           | Andrew Olendzki    |
| 18 | GUEST ARTICLE     | All About Change                | Thanissaro Bhikkhu |
| 22 | SANGHA PAGES      | Dharma Poems                    | From the Community |
| 24 | SPECIAL FEATURE   | Teaching Meditation to Children | Sumi Loundon       |
| 30 | PROGRAM MATERIAL  | BCBS 2004 Course Schedule       | Information        |
| 32 | PALI POETRY       | Crossing the Rohini             | Kaludayin Thera    |

## The Non-Pursuit of Happiness

There are two fundamentally different approaches to the attainment of happiness. One is so deeply embedded in our civilization almost everything in our culture supports it; the other is a radically different view offered by the Buddha twenty five centuries ago. Which approach is likely to contribute most to our own happiness? My bets are on the Buddha.

We should begin by offering a rudimentary definition of happiness, for which we might fruitfully turn to modern systems theory. Every organism, whether cellular, social or psychological, has some sort of membrane defining a boundary between internal and external, between the organism and its environment. Happiness might be simply defined as a state of equilibrium between inner and outer states. Unhappiness manifests as an uncomfortable tension we call *desire*, the yearning for dis-equilibrium to be resolved.

Which brings us to the two strategies for achieving happiness: One is to change the external environment to meet the needs (or "wants") of the organism; the other is to change the internal state of the organism to adapt itself to the environment. We can either change the world in order to satisfy our desires, or we change our needs by adapting to the world. Both strategies aim at removing the agitation of desires, one by fulfilling them and the other by relinquishing them.

The human psycho-physical organism is structured in such a way that the gratification of desire usually means getting each of the six senses to experiencing its object in conjunction with a feeling tone of pleasure. Of course we all know that such moments cannot be sustained; but that does not seem to be a major deterrent. Even if we know that we cannot satisfy all of the senses all of the time, the satisfaction of some of the senses some of the time is still taken to be the appropriate thing to do with ourselves on this earth. Virtually everything in our culture reinforces this, and we are continually encouraged to define ourselves by the range of our desires and our success at quenching them.

The compulsion to change the world to calm our desires is ultimately based on an idea of how things should be, and as such is dependent upon the degree of wisdom we can bring to bear at any moment. We might expound a number of altruistic ideals to change the world for the better, yet even when making progress in some ways, we can be causing major problems in others. It is not that some desires are not more worthy than others; the problem is with the nature of desire itself.

Because we are so imbued with the notion that happiness is something to be pursued by the continual transformation of the external, it can sound odd to hear the Buddha talk of uncovering happiness within. He acknowledged the inevitable development of dis-equilibrium, which he called *dukkha*, but suggested we seek out its internal causes, understand them, and solve the problem by means of internal adjustments. According to the Buddha's analysis, it is not the objective discrepancy between the internal and the external conditions that is the source of un-

happiness; it is the *desire* for the external to change (or to not change, as the case may be), which is itself an internal state. Conditions in the world are notoriously unstable and subject to forces beyond our control, while internal desires are intimate and more accessible. It is simply more efficient to adapt to the world than to alter it.

This is especially true because the mind, as the creator of desires, will inevitably throw up more than can ever be satisfied by even the most successful series of external changes. Even if we were very good at making everything outside of ourselves be just the way we ourselves want it to be (a ludicrous thought, you must admit), we could fundamentally never get everything perfect. Because our desires are always changing, because they are often conflicting, and because the changes of the environment can never keep up with the pace of the wanting mind, the satisfaction of desire as a strategy for happiness will always be a doomed enterprise.

Which brings us to meditation, which involves the continual monitoring of subjective states of mind and body. The full range of sense experience—sights, sounds, odors, flavors, physical sensations and mental phenomena—manifest as moments of knowing. The material body, feelings of pleasure and pain, perceptions of various sorts, dispositions, activities and intentions are all known; even knowing itself is known. And through all this experience are woven the threads of desire, the subtle wantings of the mind for things to be like this or like that, not quite like this or not quite like that. Moment after moment one practices letting go of these desires, surrendering to the world as it is; gently adapting to a moment, and then gently adapting to another moment.

Such inner response to experience re-establishes the equilibrium between ourselves and our world. As each more subtle desire is revealed, we let go of it and rest comfortably in the cessation of that desire. In this way happiness is not pursued and attained, but is rather discovered within. There, underlying the tensions created by wanting, it lies.

The Buddha often talked about the sublimity of happiness that lay beyond the satisfaction of the senses. But this is not the realm in which most of us can live, except, perhaps, for precious moments now and then. What about the push and pull of the busy world, built around the tyranny of desire? How do we live the wisdom of the Buddha's ancient alternative?

Nothing that is moving very fast can ever slow down suddenly without crashing. The path of transformation laid out by the tradition is a gradual one, a path of gently replacing one set of habits with another. Most of us are too much a product of the world that shaped us to entirely give up our embedded attitudes of changing the world to meet our needs. But I suspect there are far more opportunities to adapt instead of alter than we might at first imagine. And as we get the knack of it, others will present themselves.

Let's try giving the world a rest from our restless need to transform it, and work a bit more on changing ourselves. I trust the Buddha's promise that we will be happier in the long run.

—Andrew Olendzki



# Sharing What You Love

An Interview with  
Trudy Goodman

*Trudy Goodman lives and teaches in Los Angeles, and is a member of the Boston-based Institute for Meditation and Psychotherapist (IMP). She has been practicing Dharma for many years, in both the Zen and Vipassana traditions.*

*Both as a dharma teacher and as a therapist, I am passionate about awareness.*

**Trudy, in addition to being a long-time dharma practitioner and teacher, you are also a trained psychotherapist. What do you think of the recent confluence of these two traditions?**

I'm interested in the ways these two different traditions are already enriching one another. For years now my colleagues at IMP and I have been working with questions like, "Can we put the dharma into the language of evidence-based psychology, or psychoanalytic theory, without losing the spirit and intention of the ancient teachings?" If we can use professional language and methods to integrate the field of psychotherapy with the vast knowledge of consciousness arising from Buddhist meditation, this will help people. And the good news for dharma teaching is that, with training in psychotherapy (or judicious referral to psychotherapists), we have a much wider range of skillful means for meeting the deeply rooted emotional obstacles people often encounter in their practice.

**Which came first, dharma or therapy?**

In my life? It was always dharma first—meditation—and then therapy. I never set out to do therapy initially. Already a dharma practitioner for some

time, I found myself the director of a little nursery school at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center. It was a lab school for the residents in child psychiatry, and by being part of their regular seminars I was learning about how the psychiatrists looked at the children.

The psychiatrist who ran that seminar for the residents invited me (and two friends) to start a school with him for severely emotionally disturbed children in the greater Boston area. In the course of working with these children I had to learn to do therapy, because they were wildly disturbed and could not do nursery school activities with any sustained attention or cooperation. We worked with the children no one else wanted. They had been kicked out of every other child care program around.

It was while working with these children and their families that I became interested in the emotional, affective life of people. Before that I was seeking to understand how humans know, and I had studied cognitive development with Jean Piaget in Switzerland. I was looking for the dharma, really, but didn't know where to look in those days. So I looked in the field of epistemology, the study of how we know perception and real-

ity, but I didn't find there what I wanted to know. I couldn't name it at the time, but I was transfixed by the mystery of consciousness.

**Dr. Piaget was not much help here?**

No, and that was so disappointing. Piaget studied children as a means of understanding the birth of intelligence, but his definition of intelligence was cognitive development, not consciousness per se. He even said, "If I could interview prehistoric man, (he did not say 'prehistoric people,') that's what I would do. But since they are not available I have to study children." He believed that a child's development recapitulated the ontology of intelligence, and that he could somehow go back in history by studying children and how their minds unfold as they learn. He did want to know how they come to know things in reality, but his reason for wanting to know was very different from mine. He was interested in learning about the functioning of intelligence, but I had an eye out for something bigger that I found missing in his program.

But I went on to learn a lot about the emotional lives of children and families by working with multiply-challenged

inner-city families, and by dealing with intensities of suffering and poverty that I couldn't even imagine. It was incredible, right in Boston, people living in filth and crowding and crazy loneliness. That was a whole other education. This is when I started meditating and practicing dharma more intensively, when my first teacher came to Cambridge and started a Zen Center.

### **The Zen model was pretty monastic in those days, was it not?**

My first teacher, Zen Master Seung Sahn, was a monk. He urged people to become monks and nuns and, short of that, to live in the Zen Center. That was his training and he believed in it. But I was a single mother by then, and the Zen Centers were not particularly healthy places to raise a child in those days. Most people were trying to be monastic, but they weren't really, and most had little tolerance for kids.

I practiced for a few years in that context and then met Kobun Chino Roshi and Maurine (Stuart, Roshi), who both lived a family life and understood how living together and raising children can be part of spiritual training. It affirmed what I knew from experience. I also practiced *vipassana* [insight meditation] in the early years. This was before IMS got started in Barre [in 1976]. They used to rent a place in Great Barrington, and I sat *vipassana*, too, in those days.

I found out about the *vipassana* retreats through my friend Jon Kabat-Zinn, who practiced Zen with me. He said "These people can really sit!" So I went to see. After that I would go on retreats whenever my circumstances allowed. Occasionally friends, or my parents would take care of my daughter, or I would do trades with other single parents I trusted, and we would help each other that way.

### **Were there any issues for you about practicing in the two different traditions?**

You know in those days, it was no problem. My teacher Seung Sahn, Soen Sa Nim, encouraged my going to the retreats, but said of the *vipassana* medi-

tators, "They fall into emptiness. If you go to a retreat with them, you will have more *samadhi* [concentration] on the retreat, but when you come out it will be 'more worser'." And there was definitely more *samadhi* in the retreats. But it was more difficult to return to ordinary life when I came out—the emphasis then was not on mindfulness in everyday life. I would emerge in these profound states, and everything would be an impingement—including my own child. I would be painfully sensitive for days.

Whereas when I would sit at the urban Zen Center, in Providence, there would be people with boom boxes walking outside, and neither the sitting nor the walking sessions were long. You could never really sink in to any particular state. You'd be up and down, up and down, working with a *koan*, meeting with the teacher. And when you came home it seemed a more natural extension of that—meeting with life's circumstances as your teacher. But I learned things about stillness on the *vipassana* retreats that I did not learn on those Zen retreats. There was no conflict. The teachings seemed consistent and similar to me. Of course, the relationships with the teachers was quite different, but neither would say you could not practice with the other.

### **Can you say more, from your own experience, about some of the differences between practicing *vipassana* and practicing zen?**

I feel each has something to offer that the other doesn't. The *vipassana* teachings were more accessible, in the sense that there was a map you could follow. The instructions follow the four foundations of mindfulness. You are given

With Zen you manifest  
what you know by  
being it—fully.

techniques for how not to get lost in your thoughts, how to cultivate loving kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity, and for what to do, rather, how to be in the sitting. You're not busy, busy, like in the Tibetan tradition, but there

is something to hang your mind-hat on. Especially with the practice of noting and labeling, it's possible to connect mindfulness with named, and accurately known, emotions that may have been repressed. This can be a profound way to offer ourselves the acceptance we seek outside of ourselves—being seen and known completely, including psychologically. *Vipassana* has contributed in this way. There are also very explicit dharma talks about what the Buddha actually taught. So you hear about the four noble truths, the three characteristics, the factors of enlightenment, and the eightfold path. The Buddhist way is laid out in a very methodical and accessible manner, suffused with *metta* [lovingkindness].

Much of that was missing in Zen. I was a Zen student for years, and we would sit intensively and work with our teacher, but study was not much emphasized. What was valued was looking into your own don't-know mind, your self, your life, the mystery of it all. That was considered to be alive, and true. It was what I had been seeking all my young life.

What I loved about Zen, and did not find in *vipassana*, was an emphasis on direct experience, pure presence, the spontaneous expression of the immediate moment. Now you are free! What do you do? Free to do what? How do you manifest your understanding? The meetings with my teacher Maurine were like that, too: "Okay, so you understand this. Now, what? What do you do? How can you help? Show me!" That was always the emphasis.

With Zen you manifest what you know by being it—fully. If you are giving a dharma talk you don't talk about the dharma. You sit in presence, body, breath, mind, fully present, and you speak from that, moment-to-moment. It's not that you can't have an outline of what you want to say, but you don't read a prepared talk. As Kobun Chino Roshi said to me once, "Would you want to go around the table and eat the garbage off everybody's plate when they were done eating?" I was taught that a prepared talk is like leftovers, not fresh from the pot or the oven. This is a more challenging way



of teaching, less consistent sometimes, but it can carry great vitality. It involves trusting our knowing at a deep level.

Another thing about the Zen tradition I think is very useful is that you are working closely with the teacher. Now, obviously, there are things that can go wrong in this close relationship, but we are talking here about strengths, not weaknesses. The point is to have that meeting be as unclouded as possible by expectation, longing for approval, showing off—all the things we habitually bring to our encounters with people.

As a female, I had difficulty trusting my own realization.

There is something remarkable about seeing and being seen by another, about being so naked and clear and present. It's such an intimate acceptance. It almost takes your breath away!! To come to that pure presence and see: It's just this! Nothing else! Everything falls away! All your illusions, your idealizations, your longing for love, your paranoia about your teacher not liking you, or finding you're not enough—all those projections just have to stop, at least for a moment!

In Zen interviews you are facing this person sitting there in the power seat who is the authority. Depending on the teacher, you find yourself trying to answer an unanswerable question they've asked you, or you're trying to come up with something to say or do that demonstrates your understanding, your willingness to be fully present and open to what is. The Zen choreography is used to cultivate mindfulness and try and dislodge people from their comfort zone and encourage them to step out of their mind-house and see what's there. It draws out whatever poisons come up for you in intimate relationship. Whatever you are carrying will come up in that situation.

When the teacher is wise, balanced, strong and mature, it can be an unparal-

leled chance to trust someone and be completely without artifice or pretense. In those moments you realize that your mind and your teacher's mind are just one big mind you are both inhabiting. You're not caught by the particularities of anyone. To me, this sort of mind-to-mind direct transmission of understanding is a huge strength of Zen.

#### **And the teacher encounter in a vipassana retreat?**

In the beginning, the interviews were the least satisfying element of sitting vipassana. I loved being on retreat, I loved the dharma talks, the long sitting and walking, the stillness—all of it, except for the interviews. I would go and talk about my practice and then be told I was doing fine. I couldn't simply trust my teachers then, as I learned to do when I returned to intensive vipassana retreats a dozen years ago.

As a female, and I don't think this is unique, I had difficulty trusting my own realization. It was difficult to trust that just hearing is enough, just seeing, just tasting, just this thought, just this feeling in the body—is enough. The mind likes to search for more, for something deeper... Although the teaching is clear: "Zen mind is enough mind," Zen practice sometimes reinforced a sense of never doing enough. I find that can be a beautiful spirit if it keeps us from fixating and being complacent, or to understanding how the way is infinite and there is always more to learn. But so often our fears inform our beliefs, such as, whatever I'm doing can't possibly be it. So if a teacher tells you, "You're doing fine, just continue," You think, "Well, he must not really know." (*Laughter*)

#### **Have you worked recently with vipassana teachers?**

I have felt Joseph [Goldstein], Sharon [Salzberg], Sarah [Doering] and Jack [Kornfield]'s strong caring and support for years now, and have benefited hugely from the teaching—and friendship—of other vipassana teachers, too. After the teacher retreat at the Forest Refuge at IMS last year, I stayed for the month with Sayadaw U Pandita. U Pandita's commitment to *sila* [virtue] is palpable.

The morning after he arrived at the retreat, there was a rainbow over the whole entrance to the Forest Refuge. It was raining light. And when he walked in the meditation hall that morning, it was like a wave of that fragrance just rolling into the room. Such a wave of purity I felt in his presence, it made me cry. Being one of the people hurt by unethical behavior, I can say: *Sila* is the best medicine!

We were given a very clear protocol on what our report to the teacher was to include and, especially, what it was not to include. The report was to focus primarily on the rising and falling of the abdomen. We could name certain mind states, or describe what the mind might be trying to do, but not in any way that was personally identified with the experience. For example, we could say "There was sadness arising." But we would not say, "I got so sad because..." We were given very strict instructions on how to report most clearly to the Sayadaws, and that is all they would talk to us about.

It was a matter of using impersonal language, speaking without the identification 'I', 'me', 'mine', and focusing on a very tiny segment of experience. But we know reality is holographic. If you focus on any one piece and bring all of your attention to it, you are going to discover the dharma truths that are universal. So you might be just looking at rising and falling, for example; but

Reality is holographic. If you focus on any one piece with all your attention, you are going to discover universal dharma truths.

you're going to start experiencing just pulsations, and then you're going to start seeing how some disappear and others take their place, and then you're going to start having your focus on how they disappear all together as soon as they are perceived. Through the microcosm of the

rising and falling and the sensations that accompany that—because that’s what you’re reporting and focusing on—you actually come to experience their true nature. And yet, to learn in this way, you are leaving out huge amounts of your life and your experience.

**Does this kind of precisely concentrated mindfulness play any role in therapy, where you also track and report on experience?**

The level of concentration is different outside of retreat. But the more care and attentiveness the partnership of therapist/client can bring to exploring experience, the more compassion and connection there will be. And then people begin to trust their own capacity to slow into experience and see what’s there. Noting, labeling the felt sense of things, can help here too.

Both as a dharma teacher and as a therapist, I am passionate about awareness and have empathy for who we are in all our manifestations! We have all seen what happens when people compartmentalize parts of their lives. When we disavow and deny aspects of who we are by projecting them on to an enemy, or try to be a ‘spiritual’ person, we wind up at the mercy of the very forces we reject, without the protection of mindfulness and compassion. I think the best way for us to learn to live in peace with each other is to be able to know that, with a little mindfulness and metta and *karuna* [compassion], all the different parts of who we are—even the crazy parts—can peacefully coexist in our own hearts.

To wake up, to be fully alive, most of us have to include the wider range of emotional experience along with body-based, sensation-based awareness. High levels of energy and aliveness come through the emotions when they are approached skillfully and can transform into wisdom. I say transform, rather than be transformed, because it’s something that just happens when we are willing to be present and trust our experience. And having the wise company of a skilled

therapist (or teacher) can help people find the courage and strength to trust even their painful losses as truth.

Discovering how to do that came from practicing with my own intense suffering. We can find what lies on the other side of suffering—what’s left when you’ve had insight into how you came to be this way through your parents being the way they were, in part because your grandparents brought them up this way, and their parents’ lives were this way, and so on. The view of human life gets very, very big. Bigger than you or me or them! And what’s naturally left when our



suffering falls away? A vast peace and freedom that has always been there.

**Might this be one of the ways these traditions of Zen and vipassana are complementary?**

Everything is complementary for me. I don’t get into conflicts or confusion with different practices, because I can see how they’re all expressing dharmic truth. I spent two years studying Vajrayana Buddhism, doing *ngondro* practices, doing a Dzogchen retreat in the mountain jungles of Bhutan, then continuing to practice in India for a couple of months

in Bodh-Gaya, doing prostrations at the *stupa*. I could see that each practice was just drawing on different *paramis* [moral perfections] and developing different qualities. And they were all so clearly and deeply rooted in the dharma, in the teachings of the Buddha. They were just coming at it from different *upaya* [skillful means]. It seems to me it is the creativity of human culture developing all of these skilful means of waking up and expressing our gratitude and love of life. Such an abundance of imagination, creativity and cultural diversity! 50 ways to love the dharma! Thank you,

India, Korea, Japan, China, Burma, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Tibet, Bhutan! United States, Switzerland, France, England, Thank you, too!

**What about the differing notions of selfhood and identity, East and West?**

There is a lot of conversation about this. It gets confusing for the therapists when they hear “no self.” Then people start talking about “no self” or “emptiness” as if they were things, reified (thing-ified) experiences. There is also a lot of confusion in dharma circles about therapy. Many people jump on Freud’s phrase about returning his patients to ordinary human unhappiness, and view therapy as simply a way of adjusting to *dukkha* [suffering] without much spiritual value.

I remember hearing a Rinpoche [Tibetan Buddhist teacher] at a conference on psychotherapy and Buddhism in the early eighties say in his opening talk to an assembly of professionals something like, “I suppose some poor, unfortunate individuals might need some psychotherapy before they can practice dharma.” That was his understanding of what we were doing. So there are misunderstandings on both sides.

In my experience, there are places in practice where personality is uncovered as illusory and unnecessary. These insights can be vivid and on-going if you are on a retreat, and maybe for some people they are on-going when not on

retreat. Some of those dimensions of experience are not ordinarily accessible through psychotherapy, and they're not usually accessible to psychotherapists unless they've practiced.

### **How do you feel about combining the professions of dharma teachers and psychotherapists?**

You see a lot of dharma teachers who become therapists, and some are not necessarily well trained as therapists. And there are therapists who learn dharma, but then continue to think in therapy terms. Not everyone makes the shift.

For me beginning to teach dharma was very humbling, because I realized it wasn't about me. It was really about just performing a service. People need to hear the dharma, for the same reasons I did. It saved my life over and over. If you've been blessed with being given the chance to practice a bit and work usefully with suffering, it is a service to pass on the teachings about how to do this to others.

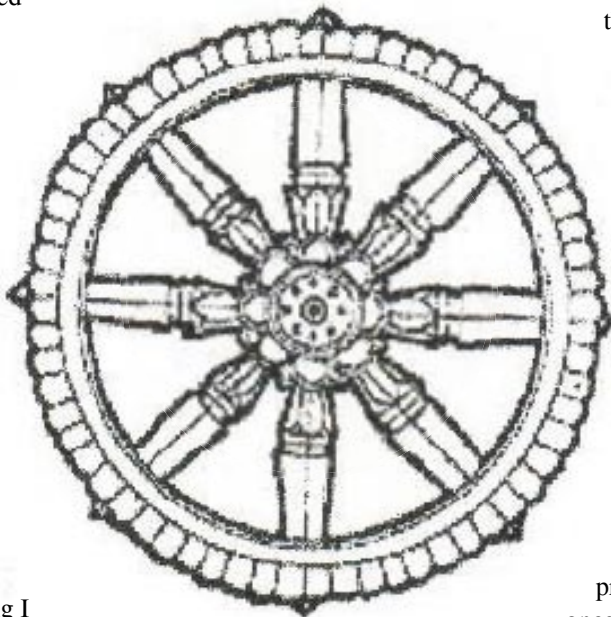
I don't think I have a strong teacher identity. I've seen too many hurtful things arise out of that, so I'm really careful. I think of myself like a French teacher or a piano teacher. I have a way of being with people (and myself) that I've practiced a lot because it's something I love. And if you share what you love, it's contagious. People can catch that spark. And it's profoundly healing to love your life; this is where the two paths intersect for me.

### **What brought you from Cambridge, Massachusetts, where you lived for so many years, to Los Angeles?**

I left Cambridge after a tough divorce that tore away deeply rooted illusions I'd had for years. It felt like dying, and I had to jump into the unknown and live a gypsy life on the dharma trail for a few years.

I landed in Los Angeles for family reasons. My elderly mom lives there, and needed help in a way that she hadn't

before. She is showing me what it is to be old. It truly is a different stage of development, with its own cognition and ways of perceiving things. It's not just rhythm and pace that slow down; there are also subtle changes in perception. Understanding this has allowed me to be patient with her in ways that did not come easily at all. She wasn't a very patient parent, and I wasn't a very patient daughter. She has sweetened and mellowed, and only speaks her gratitude and support now. I just can't imagine living far away from her during these years. I'm learning a different kind of love, her dharma of old age.



My daughter also lives in the area, and got pregnant before I went to India. She had been off on her own quite happily for a long time, but wanted me nearby because of the baby. I was in transition in my life, so I thought I would spend a little time while the baby is young and help my daughter. But I fell in love, head over heels, with that child, and did not want to live far away from her. She is almost three now, and she has a new baby brother! So my family life now turns around the evolving relationship with my mother, siblings, daughter, and watching my grandchildren grow.

### **So you are fully embedded in the life of a householder now?**

Oh no! I'm in it, but not of it – that's the beauty of being a grandparent. When I came to LA a teacher said to me, "Well, being so involved with your family is going to be very bad for your spiritual life." I knew what he meant, because I was always getting triggered by my family. I felt a lot more *kilesas* [imperfections], such as impatience and aversion.

Yet I began to think, "Wait a minute, what is this practice if it doesn't work around my family of origin? Isn't that a training ground? Don't they push my buttons the most? Why do I have to go to a monastery to seek out situations that push my buttons? I have them right here: endless chances to cultivate my least favorite virtue, patience! Countless opportunities for renunciation! It's been very humbling, like going backwards in time and bringing the practice to ancient family dynamics that I'd been able to bypass for a long time.

### **So how did you get started teaching in LA?**

Out of appreciation for the intensity of my own family path, I started Growing Spirit, a family practice program in LA that meets once and a while on Sunday mornings. We sit, and the kids do meditations that are geared toward kids and play. In my new life, I just created a practice situation I knew to be valuable and offered it to the community. We started with two people and now have a regular Thursday sitting group, monthly retreats, weekly classes, visiting teachers, and a growing sangha: Insight LA.

I'm truly grateful to the people in Los Angeles who have come to sit with me. They are so devoted to waking up and being compassionate in this life, caring about each other and the dharma. When I talk about what's happening with Insight LA, I immediately think of them. They are, *we* are, what's happening with Insight LA.



# FEAR, PAIN ...AND TRUST

Joseph Goldstein



Meditation practice is a path of opening. To begin with, it opens us to a deeper awareness of our bodies. Usually, we have a sense of our bodies being something quite solid and fixed. But as we develop stronger mindfulness, we experience the sensations in the body as a fluid energy field. The solidity begins to dissolve, which itself becomes a healing process. We also open our sense doors. As the mind gets quieter and we are less distracted, we see and hear and smell and taste with much greater clarity. The senses become more alive because we are present. It's not some magical process; it's just a matter of actually living in the body and paying attention.

Meditation is also a way of opening to the depth and range of our emotions. We feel with greater subtlety, accuracy, and depth the entire range of emotions that come in the course of our relationships and interactions. Often there is a release of old memories during practice. Sometimes this clearing out process arrives as a flood of thought or images, sometimes pleasant, sometimes unpleasant.

There is also the opening to deepening experiences of silence. Just as the Eskimo have, so I'm told, many different words for snow, in the Buddhist meditative tradition there are twenty-one kinds of silence. As we quiet our minds, we begin to experience the beauty, the clarity, and the stillness of those kinds of silence. Our Dharma practice—Dharma means truth, the law, the teachings of the Buddha, the way things are—is not a reaching out or looking for a different experience; it's a settling back into the moment, settling back into this naturally unfolding process.

But there is one strongly conditioned tendency of mind that freezes this flow of experience, like a deer frozen in the headlights of a car. It is the deep pattern, the deep conditioning, of fear.

## UNDERSTANDING FEAR

When we look carefully at fear, we see that it is one aspect of aversion. As you know, in Buddhism there are three unwholesome roots in the mind that cause suffering: greed, aversion, and delusion. Aversion can take many forms, such as anger, impatience, or frustration, when something unpleasant is arising in our experience and we strike out against it. It can take the form of grief, over the loss of someone or something very dear to us. And it can also take the form of fear. While anger is aversion striking out, fear is aversion pulling back or contracting within.

I would like to discuss today how fear is conditioned in our minds, and how we can practice going beyond this limitation in our lives. One of the things you have probably noticed, both in life generally and in meditation practice, is that we often encounter a boundary or an edge of what I call our comfort zone. It might be a physical, a psychological, or an emotional comfort zone. We're going along and everything is fine, but then we reach an edge of what we feel at ease with. It is right at that edge that fears start to arise. It might be a fear of physical pain or really unpleasant emotions. It can be fear of change and insecurity; or it may be fear of the unknown, fear of death.

*This article  
has been  
excerpted  
from a course  
Joseph taught  
at the study  
center on  
September 6,  
2003.*

Can we  
make pain  
part of our  
practice?

The problem - and the challenge - when these fears emerge is that they are all fears of things that are true in our experience. There is pain; there is change; there are difficult emotions; there is insecurity. We all will die. So working with these fears is an essential part of our path. It's not that we can just ignore them, or pretend that they are not important, because then we are closing ourselves off from what is true in our lives.

In order to understand the nature of fear as a mind state, as a feeling, it is helpful to first look at what it is we are afraid of. We each have different fears and limitations, and the path of meditation involves playing at those edges. We explore what these boundaries are like for us and the possibilities of going beyond them. Sometimes when I imagine the Buddha's mind, I think of a mind with no edges anywhere, a mind completely open. This would also be a mind without fear.

#### PHYSICAL PAIN

The first, and perhaps most obvious, edge in our experience happens with physical pain. Pain is unpleasant. We don't like it. We become impatient with discomfort. If there is strong pain due to an accident or disease, both the sensations and our reactions to them are usually quite clear. At these times, we can notice how our minds are relating to the pain. Does it pull back? Does it contract? Does it tense? And even when we are trying to be aware, is it the awareness of endurance or bargaining - "Ok, I'll be with it.... if it goes away" - or is it an awareness that is really open? These are two very different qualities of mind.

If we are mindful enough, it is possible to say "Okay, let me relax, let me open, let me feel the sensations of the pain." It can become a very good object of meditation, because concentration can get very strong with a painful sensation. The mind is not wandering much, it is right there.

Many years ago, someone accidentally slammed a car door on my finger. It really hurt. That night I couldn't sleep at all, so I was just there with that painful throbbing sensation. At first, my mind had all kinds of thoughts and feelings, starting with "How stupid could I be, how could I put my hand there?" and then leading up to fear of what it was going to be like through the whole night. At some point, however, my mind

settled down and I was just with the sensation. So I was just watching - throbbing, throbbing - and it was amazing: my mind got very concentrated, clear, and light. It was not a problem at all.

The experience was a good example (though not one I would go looking for) of the times in our lives when pain, from one circumstance or another, just arises. Then the issue is: How do we relate to it? Do we get lost in the fear, both of the pain in the moment and of the anticipated pain, or can we make it part of our practice? It's not that we will be able to do this perfectly. It takes practice to open to intense sensations and simply feel them. But it is an important way of bringing the practice into our lives.

Learning to open to painful sensations that commonly come in our meditation practice, the discomfort of the knees or the back or whatever, is also good training for illness or dying. In meditation we may have some discomfort, but when we shift position the discomfort goes away. There are many times, though, when pain in our lives will be there and will not go away by a shift in position. It is just what is happening. When we have trained our mind in somewhat easier circumstances to relax into pain, to feel it without fear, then in those more extreme times the mind is better able to relate to it in an open and wise way.

Often in the texts, the Buddha addresses people who are suffering from a grave illness. The descriptions they use for their symptoms are sometimes very graphic. The Buddha then asks of the person: "Even though your body is experiencing all these painful feelings, can your mind be at peace?" This is a possibility for us, but it takes training and practice.

#### DIFFERENT KINDS OF PAIN

So how can we move in this direction? What are some of the ways to open ourselves to the experience of physical pain with less fear? It's helpful to first understand that there are different kinds of pain so our responses need to be appropriate to what is happening. There is the pain of a danger signal. If you put your hand in fire and it starts to burn and it hurts, the pain encourages you to pull it out. I had one friend who was doing a retreat in a hut in western Massachusetts. He was sitting with his eyes

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closed when he started to smell something. As a good yogi, he simply noted, “Smelling, smelling, burning, burning, burning...” Fortunately, he eventually opened his eyes and saw that something had caught fire. So it’s not that we want to ignore what our senses are telling us, because some of the uncomfortable or painful feelings will actually be saying, “Is there something to do here?” And if there is, then we should do it.

Another kind of pain, common in meditation practice, is when we begin to feel the pain or discomfort of the accumulated tensions in our bodies. If we can feel these sensations without fear, without contraction, without a further tightening against them—then an amazing opening process unfolds. We are allowing for an unwinding of the many energy knots that we often carry unknowingly in our daily activities.

Sometimes when we feel pain in the body it is the pain of a healing crisis – we become aware of some unhealthy condition of the body. And sometimes, the awareness itself facilitates the healing of the ailment. Sayadaw U Pandita, my teacher from Burma who has been teaching now for fifty years, tells many stories of people coming to the monasteries with serious diseases and being healed by mindfulness practice. I don’t want to suggest that meditation will necessarily cure every disease that we have, but it is helpful to know, and experience, the healing power of meditation when we can open to what’s there without fear.

Sometimes when we feel pain in the body it is the re-living of old trauma, something that happened to the body in the past and has been stored in the body in some way. Once I was on retreat, doing walking meditation, when all of a sudden there was this intense pain in my shinbone. It was so sharp it felt like the bone was sticking out of my leg. I looked down to see what had happened, and right in that moment I had a memory of myself as a young boy running across a field flying a kite and running right into a cement bench. It was amazing to me that even though the physical pain had ceased forty years before, something was stored in the body all that time. In the process of meditation there can be this purifying of things that have been long held.

How we relate to physical pain can show us a lot about how we habitually relate to

other kinds of unpleasant circumstances in our lives. Do we have an ability to be with unpleasantness, or does the mind just respond, either with anger or with fear?

#### ANTICIPATED PAIN

Often there is a fear of anticipated pain, pain not even actually present. We might be feeling some unpleasant sensation that is quite okay. We are with it, and it’s not really an edge or a boundary. But then the mind starts imagining what that pain will be like in half an hour, or an hour, or by the time the bell is rung at the end of the sitting. We create this whole scenario in our minds—and then get afraid. There is a Zen story of an artist in a cave who paints a tiger on the wall so realistically that when he is done he looks at it and gets frightened. We paint all kinds of pictures in our minds of what will be, and then become frightened of our own imaginings. But it is not how things are now; it is just a product of our imagination.

I find it interesting to see how fear of anticipated discomfort often feeds into desire. One example of this stands out in my mind, though it happened many years ago. I was doing a retreat in England with Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw. He was one of the great monks of Burma, the grandfather of this whole tradition. He died quite a few years ago now. On this retreat we all took eight precepts, which means one doesn’t eat after the noon meal. So every morning we would come down for breakfast, and I would go through the line, taking some cereal, two pieces of toast, a piece of fruit, and tea. But as I was eating, I realized that one piece of toast was enough. Then the second morning I took the same breakfast, including two pieces of toast, and the same thing happened—one piece was enough.

By the third day I was starting to actually look at my mind, wondering, “What’s going on here?” I saw that in the moment of going through the line I was worried: “What if I’m hungry later in the day? What if I don’t have enough?” It actually took me about six days of watching this process until I worked up the great courage to leave the second piece of toast. Although it was a rather trivial circumstance, it was revealing of how fear and desire play out in our lives. It was all a fear of something imagined, not of something actually present.

We paint pictures in our minds of what will be, and then become frightened of our own imaginings.

If we can open to unpleasant painful sensations, without fear, even for some moments at a time, much of the Buddha's teaching is illuminated. We gain insight into the impermanent, selfless nature of experience. When we look carefully, we see that what we call pain is a constellation of physical sensations changing moment after moment. They may all be unpleasant, but it's not a solid, unchanging thing. There's throbbing, pressure, burning, stabbing, all with varying intensities. When we feel them closely, the impression of solidity begins to break up and we see them as part of a changing flow. We also see these sensations as selfless, meaning they are outside our control. On the night of my throbbing finger, I could not simply wish the pain away. The conditions and causes were there for it to arise. That's what selflessness means. Things are not subject to our will or our command. They are following their own laws.

This leads to a realization that can begin to defuse or decondition the habit of fear, namely, the growing understanding that painful sensations arising in the body are not some mistake. It is not that we've done something wrong. It is the nature of the body that at different times pain is going to arise. So often something happens and we think, "Oh, if I'd only done something differently, then this wouldn't be happening." Well, possibly, but given the nature of the body, at some point or other, painful feelings will arise.

In this regard, I'd like to share with you two of my favorite insight mantras, the first being 'Goldstein's law of practice': *If it's not one thing, it's another*. If it were not the finger in the door, it would have been falling off my bike, or something else. Things happen. The second law, which has also been a profound reflection for me, is: *Anything can happen any time*. We can be going along just fine in our lives, and suddenly there is an accident or an illness, or some dramatic change in the conditions of the world. Some people may hear "anything can happen any time" and think, "Oh, that's depressing." But rightly understood, it's not depressing at all. It's really freeing, because in understanding this, we are not living in delusion. The mind

actually relaxes, lets go of fear, and is much more open because we acknowledge the truth of change rather than deny it.

On a more subtle level, as we refine the quality of our mindfulness, we begin to recognize that which knows the pain; we explore the nature of consciousness itself. One of the most startling aspects of meditation practice is that whatever the object of our attention might be, the nature of knowing—that open, empty, aware nature of the mind—remains the same. It is completely unaffected by what is known. It simply knows, whether it is pleasure or pain.

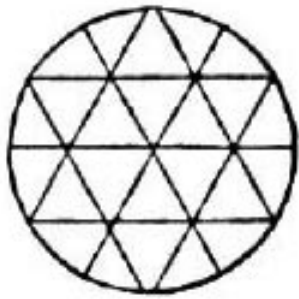
A couple of images might help illustrate this. The first is considering the mirror-like nature of the mind. A mirror just reflects what comes in front of it. Beautiful, ugly, the mirror doesn't care; its nature is simply to reflect. Likewise, the nature of the mind is simply to know. Another image pointing to the nature of awareness is the openness of an open window. Everything is perceived through the openness of the window, whether it's sounds or sights, or whatever. The openness itself is unaffected. The openness doesn't care whether it's pleasant or unpleasant. This is the nature of awareness. Beginning to recognize and understand this helps us develop a certain quality of fearlessness with respect to what's arising, because we see that the knowing is unaffected.

Henry David Thoreau offers an inspiring example of this possibility. He died in his forties from TB, but even as he lay sick and dying, he had an amazing understanding of the body and the mind, seeing both as part of the great natural world. As people were consoling him in his last days, he replied, *There is as much comfort in perfect disease as in perfect health, as the mind always conforms to the condition of the body*. That's a remarkable statement. Our awareness just knows whatever the condition of the body is, and the knowing itself is unaffected by it.

As we explore the edge of physical pain and discomfort in our meditation, we bring this understanding to other life situations. We begin to apply the same principles of open mindfulness to difficult emotions and mind states and we learn to find in ourselves the same place of freedom.

Goldstein's  
law of  
practice:  
If it's not one  
thing, it's  
another.





## THE FOURTH FOUNDATION OF MINDFULNESS

Andrew Olendzki

Most practitioners of insight meditation are familiar with the four foundations of mindfulness, and know that the *Satipaṇṇhāna Sutta* (M 10; D 22), the Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness is the cornerstone of the *vipassana* [insight meditation] tradition. The first foundation, mindfulness of the body, has to do with bringing awareness, attention, or focus to breathing and to bodily sensations. The second foundation of mindfulness, mindfulness of feeling, involves noticing the affect tone—pleasure or displeasure—that comes bound up with every sense object, whether a sensation or a thought. These first two movements of mindfulness are by and large descriptive; they are merely directing us to notice the texture of what is arising in experience.

With the third foundation of mindfulness, mindfulness of the mind, it becomes a little more evaluative. We are asked to notice, when there is attachment present in the mind, that the mind is attached. When that attachment—also known as greed or wanting—is not there, we notice that the mind is not attached. The same thing happens with aversion, also called hatred or resistance. If it is arising in the mind, then we can notice that the mind is beset by aversion. If it is not there, then we notice that the mind is without aversion. The idea is not, as I understand it, to compare the two states of presence and absence. But one cannot help, on an intuitive, almost cellular level, to begin to discern the difference between what it feels like: what you know about yourself in the world when the mind is beset by attachment or aversion, and when it is not. The same process is outlined for confusion or delusion.

Now with the fourth foundation of mindfulness, mindfulness of mental objects or of mental phenomena, we are sometimes told in meditation instruction to simply notice when a thought arises, be mindful of it, and

allow it to pass away unobstructed. There is nothing wrong with this, of course, but actually the *Satipaṇṇhāna Sutta* is directing through a much more precise exploration of the inner landscape of mental experience. What I want to do here is walk systematically through the classical training on how to work with the content of one's mind, and invite you all to linger experientially on the texture of each step. Almost as a guided meditation, the fourth foundation of mindfulness investigates 108 mental objects, and in the process manages to guide the meditator through the whole curriculum of Buddhist psychology: five hindrances, five aggregates, six sense spheres, seven factors of awakening, and four noble truths.

These are subjects familiar to all students of Buddhism. But in working with them as objects of meditation we are asked to look not just at their presence or absence in the mind, but also at how these factors are in motion. And in practice we are directed by the text to working with the arisen mental states in particular ways: when they are hindrances we want to loosen our attachments and abandon them; when they are factors of awakening, which are beneficial for the growth of understanding, we are invited to learn how to cultivate, develop and strengthen them. This goes well beyond an agenda of passive observation of phenomena, and takes us into the realm of transformation.

### THE CORE TERMS

The two most important words throughout the *Satipaṇṇhāna Sutta*, and which thereby are most crucial to meditation practice, are the verbs *anupassati* and *pajānāti*. It is useful to look carefully at these terms in the beginning, to see just how they are to be understood.

*Anupassati* is often translated (by Nanamoli/Bodhi, Walsh, and Horner) as

*This brief article introduces the chart found on the following pages (16-17). It is taken from the beginning of a talk given at the IMS staff retreat this winter*

This goes  
beyond  
passive  
observation  
into the  
realm of  
transformation.

A more dynamic view of mind unfolds as the practice progresses.

“contemplate”: e.g., contemplating body as body, contemplating mental objects as mental objects. The earliest translator of Pali, T.W. Rhys Davids, uses the term “consider.” But I think both these words have a meaning in English that suggests a discursive “thinking about” or “pondering over” an object, rather than the sense of direct awareness that is so obviously prevalent in the practice of meditation. These words also fail to capture a nuance in the Pali which can be glimpsed from an analysis of the word.

Anupassati is made up of two elements: *passati* is simply the verb to see; the prefix *anu-* adds a sense of “following along” with something. *Anu-* is used to suggest following along with the way things are already happening. For example *anu-loma* means “along with [the way] hair [is growing]” while *pañi-loma* means “against [the way] hair [is growing]. In English we would use the expression “with the grain” and “against the grain.” So as a meditation instruction, I take *anu-passati* to suggest a non-interfering observation or surveillance of what is arising and passing away in experience. In this case, one is following along, not literally with the eyes, but following along figuratively with awareness or attention. I would therefore suggest taking the verb as “to observe” or “to notice.”

It’s almost as if these mental objects or the feelings or the body sensations are like little mice that are scampering across the room. They emerge out of one hole, and they run across the floor, and then disappear down another hole. The yogi, the one who is undertaking this practice of cultivating mindfulness, is someone who abides, dwells, or holds herself in the moment in such a way that she is observing the passing of that thought or sensation. She is not contemplating it as much as merely observing it. To observe mental objects as mental objects, then, involves observing their presence, their absence, their arising, their passing away, and observing what happens in our experience with some of these mental objects when we relate to them in a certain way.

The other important word, which lies at the very core of almost every sentence in the *Satipaṇṇhāna Sutta*, is *pajānāti*. It is the Pali term that describes how a meditator relates to each of the objects of experience

he is observing. Bhikkhus Nanamoli and Bodhi (who in my opinion generally provide excellent translations) translate by saying *he understands* ‘I breath in long’ or ‘I breath in short’” (for example); Walsh renders this *he knows*; while I.B. Horner offers us *he comprehends*.

Again, I think these are unfortunate word choices, because in English these terms suggest already some wisdom, some contextualization, some association, some piecing of that sensation in with other aspects of one’s understanding. Such a growth of insight and wisdom is certainly something that develops from the practice, but I think in these instructions we are being guided towards a more elemental or primordial mental process. T.W. Rhys Davids seems to agree by using the phrase *he is conscious* (of breathing, for example). I think the common expression *he is aware* does the job well for the contemporary practitioner. Awareness is meant not in the sense of a broad, background awareness, but as the deliberate focusing of awareness on a particular object of experience.

What the *Satipaṇṇhāna* text is inviting us to do—again and again and again—is be aware of this, be aware of that, be aware of the other thing. And in the tour of the fourth foundation of mindfulness we are about to undertake, we are being asked to be aware of certain contents, if you will, of our mind. Although, of course, in Buddhism the mind is not a subject that has objects as content, but is rather the activity or process of observing a flow of events, the unfolding of certain occurrences or episodes of cognition that follow one after another to make up the texture of our experience. This more dynamic view of mind unfolds as the practice progresses.

#### WORKING WITH THE HINDRANCES

The first thing the fourth foundation of mindfulness invites us to do as we observe mental objects as mental objects is to be aware when there is some form of sense desire occurring in experience. One notices, and may even say subtly to oneself, ‘There is sense desire in this moment’. If this is what is happening in the mind, then one is to be aware of it. This sense desire does not need to be a full-blown outbreak of passionate, lustful attachment so often mentioned

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in Buddhism as the cause of suffering. The hindrance of sense desire is sometimes just a very subtle impulse, rooted in our sensory apparatus itself, to reach for an object or to reach for sensory gratification. Our body *wants* to feel good; or sometimes, believe it or not, it wants to feel bad. Our eyes want to see, our ears want to hear. Notice the wanting. Be aware of the wanting so often occurring in this present moment at this very basic level of sensation.

And, if you notice it is not there, then notice that. In this particular moment you are observing, at least, the wanting of one particular sense object or of some particular form of gratification is not there. Sometimes it is, sometimes it's not. Sometimes the eye is wanting to see and sometimes it's not. Of course, sometimes the eye is not wanting to see because the ear is too busy wanting to hear. The text is inviting you to explore the texture of wanting as it manifests in experience.

Moreover, if you notice—and this is the third instruction—that the sense desire is not present, wait a moment and it will arise. When it's not present, notice how the wanting emerges, gradually or suddenly, and becomes present. The very first time you notice some particular form of wanting or of sense desire, you are watching it arise in your phenomenal field.

The fourth movement in this exploration of the nuanced texture of sense desire is to be aware of the experience of abandoning it. Remember, the hindrances are obstacles to concentration. Sense desire is an obstacle to understanding and to insight. It's not that we are trying to beat it up or suppress it or deny it, but we are trying to become aware of it. Once you notice that this very basic impulse to want things has arisen, notice how your experience changes when you decide to let go of it. The bringing of a gentle intention of letting go, to that very particular experience of sense desire, is also something that can be observed with focused awareness.

And fifthly, to take it a step farther, notice what attitude you can take, what intentional stance you can manifest, in a moment of awareness that will contribute to the non-arising of that particular sense desire. Remember, we're not working with generalities here. It's not about desire in general.

Insight meditation, vipassana meditation, the foundations of mindfulness practice, are all about the details: becoming aware of this instantaneous manifestation of this particular desire for this very specific sense object. And by the time you get through noticing all that, it's gone and the next one is there. As we develop and hone our ability to see ever more closely what's happening, we see more and more of these episodes of awareness arising and passing away.

To recapitulate, we are being asked to work with the hindrance of sense desire in five different ways. Notice the sense desire when it is there; notice when it is not there; notice as it arises; once it's arisen, notice the texture of the intention to abandon it. The arisen sense desire does not have to rule our experience—we can let go of it. And then once we've let go of it, notice how we can cultivate an attitude that will contribute to its non-arising in the next moment of experience.

I think it is these last two moves that make this practice transformative. The Buddha directs us to pay attention to unwholesome mental objects, not to reinforce them but to undermine their hold on the mind. The hindrances cannot survive the bright light of awareness. As mindfulness grows, mental capacity is gradually shifted from the objects of attention to the process of being aware. This requires an attitude of letting go of the object, of abandoning attachment to it. The mind is a dynamic process; mental objects, as snapshots frozen in moments of time, are inherently static. When the mind is stuck on what has arisen, it is rigid and limited; but the mind that is letting go—moment after moment—keeps open to the emerging flow. This text is training us at a microcosmic mental level to step lightly in the field of phenomena, and to constantly explore the very cutting edge of experience.

All this, and we have so far only covered the first five of the 108 mental objects. The same five experiential movements are applied to each of the remaining four hindrances, and then somewhat different strategies of selective attention, nevertheless working at the same detailed scale, are introduced to guide us through other territory of the inner landscape: aggregates, sense spheres, factors of awakening and noble truths. Shall we proceed...?

This text is training us to step lightly in the field of phenomena, and to explore the very cutting edge of experience.

# THE FOURTH FOUNDATION OF MINDFULNESS

So how does a person abide observing mind objects as mind objects?  
Here a person abides observing mind objects as mind objects in terms of:

## The Five Hindrances (25)

- 1 When there is sense desire in him, a person is aware: 'There is sense desire in me';
- 2 or when there is no sense desire in him, he is aware: 'There is no sense desire in me';
- 3 & when the arising of unarisen sense desire occurs, he is aware of that;
- 4 & when the abandoning of arisen sense desire occurs, he is aware of that;
- 5 & when the future non-arising of abandoned sense desire occurs, he is aware of that.
- 6 When there is aversion in him, he is aware: 'There is aversion in me';
- 7 or when there is no aversion in him, he is aware: 'There is no aversion in me';
- 8 & when the arising of unarisen aversion occurs, he is aware of that;
- 9 & when the abandoning of arisen aversion occurs, he is aware of that;
- 10 & when the future non-arising of abandoned aversion occurs, he is aware of that.
- 11 When there is sloth & torpor in him, he is aware: 'There is sloth & torpor in me';
- 12 or when there is no sloth & torpor in him, he is aware: 'There is no sloth & torpor in me';
- 13 & when the arising of unarisen sloth & torpor occurs, he is aware of that;
- 14 & when the abandoning of arisen sloth & torpor occurs, he is aware of that;
- 15 & when the future non-arising of abandoned sloth & torpor occurs, he is aware of that.
- 16 When there is restlessness & remorse in him, he is aware: 'There is restlessness & remorse in me';
- 17 or when there is no restlessness & remorse in him, he is aware: 'There is no restlessness & remorse in me';
- 18 & when the arising of unarisen restlessness & remorse occurs, he is aware of that;
- 19 & when the abandoning of arisen restlessness & remorse occurs, he is aware of that;
- 20 & when the future non-arising of abandoned restlessness & remorse occurs, he is aware of that.
- 21 When there is doubt in him, he is aware: 'There is doubt in me';
- 22 or when there is no doubt in him, he is aware: 'There is no doubt in me';
- 23 & when the arising of unarisen doubt occurs, he is aware of that;
- 24 & when the abandoning of arisen doubt occurs, he is aware of that;
- 25 & when the future non-arising of abandoned doubt occurs, he is aware of that..

## The Six Bases (36)

- 41 A person is aware of the eye; 42 he is aware of forms;
- 43 & the fetter that arises dependent on both, he is aware of that;
- 44 & when the arising of the unarisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 45 & when the abandoning of the arisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 46 & when the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter occurs, he is aware of that.
- 47 A person is aware of the ear; 48 he is aware of sounds;
- 49 & the fetter that arises dependent on both, he is aware of that;
- 50 & when the arising of the unarisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 51 & when the abandoning of the arisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 52 & when the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter occurs, he is aware of that.
- 53 A person is aware of the nose; 54 he is aware of odors;
- 55 & the fetter that arises dependent on both, he is aware of that;
- 56 & when the arising of the unarisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 57 & when the abandoning of the arisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 58 & when the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter occurs, he is aware of that.
- 59 A person is aware of the tongue; 60 he is aware of flavors;
- 61 & the fetter that arises dependent on both, he is aware of that;
- 62 & when the arising of the unarisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 63 & when the abandoning of the arisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 64 & when the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter occurs, he is aware of that.
- 65 A person is aware of the body; 66 he is aware of touches;
- 67 & the fetter that arises dependent on both, he is aware of that;
- 68 & when the arising of the unarisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 69 & when the abandoning of the arisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 70 & when the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter occurs, he is aware of that.
- 71 A person is aware of the mind; 72 he is aware of mind objects;
- 73 & the fetter that arises dependent on both, he is aware of that;
- 74 & when the arising of the unarisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 75 & when the abandoning of the arisen fetter occurs, he is aware of that;
- 76 & when the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter occurs, he is aware of that.

## The Five Aggregates (15)

A person is aware:

- 26 Such is material form;
- 27 such is its origin;
- 28 such is its disappearance.
- 29 Such is feeling;
- 30 such is its origin;
- 31 such is its disappearance.
- 32 Such is perception;
- 33 such is its origin;
- 34 such is its disappearance.
- 35 Such are formations;
- 36 such is their origin;
- 37 such is their disappearance.
- 38 Such is consciousness;
- 39 such is its origin;
- 40 such is its disappearance.



# MINDFULNESS OF 108 MENTAL OBJECTS

## The Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness (Satipaṇṇhāna Sutta: Majjhima 10, Dāgha 22)

### The Seven Awakening Factors (28)

- 77 When there is the mindfulness awakening factor in him, a person is aware: 'There is the mindfulness awakening factor in me';  
78 or when there is no mindfulness awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is no mindfulness awakening factor in me';  
79 & when the arising of the unarisen mindfulness awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that;  
80 & when the coming to fulfilment by development of the arisen mindfulness awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that.
- 81 When there is the investigation-of-states awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is the investigation-of-states awakening factor in me';  
82 or when there is no investigation-of-states awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is no investigation-of-states awakening factor in me';  
83 & when the arising of the unarisen investigation-of-states awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that;  
84 & when the coming to fulfilment by development of the arisen investigation-of-states awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that.
- 85 When there is the energy awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is the energy awakening factor in me';  
86 or when there is no energy awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is no energy awakening factor in me';  
87 & when the arising of the unarisen energy awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that;  
88 & when the coming to fulfilment by development of the arisen energy awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that.
- 89 When there is the joy awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is the rapture awakening factor in me';  
90 or when there is no joy awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is no rapture awakening factor in me';  
91 & when the arising of the unarisen joy awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that;  
92 & when the coming to fulfilment by development of the arisen joy awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that.
- 93 When there is the tranquility awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is the tranquility awakening factor in me';  
94 or when there is no tranquility awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is no tranquility awakening factor in me';  
95 & when the arising of the unarisen tranquility awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that;  
96 & when the coming to fulfilment by development of the arisen tranquility awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that.
- 97 When there is the concentration awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is the concentration awakening factor in me';  
98 or when there is no concentration awakening factor in him, he is aware: 'There is no concentration awakening factor in me';  
99 & when the arising of the unarisen concentration awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that;  
100 & when the coming to fulfilment by development of the arisen concentration awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that.
- 101 When there is the equanimity enlightenment factor in him, he is aware: 'There is the equanimity awakening factor in me';  
102 or when there is no equanimity enlightenment factor in him, he is aware: 'There is no equanimity awakening factor in me';  
103 & when the arising of the unarisen equanimity enlightenment factor occurs, he is aware of that;  
104 & when the coming to fulfilment by development of the arisen equanimity awakening factor occurs, he is aware of that.

### The Four Noble Truths (4)

- 105 A person is aware as it actually is:  
'This is suffering';  
106 he is aware as it actually is:  
'This is the origin of suffering';  
107 he is aware as it actually is:  
'This is the cessation of suffering';  
108 he is aware as it actually is:  
'This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering.'

Such is the way he abides observing mind objects as mind-objects internally,...or externally,...or both.

Or he abides observing among mind objects: arising mind objects...vanishing mind objects...or both.

Or else mindfulness becomes established for him just to know, just to be mindful: 'there is a mind object'.

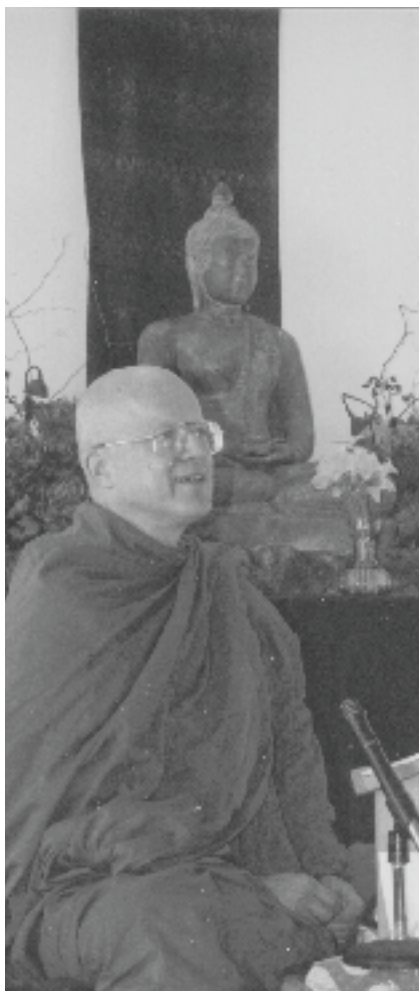
And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world.

Translated by Andrew Olendzki

NOTE: The word "monk" (*bhikkhu*) has been replaced with "person" throughout, but the masculine gender has been retained.

# All About Change

Thanissaro Bhikkhu



Change is the focal point for Buddhist insight—a fact so well known that it has spawned a familiar sound bite: “Isn’t change what Buddhism is all about?” What’s less well known is that this focus has a frame, that change is neither where insight begins nor where it ends. Insight begins with a question that evaluates change in light of the desire for true happiness. It ends with a happiness that lies beyond change. When this frame is forgotten, people create their own contexts for the teaching and often assume that the Buddha was operating within those same contexts. Two of the contexts commonly attributed to the Buddha at present are these:

*Insight into change teaches us to embrace our experiences without clinging to them—to get the most out of them in the present moment by fully appreciating their intensity, in full knowledge that we will soon have to let them go to embrace whatever comes next.*

*Insight into change teaches us hope. Because change is built into the nature of things, nothing is inherently fixed, not even our own identity. No matter how bad the situation, anything is possible. We can do whatever we want to do, create whatever world we want to live in, and become whatever we want to be.*

The first of these interpretations offers wisdom on how to consume the pleasures of immediate, personal experience when you’d rather they not change; the second, on how to produce change when you want it. Although sometimes presented as complementary insights, these interpretations contain a practical conflict: If experiences are so fleeting and changeable, are they worth the effort needed to produce them? How can we find genuine hope in the prospect of positive change if we can’t fully rest in the results

when they arrive? Aren’t we just setting ourselves up for disappointment?

Or is this just one of the unavoidable paradoxes of life? Ancient folk wisdom from many cultures would suggest so, advising us that we should approach change with cautious joy and stoic equanimity: training ourselves to not get attached to the results of our actions, and accepting without question the need to keep on producing fleeting pleasures as best we can, for the only alternative would be inaction and despair. This viewpoint, too, is often attributed to the Buddha.

But the Buddha was not the sort of person to accept things without question. His wisdom lay in realizing that the effort that goes into the production of happiness is worthwhile only if the processes of change can be skillfully managed to arrive at a happiness resistant to change. Otherwise, we’re life-long prisoners in a forced-labor camp, compelled to keep on producing pleasurable experiences to assuage our hunger, and yet finding them so empty of any real essence that they can never leave us full.

These realizations are implicit in the question that, according to the Buddha, lies at the beginning of insight:

“What, when I do it, will lead to my long-term well-being and happiness?”

This is a heartfelt question, motivated by the desire behind all action: to attain levels of pleasure worthy of the effort that goes into them. It springs from the realization that life requires effort, and that if we aren’t careful whole lifetimes can be lived in vain. This question, together with the realizations and desires behind it, provides the context for the Buddha’s perspective on change. If we examine it closely, we find the seeds for all his insights into the production and consumption of change.

The first phrase in the question—“What, when I do it, will lead to . . .”—focuses on the issues of production, on the potential effects of human action. Prior to his Awakening, the Buddha had left home and gone into the wilderness to explore precisely this

issue: to see how far human action could go, and whether it could lead to a dimension beyond the reach of change. His Awakening was confirmation that it could—if developed to the appropriate level of skillfulness. He thus taught that there are four types of action, corresponding to four levels of skill: three that produce pleasant, unpleasant, and mixed experiences within the cycles of space and time; and a fourth that leads beyond action to a level of happiness transcending the dimensions of space and time, thus eliminating the need to produce any further happiness.

Because the activities of producing and consuming require space and time, a happiness transcending space and time, by its very nature, is neither produced nor consumed. Thus, when the Buddha reached that happiness and stepped outside the modes of producing and consuming, he was able to turn back and see exactly how pervasive a role these activities play in ordinary experience, and how imprisoning they normally are. He saw that our experience of the present is an activity—something fabricated or produced, moment to moment, from the raw material provided by past actions. We even fabricate our identity, our sense of who we are. At the same time, we try to consume any pleasure that can be found in what we've produced—although in our desire to consume pleasure, we often gobble down pain. With every moment, production and consumption are intertwined: We consume experiences as we produce them, and produce them as we consume. The way we consume our pleasures or pains can produce further pleasures or pains, now and into the future, depending on how skillful we are.

The three parts of the latter phrase in the Buddha's question—"my / long-term / well-being and happiness"—provide standards for gauging the level of our skill in approaching true pleasure or happiness. (The Pali word, here—*sukha*—can be translated as pleasure, happiness, ease, or bliss.) We apply these standards to the experiences we consume: if they aren't long-term, then no matter how pleasant they might be, they aren't true hap-

piness. If they're not true happiness, there's no reason to claim them as "mine."

This insight forms the basis for the Three Characteristics that the Buddha taught for inducing a sense of dispassion for normal time- and space-bound experience. *Anicca*, the first of the three, is pivotal. *Anicca* applies to everything that changes. Often translated as "impermanent," it's actually the negative of *nicca*, which means constant or dependable. Everything that changes is inconstant. Now, the difference between "impermanent" and "inconstant" may seem semantic, but it's crucial to the way *anicca* functions in the Buddha's teachings. As the early texts state repeatedly, if something is *anicca* then the other two characteristics automatically follow: it's *dukkha* (stressful) and *anatta* (not-self), i.e., not worthy to be claimed as me or mine.

If we translate *anicca* as impermanent, the connection among these Three Characteristics might seem debatable. But if we translate it as inconstant, and consider the Three Characteristics in light of the Buddha's original question, the connection is clear. If you're seeking a dependable basis for long-term happiness and ease, anything inconstant is obviously a stressful place to pin your hopes—like trying to relax in an unstable chair whose legs are liable to break at any time. If you understand that your sense of self is something willed and fabricated—that you choose to create it—there's no compelling reason to keep creating a "me" or "mine" around any experience that's inconstant and stressful. You want something better. You don't want to make that experience the goal of your practice.

So what do you do with experiences that are inconstant and stressful? You could treat them as worthless and throw them away, but that would be wasteful. After all, you went to the trouble to fabricate them in the first place; and, as it turns out, the only way you can reach the goal is by utilizing experiences of just this sort. So you can learn how to use them as means to the goal; and the role they can play in serving that purpose is

The difference between 'impermanent' and 'inconstant' may seem semantic, but it's crucial to the way *anicca* functions in the Buddha's teachings.

The Deathless is simply there, radically prior to and separate from the fabrication of space and time.

determined by the type of activity that went into producing them: the type that produces a pleasure conducive to the goal, or the type that doesn't. Those that do, the Buddha labeled the "path." These activities include acts of generosity, acts of virtue, and the practice of mental absorption, or concentration. Even though they fall under the Three Characteristics, these activities produce a sense of pleasure relatively stable and secure, more deeply gratifying and nourishing than the act of producing and consuming ordinary sensual pleasures. So if you're aiming at happiness within the cycles of change, you should look to generosity, virtue, and mental absorption to produce that happiness. But if you'd rather aim for a happiness going beyond change, these same activities can still help you by fostering the clarity of mind needed for Awakening. Either way, they're worth mastering as skills. They're your basic set of tools, so you want to keep them in good shape and ready to hand.

As for other pleasures and pains—such as those involved in sensual pursuits and in simply having a body and mind—these can serve as the objects you fashion with your tools, as raw materials for the discernment leading to Awakening. By carefully examining them in light of their Three Characteristics—to see exactly how they're inconstant, stressful, and not-self—you become less inclined to keep on producing and consuming them. You see that your addictive compulsion to fabricate them comes entirely from the hunger and ignorance embodied in states of passion, aversion, and delusion. When these realizations give rise to dispassion both for fabricated experiences and for the processes of fabrication, you enter the path of the fourth kind of kamma, leading to the Deathless.

This path contains two important turns. The first comes when all passion and aversion for sensual pleasures and pains has been abandoned, and your only remaining attachment is to the pleasure of concentration. At this point, you turn and examine the pleasure of concentration in terms of the

same Three Characteristics you used to contemplate sensual experiences. The difficulty here is that you've come to rely so strongly on the solidity of your concentration that you'd rather not look for its drawbacks. At the same time, the inconstancy of a concentrated mind is much more subtle than that of sensual experiences. But once you overcome your unwillingness to look for that inconstancy, the day is sure to come when you detect it. And then the mind can be inclined to the Deathless.

That's where the second turn occurs. As the texts point out, when the mind encounters the Deathless it can treat it as a mind-object—a dhamma—and then produce a feeling of passion and delight for it. The fabricated sense of the self that's producing and consuming this passion and delight thus gets in the way of full Awakening. So at this point the logic of the Three Characteristics has to take a new turn. Their original logic—"Whatever is inconstant is stressful; whatever is stressful is not-self"—leaves open the possibility that whatever is constant could be (1) easeful and (2) self. The first possibility is in fact the case: whatever is constant is easeful; the Deathless is actually the ultimate ease. But the second possibility isn't a skillful way of regarding what's constant: if you latch onto what's constant as self, you're stuck on your attachment. To go beyond space and time, you have to go beyond fabricating the producing and consuming self, which is why the concluding insight of the path is: "All dhammas"—constant or not—"are not-self."

When this insight has done its work in overcoming any passion or delight for the Deathless, full Awakening occurs. And at that point, even the path is relinquished, and the Deathless remains, although no longer as an object of the mind. It's simply there, radically prior to and separate from the fabrication of space and time. All consuming and producing for the sake of your own happiness comes to an end, for a timeless wellbeing has been found. And because all mind-objects are abandoned in this happi-



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ness, questions of constant or inconstant, stress or ease, self or not-self are no longer an issue.

This, then, is the context of Buddhist insight into change: an approach that takes seriously both the potential effects of human effort and the basic human desire that effort not go to waste, that change have the potential to lead to a happiness beyond the reach of change. This insight is focused on developing the skills that lead to the production of genuine happiness. It employs the Three Characteristics—of inconstancy, stress, and not-self—not as abstract statements about existence, but as inducement for mastering those skills and as guidelines for measuring your progress along the way. When used in this way, the Three Characteristics lead to a happiness transcending the Three Characteristics, the activities of producing and consuming, and space and time as a whole.

When we understand this context for the Three Characteristics, we can clearly see the half-truths contained in the insights on the production and consumption of change that are commonly misattributed to the Buddha. With regard to production: Although it may be true that, with enough patience and persistence, we can produce just about anything, including an amazing array of self-identities, from the raw material of the present moment, the question is: what's worth producing? We've imprisoned ourselves with our obsession for producing and consuming changeable pleasures and changeable selves, and yet there's the possibility of using change to escape from this prison to the freedom of a happiness transcending time and space. Do we want to take advantage of that possibility, or would we rather spend our spare hours blowing bubbles in the sunlight coming through our prison windows and trying to derive happiness from their swirling patterns before they burst?

This question ties in with wisdom on consumption: Getting the most out of our changing experiences doesn't mean embracing them or milking them of their intensity. Instead it means learning to approach the

pleasures and pains they offer, not as fleeting ends in themselves, but as tools for Awakening. With every moment we're supplied with raw materials—some of them attractive, some of them not. Instead of embracing them in delight or throwing them away in disgust, we can learn how to use them to produce the keys that will unlock our prison doors.

And as for the wisdom of non-attachment to the results of our actions: in the Buddha's context, this notion can make sense only if we care deeply about the results of our actions and want to master the processes of cause and effect that lead to genuine freedom. In other words, we don't demand childishly that our actions—skillful or not—always result in immediate happiness, that everything we stick into the lock will automatically unlatch the door. If what we have done has been unskillful and led to undesirable results, we want to admit our mistakes and find out why they were mistakes so that we can learn how to correct them the next time around. Only when we have the patience to look objectively at the results of our actions will we be able to learn, by studying the keys that don't unlock the doors, how finally to make the right keys that do.

With this attitude we can make the most of the processes of change to develop the skill that releases us from the prison of endless producing and consuming. With release, we plunge into the freedom of a happiness so true that it transcends the terms of the original question that led us there. There's nothing further we have to do; our sense of "my" and "mine" is discarded; and even the "long-term," which implies time, is erased by the timeless. The happiness remaining lies radically beyond the range of our time- and space-bound conceptions of happiness. Totally independent of mind-objects, it's unadulterated and unalterable, unlimited and pure. As the texts tell us, it even lies beyond the range of "totality" and "the All."

And that's what Buddhist practice is all about.

...would we rather  
spend our spare  
hours blowing  
bubbles in the  
sunlight coming  
through our  
prison windows,  
trying to derive  
happiness from  
their swirling  
patterns before  
they burst?

## Insight Meditation

I awoke this morning  
to awareness, to enlightenment,  
to knowledge that the way  
is my way and not,  
that all is changed, unchanging;  
that I am me, but also more  
than me, that time and eternity  
are one, that my life  
is beginning, yet also  
continuing as it was,  
both different and the same;  
that outwardly I am me, but  
inwardly someone else,  
thought my faults and incomplete-  
ness remain.

That I have been through a dark night,  
utterly dark, that my worthlessness  
is both true and not true;  
that I have gifts not mine  
but of me, which I realize  
in giving them away.

That I am an instrument,  
not an initiator, yet beginnings  
depend upon me;  
that death is indeed a gateway  
to life, as well as an ending,  
that we each work out our  
fate, yet depend upon others  
and are dependent; that we must  
turn and turn—a yes, a no,  
a moving forward and a  
retreat, so that the source of  
life lives in us when  
we are faithful to the light,  
to the dark, to eternity  
and time, to now and forever.

*Michael True*



## Accompanied by Snowing

I sit  
watching birds  
just sitting,  
accompanied by snowing.

Quiet expresses itself.  
Plans evaporate.

Not thinking  
I, too, grow still.

Birds sit,  
watching me  
just sitting,  
accompanied by snowing.

*Tish Kilby*

## The Forest Refuge in Winter

The world moves like winter water:  
fast and fearful as southern torrents,  
slow and easy as southwestern creeks,  
hidden as northeastern streamlets  
that start and stop in air pockets  
beneath ice sheets thin as wax paper.

Here in Barre the world sometimes seems  
not to move at all, like ice falls  
frozen in free fall over granite  
boulders. But it does move quietly  
as snow melting from warm pine trunks,  
sure as an awareness stirring from cold  
slumber to ripple pavement stones.

The surface of the reservoir nearby  
is neither water nor ice, but both.  
Last night's snow covers the refuge  
this morning, a white coat that also  
is and is not water. For protection  
yogis go inside to walk and sit and eat  
and sleep behind pillars hand-hewn  
from downed wood varnished for long-  
life,  
behind tool-cut wooden shingles  
that overlap like armadillo plates.

Deeper inside they meditate in the  
presence, the company, of a Buddha.  
Of Thai wood, he too is like winter  
water: frozen and fluid, still  
and still moving. The rock pedestal  
he sits on is now immovable, a halved  
foundation for thought set in concrete  
to bring the outside world in, the inside  
world out. At the rock's core a waking  
heart begins to free itself from dukkha,  
like a fountain of spring waters.

*Jim McCord*

## spring flowers song

sky above—earth below  
gusty wind in between

no anger

*Theikdi*

## a single breath

the infant arrives  
a single breath  
the old one leaves  
a single breath  
everything in between

*Ben Oshel*

## Ephemera

A thin skim of ice on the pond,  
A light dusting of snow,  
A world of delicate things,  
Dissolving into the inseparable.

Creatures, uniquely animated,  
Appearing to abide;  
Still, for all, a single breath  
Connecting Life with Death.

I weep for joy at such exquisite fragility.

*Tish Kilby*



## Slug's Pace

Slowing down my steps,  
Attending to lifting, moving, placing  
Each foot in turn  
On the dirt trail to the woods,  
I note when my attention wanders.  
Pleased with my process,  
Mindful at rubato tempo,  
I spy a long slimy slug,  
Oozing his way across  
A patch of parched brown leaves.

His barely perceptible movements  
Undulate silently.  
Black-horned antennae  
Scan the forest floor ahead.  
Sliding effortlessly,  
He appears almost stationary.  
Like a languidly licking tan tongue,  
The slug mocks my meditative march,  
Trumping me in the race  
To master the slowest pace.

*Ginger Clarkson*

# Teaching Meditation to Children and Beginners

Sumi Loundon



The adults in the Zen commune I grew up in for a time may have been nutty, but they were brilliant in their approaches to teaching the children of the commune about meditation. There was nothing systematic or planned about how kids got lessons in mindfulness. Yet, all of us commune kids by the age of seven could meditate for a half hour, knew Japanese chants, zendo etiquette, and could do a full form from tai chi chuan—and even saw all of it as fun, as a game.

I have organized these informal lessons together into a progression, based on what worked for me as a kid and on what I see works for others. The following series of mindfulness games and exercises is based on the lessons I received. This is still a work in progress, and I welcome any reflections from readers, especially those who work with different age groups, on how to improve it.

In my experience, telling a beginner to “watch the breath” is too abstract. Thus this program moves from the things we immediately perceive with the gross senses, such as hearing, touching and tasting towards more subtle things, like the breath. This sets a foundation for moving from awareness of the breath to awareness of the more ephemeral emotional and thought processes. The following activities are done in a group (size doesn’t matter). This version is written for a 11-13 year old public school audience, so I’ve kept the language simple and without reference to the Buddhist meditative traditions from which the exercises are drawn.

## MINDFULNESS OF HEARING: “HOW MANY SOUNDS” CONTEST

I. Okay, everyone, close your eyes and for one minute listen for as many sounds as you can. [Minute passes.] Open your eyes. Without talking, write down everything you heard. Who got more than ten sounds? More than twenty? [Person with the largest list reads theirs aloud.]

II. Let’s do it again. Close your eyes, and for one minute, listen for as many sounds as you can. [Minute passes.] Open your eyes. Again, write down everything you heard. How many of you have a second list that’s longer than the first one? [Everyone will.] Would someone like to read their list?

III. Lesson: Wonderful. Mindfulness is like a muscle: the more you exercise it, the stronger it gets. You managed to improve your ability to perceive sounds in just ONE minute. Isn’t that amazing?! And, you know, this attention muscle is the same muscle that does the heavy lifting of studying, figuring out math problems, writing an English paper, and so on. So, if you practice meditation regularly, you’ll find you can sustain your attention during studying for longer periods and with higher quality.

## MINDFULNESS OF TASTING: RAISIN MEDITATION

Give everyone two raisins. I use golden raisins just to make it a little more exotic. A bowl with the raisins can be used, supplying a spoon so that too many grubby fingers doesn’t get into the bowl.

I. We’ve just brought out attention to our ears, so now we’re going to bring it to our mouths. I’d like you to chew one of the raisins as slowly as possible, for at least three minutes. Okay, let’s start—don’t put the raisin in your mouth just yet! Take one raisin in your fingers slowly. Look at it carefully, the color, the way the light hits the folds. Feel the pressure of your fingers against the sticky skin. Close your eyes, and very slowly bring the raisin into your mouth and begin to chew and experience it there.

*Generally, students will take about four minutes with the raisin. You can get a sense of when to stop by looking at how many are still moving their jaws.*

Okay, go ahead and swallow the raisin if you haven’t already. So, what kinds of experiences did you have with the raisin? [Depending on group size, you can go around in a circle, or you can have kids raise their hands.]

By the way, guess how long you guys chewed that raisin for? One minute? Two? Nope! You chewed it for FOUR minutes! *The kids will be amazed.*

II. Let’s do it again. This time, what I want you to do is to think of your mind as a microscope and I want you to see how strong your microscope can magnify your

experience of eating the raisin. While you're chewing this raisin, try to get down to the smallest particle of sensation. I want you to be like a scientist, looking for the tiniest atom of raisin-chewing experience.

Take the second raisin in your fingers, again looking at the color, the texture. Bring your awareness to your mouth: can you feel your mouth preparing itself for the sweetness? I just felt my mouth water. Close your eyes and bring the raisin to your mouth.

*Generally, the students eat the raisin more quickly the second time, but this will still take several minutes.*

Okay, go ahead and swallow the raisin if you haven't already. Would anyone like to share what their tiniest atom of raisin-experience was?

III. Lesson: Isn't it amazing that something as simple as chewing one single raisin can open up an entire world of sensation? I'd like you to remember the last time you had, say, a scoop of your favorite ice-cream. Someone tell me what your favorite kind of ice cream is: (chocolate, vanilla, etc.). Great.

So there you are with your scoop of \_\_\_ ice cream, and the first bite, isn't the first bite just so wonderful? It just explodes in your mouth, all that sweetness and cold and melting. But, then, think about the last bite of ice cream. Are you even aware of the ice cream by then?

Somehow, as you dug through the ice cream, your attention got distracted. Maybe you were watching TV or you were talking to someone. The initial burst of sensation of the first spoonful of ice cream has diminished to the point where we're not even aware of the ice cream any more.

Well, this says something about how we experience pleasure. And what happens in bigger things in life is that we have to keep ramping up our pleasurable experiences to get the same high. So the next time we get ice cream, we might get a sundae, and the time after that, we might get an entire banana split with oozing chocolate and M&M's and three scoops of ice cream. I think you've seen adults do this, for example: they might start with a canoe, and then a few years later it's a motor boat, and a few years after that it's an entire yacht.

Well, guess what? If you bring mindfulness to your experience, you can enjoy the last bite of ice cream as much as the first. This way, you can keep your life simple: you

don't need an entire banana split to get the same high off the ice cream if you are totally mindful of the pleasure that one scoop can bring. In fact, I bet you will feel more satisfied, more fulfilled from that one scoop if you eat it totally mindfully, than if you ate the whole banana split thoughtlessly.

So what this means is that mindfulness can help us regulate our consumption, not just with food but with video games, movies, or anything that we often consume for pleasure. It helps us be more healthy and balanced with our intake.

*Note: Invariably, someone in the group will not like raisins, and this can be used as a point about distinguishing between the bare experience of tasting the raisin versus the mental activity of disliking and judging about the raisin.*



#### MINDFULNESS OF MOVEMENT I: PALMS TOGETHER

Have students pair off and sit facing each other. Everyone will need a sheet of paper and writing implement.

In this activity, we're going to bring our mindfulness to movement. One of you is going to do a simple movement and verbally report on all the sensations of that movement. The other person in your pair is going to be the secretary, writing down what you say. The movement we're going to do is to bring our hands from resting on the knees up to a palms-together position in front of our chests. *Teacher should demonstrate and verbalize: I feel the warmth of my palms on my knees ("the secretary can write down "warmth of palms on knees"). Now I feel my biceps contracting. I feel the cool air under my palms as I lift them in the air. .... I feel my fingers coming together.... Move very slowly so that you can feel as many sensations as possible.*

*Activity usually takes 10 minutes.* Who would like to read the movement journal of their partner? *Someone reads.* Would anyone else like to share? Okay, let's switch roles. The other person is the secretary and you can be the person doing the movement. *Have the sharing again.*



MINDFULNESS OF MOVEMENT II:  
WALKING MEDITATION

Have the students line up after you, the teacher, and walk around the room, very slowly, in a circle. With shoes off, students can feel the floor and their feet more sensitively. Teacher guides by asking questions throughout: "what part of the foot leaves the floor last? What part of the foot comes to the floor first? Can you feel your toes spreading as you put more weight on the foot?" 8-10 minute activity.

*BREAK Students will need to stretch out, chat, release some energy. Good time to have lunch. Some will naturally do a mindfulness of eating at lunch.*

MINDFULNESS OF BODY: FULL RELAXATION  
AND DE-STRESSING

Welcome back, everyone. So we brought our attention to sound, then to taste, and then into the motion of our hands coming together. Now we're going to bring our attention into our bodies and consciously relax each part of the body, releasing any built up stress and tension. Our minds are not separate from our bodies: when our mind is tense and full of racing thoughts, our bodies become tense and stressed out. Likewise, when we relax the body, that sends a message to the mind to relax, to slow down. As your body relaxes, you'll find that your mind softens and relaxes, too. So, everyone find a spot on the floor and lay down on your backs. No need to engage with your friends at this point, no need to talk to anyone. Please respect each other by not touching or poking. Lay down with your legs and arms flat on the floor.

The palms of your hands are facing upwards towards the ceiling. Let the feet fall away to the sides, letting your entire body just fall into the floor. Close your eyes and mouth and bring your attention into your body. Feel the contact of your body with the floor, the hardness, the coldness, the warmth, whatever you feel.

*Depending on how much time you have, you can do large chunks of the body or small parts, i.e. the entire foot versus the toes, the foot, the ankle.*

Bring your attention to your feet and consciously relax all the muscles. Let the feet fall to the sides without any effort. Completely letting go of any strain, feeling the muscles become soft and relaxed. Now feel the muscles in your calves, letting go of any tightness or strain, allowing the muscles to become soft and relaxed. Allow your entire head to just fall into the floor, very heavy, very soft, melting into the floor *teacher's voice should soften, become rhythmic in instruction.*

*There are actually a variety of relaxation methods. One is a way of autosuggestion: "My feet are relaxing, my feet aaarree relaxing, my feet are relaxed." If you are familiar with a technique from yoga classes, just use that. Anything will work!*

*Move to knees, thighs, bottom, pelvis, back, abdomen, chest, down one arm to the hand and then down the other, the shoulders, neck, back of the head, area around the mouth, cheeks, area around the eyes, top of the head, the whole head. Minimum 15 minutes of full relaxation.*

Now let your awareness spread throughout your entire body, allowing everything to completely relax, heavy, soft, falling into the floor.

*Be silent for a few more minutes, letting the children be in their bodies. Most will fall asleep, which is fine.*

Now, let's re-awaken our bodies by gently moving the fingers. No need to talk or interact with your friends, just stay inside yourself. Gently wiggling the toes. Move your head slowly from side to side. Now slowly roll over onto your left side. Take a rest there, just feeling how calm and relaxed you feel. Now slowly push yourself up into a sitting position. Please respect others by not interacting with them, just stay inside yourself. *For those who've fallen asleep, have an assistant teacher gently wake them up.*

And now come into a sitting position, close your eyes, and feel your whole body, how relaxed it is.

*Teacher should keep voice soft, be very still, sitting in similar position to model for children. Move right into next activity.*





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## MINDFULNESS OF BREATH

Feel your body, feel your bottom touching the floor, your ankles touch the floor and your calf. Feel your hands on your knees. Let your awareness be in your entire body, just moving from sensation to sensation. *Do this for a few minutes.*

And now bring your awareness into your abdomen area, feeling it move as you breathe. ...

Moving your awareness into your chest, feeling it rise and fall as you breathe. No need to control the breath. Just let it come and go as it will. Sometimes the breath will be long, sometimes short, sometimes deep, sometimes shallow. Just let it be and watch....

Moving your awareness to the back of the throat, feeling the air pass there, very soft and gentle.....

Moving your awareness to the back of the nose area, feeling the air passing in and out, warm and cool, in and out....

Moving your awareness to just inside the nostrils, feeling the air there passing in and out, warm and cool....

Moving your awareness to the tip of your nose, feeling whatever sensations are there. Your mind is alike a microscope, zooming in on the smallest of sensations, finding the atom of sensation....

Now watch your whole breath, letting your attention go to wherever in the breath it wants, the nose, the throat, the chest, the abdomen, just letting the attention be with the breath, very soft, very gentle, very light, very quiet....

*Most of the children will be completely absorbed in this for at least five to ten minutes. Some of the children will naturally break their attention and begin looking around. To let the ones really absorbed be with that as long as possible, be patient and try to make the time go as long as possible, perhaps ten minutes. For those with their eyes open, you can just smile at them and indicate they should keep silent (finger to lips sign) which will reassure them that they're not in trouble but should respect the others. When a critical mass of children have broken their concentration, close the meditation, as follows:*

Keeping the eyes closed, bring your attention to the palms of your hands, feeling

them there. Slowly lift them and feel the movement as you bring your palms together in front of your chest, feeling all the sensations like we did before. And now bring your hands back to your knees. Open your eyes to look just in front of you. Take a nice big breath. And now open your eyes all the way.

*Give the students a big smile and look around the room. Teacher should stay quiet and relaxed, matching the energy of the room.*

Good job everyone. Guess how many minutes you watched your breath for? Two? Three? Nope! You did that for TEN whole minutes!!!

## NOTES FOR TEACHING

For true beginners, I found that the more the teacher demonstrates, the better the results. For example, when demonstrating the mindfulness of palms coming together activity, the kinds of experiences you note will be a model for the students:

Warmth of palms on the knees

Contraction of biceps

Cool air under the palms

Inevitably, these will be the things that the students list when they do it. But, if you are more detailed in your noting, that leads them to be more creatively detailed in theirs:

As my fingers separate, feeling the moisture between them cool off

The twitching of my left fourth finger

A ripple of muscle contraction in my shoulder

Still, students will need more encouragement to find their own experiences, see if they can come up with something unique that you haven't said.

On the last teaching session, I tried making things more of a race to see who could do it the slowest (the kids seem to get the joke). "Let's see who can move their hands the slowest...."

Variations of this series have worked successfully with teens in Malaysia, children in Singapore, young adults from Korea, university students, and most recently, seventh and eighth graders in rural Massachusetts.

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MINDFULNESS FOR EQUANIMITY AND  
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: SHORT TALK

Good work, everyone. We've gone from tuning our attention to sounds, to tasting, to feeling movement, to our entire body, and then to the breath. Now I bet you've never thought about this, but breathing is a very special part of our being. Here's why. As you know, with our bodies there are things we can control and things we can't control. For example, we can control moving our fingers but we can't control our heart beating. The heart will beat by itself. But there are a few things in our body that are both automatic and to some extent in our control. Think about blinking, for example. You blink without even thinking about it. Somehow your body is set on automatic to blink regularly to keep your eyeballs moist. But you can also control your blinking. If I say, "blink five times fast" you can do it, right? Breathing is like blinking: we breathe most of the time without even thinking about it. And at the same time, if I tell you, "Take a deep breath in" you can do it consciously.

In this way, the breath can be a link between our body and our mind. In fact, our breathing often reflects our state of mind. When you are afraid, your breathing becomes short and tight, and resides in the chest area. When you get surprised, you will take a quick, sharp breath into your throat area. But, get this: you can use your breath to control your state of mind. Let's do an experiment. I'd like everyone to put one hand on the belly and one hand on the chest. Now take a slow breath in, first letting the belly-hand rise and then draw air up into the chest, letting your chest-hand rise. Good. Now slowly breath out, letting the chest-hand fall and then letting your belly-hand fall. Notice what your mind feels like: calm, relaxed, unworried. That's why when kids get mad a teacher might say, "Slow down, I want you to take three deep breaths." It really works: three deep breaths calms our mind down.

And this is one reason that in meditation we use the breath as an anchor for our attention. We can place our attention on anything: on sound, on the taste of a raisin, on the body. But paying attention to the breath has an incredibly deep affect on the mind, giving it calmness and clarity.

Now there's one more leap from the breath that our attention can take and that is that our attention can become mindful of our very own mental states, emotions, and thoughts. If we practice watching our breath, over time, our attention becomes really strong. Remember how in the second minute of listening for sounds you heard more sounds? Was it because suddenly there were more sounds to be heard? No. It's because your attention got stronger and so you perceived more sounds. In the same way, with a strong mindfulness muscle, we become more perceptive about our own thoughts and emotions.

MINDFULNESS IN EVERYDAY LIFE:  
HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

Mindfulness is a tool that you can carry with you everywhere. It's not heavy. It's inexpensive. And you can use it in almost every situation. Let's say you're in the car, waiting for your mom or dad as they put gas in the car. What do most of you do? Take out a cell phone and make a call, or perhaps send a little message to a friend? Maybe you turn on the radio and fiddle around with it? Basically, most of us will do anything except for sit there and be quiet, being present with our immediate environment. We crave stimulation and hate boredom. But here is a perfect opportunity to try something different. While you're waiting for your mom or dad to fill up the tank, close your eyes and play a game of discovering how many sounds you can hear. Can you hear the gurgle of the gas going into the car? The beeping of the machine when the credit card is approved. The receipt being printed.

So, here's your homework: find one regular activity or moment and use that moment to be fully mindful of what's going on. Maybe it's waiting for someone to fill the car up with gas. Or maybe it's putting on your socks. You can put on your socks with total attention to the feeling of cloth against your skin, the pressure, your fingers, your toenails scraping the inside, and so on. For me, I often practice mindfulness of shampooing my hair and brushing my teeth. So that's your homework, and I promise it won't be graded.

A WORD  
ABOUT DISCIPLINE

*A very important point regarding discipline: if a student is out of line, giggly or slouchy or keeps their eyes open a lot, that's OKAY. In my experience so far, because of the nature of these activities, scolding or sternness is not appropriate.*

*Students open their eyes because they're uncomfortable. In that case, just smiling at them and then signaling to close the eyes gives them enough reassurance that they're safe with you. Or, I found just placing my hand on their shoulder helps them calm their body down.*

We'll end with one last short activity. I'd like you to think about something you own that you really care about. Maybe it's your favorite pair of pants, or a baseball mitt, or a book you've read many times. Now if I were to ask you to describe that thing to me, you'd be able to tell me every single last detail about it, right? For example, these pants I'm wearing. These are my favorite pair. I can tell you about the small threads here where a dog put his paws and ripped it a little. There's a thread at the bottom coming loose. These pants are 1% lycra, so I can't put them in the dryer. I know that if I wear them three times without washing the knees get slightly out of shape, but if I iron them again the knees will come back properly. The tiny little pen mark that I can't seem to wash out.

The point is that the things we love and care about we pay attention to. And very often, the things we pay attention to we come to love. For example, in my grandmother's house there's a painting that I used to think was pretty ugly. Well, I've had to pass that painting by for about the last ten years and because I've seen it so much, I actually have a little bit of affection for that painting. I once read about a famous artist in the Middle Ages who trained his art students by having them draw a decaying fish for three days. You should see these drawings: they are absolutely amazing. Disgusting, but amazing. One of the artists wrote in his journal that although he was at first repulsed by the decaying fish, after drawing it for three days, he came to see that it was beautiful. And that was without refrigeration! So love and attention are two sides to the same coin.

This morning, we've done a lot with our attention, learning about it, making it stronger. Now we'll close with just a little bit of love, the other side of the coin. Close your eyes and bring your attention inside yourself. Settling in to a comfortable, relaxed position. It's okay to lie down if you prefer. Just make yourselves very comfortable.

We're going to repeat three phrases silently in our minds:

- May I be happy.
- May I be peaceful.
- May I be free from harm.

*Teacher repeats these three phrases at least 3-4 times. It is helpful to add some guidance such as:*

- "I truly and sincerely wish: May I be happy...."
- "With all my heart, I wish: May I be happy..."
- "With all my good intentions, I hope that: May I be happy..."
- "Remembering that I am a good person, full of kindness, intelligence, humor, generosity, I wish for myself: May I be happy..."

Now, without opening your eyes, think of the person to your right. "Person to my right, whether I know you well or whether I know you only a little, I truly and sincerely wish for you, "May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be free from harm. Just as I wish for myself these things, I wish for you...."May you be..." *Do 3-4 times.*

Now, without opening your eyes, think of the person to your left: "Person to my left, whether I know you well ..." *Do 3-4 times.*

Now thinking of our teachers here with us today, with all the care and attention they give us, "Dear teacher, I wish for you...."

Thinking of all our classmates here in this room....phrase can change to "May WE ALL be happy...."

Finally, let's think about the whole school. Everyone here having joys and sorrows, challenges and successes. The children who come here, the dedicated and kind teachers, the people who make our food and feed us, the janitors who clean the hallways and shoveled the snow today, the secretaries, the administrators, everyone in our whole school, who are all good people, let us wish for everyone, "May we all be happy...."

*When finished, let there be some silence.*

Okay, open your eyes and come into a sitting position. Wonderful, very good everyone.

*And then the teacher can close with:*

You have been such a great group to work with. Thank you for your wholehearted effort. I truly wish for each of you here, "May you be happy..." *something of a final word from the teacher, giving lovingkindness to the children.*



**Like a college, but not a college.**

Much of our program involves reading, lecture and discussion, and credit is often available for undergraduates of other colleges or for professional continuing education (CEU). However, we also place great value on the practice of meditation as an important tool for Buddhist Studies, for investigating experience, and for understanding the dhamma.



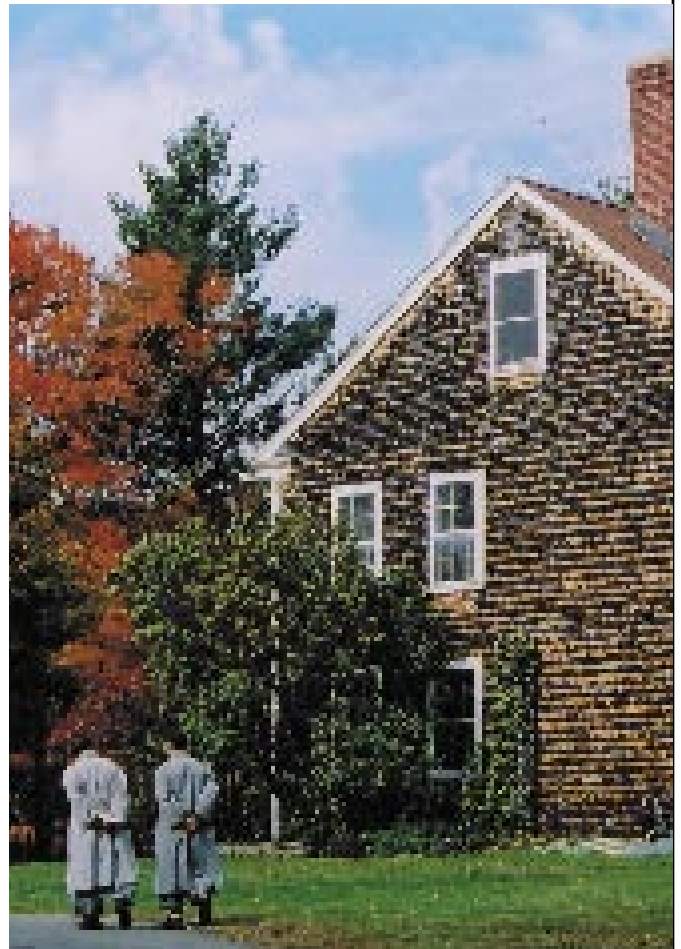
**Like a retreat center, but not a retreat center.**

All of our courses include some meditation, and some are based upon extensive periods of silent sitting and walking meditation. Yet even our silent retreats involve some degree of reading primary Buddhist texts and discussion of their meaning among students and teachers.



**Like a monastery, but not a monastery.**

BCBS is rooted in a deep respect for the classical Buddhist tradition, including all three vehicles, while at the same time valuing the critical spirit and the give and take of rigorous investigation. Our programs are primarily directed towards laypeople, who may be studying the Buddhist tradition in a secular context and as householders committed to a full range of community responsibilities and duties.





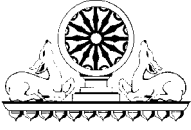
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| May 1        | (Saturday)      | <i>Sylvia Forges-Ryan &amp; Ed Ryan</i>                   | Ripples in a Pond: Haiku and Meditation                   |
| May 2        | (Sunday)        | <i>Doug Phillips</i>                                      | Family Dharma: Practice in a Family Context               |
| May 8        | (Saturday)      | <i>Lama John Makransky</i>                                | Giving Tantric Expressions to Buddhist Attitudes          |
| May 9-14     | (5 days)        | <i>Andrew Olendzki. et. al.</i>                           | Essentials of Buddhist Psychology                         |
| May 15-22    | (7 days)        | <i>Andrew Olendzki<br/>&amp; Gloria Taraniya Ambrosia</i> | Bhavana Program: Empty of Self                            |
| May 28-30    | (Weekend)       | <i>Mu Soeng</i>   | The Ox-Herding Pictures                                   |
| Jun 6-11     | (5 days)        | <i>Mu Soeng</i>   | Emptiness: Still Point of the Turning World               |
| Jun 13-18    | (5 days)        | <i>Andrew Olendzki</i>                                    | Abhidhamma: Classical Buddhist Psychology                 |
| Jun 26       | (Saturday)      | <i>Lee Robbins &amp; Mu Soeng</i>                         | Karma & Archetype: Jungian & Buddhist Perspectives        |
| Jul 16-18    | (Weekend)       | <i>Taitetsu Unno &amp; Mark Unno</i>                      | Shin Buddhism   |
| Jul 22-25    | (3 days)        | <i>Bill &amp; Susan Morgan &amp; Ron Siegel</i>           | Meditation for Psychotherapists                           |
| Aug 7        | (Saturday)      | <i>Trudy Goodman</i>                                      | The Dharma of Being with Children                         |
| Aug 27-30    | (3 days)        | <i>Sumi Loundon &amp; Chas DiCapua</i>                    | Dharma for Young Adults (ages 18 to 24)                   |
| Sep 4        | (Saturday)      | <i>Joseph Goldstein</i>                                   | Rest Your Weary Mind: Letting Go of Hindrances            |
| Sep 12-17    | (5 days)        | <i>Martine &amp; Stephen Batchelor</i>                    | The Path to the Deathless                                 |
| Sep 18-22    | (4 days)        | <i>Steve Armstrong &amp; Kamala Masters</i>               | The Theory and Practice of Freedom                        |
| Sep 24-26    | (Weekend)       | <i>Mark Hart</i>  | The Medicine of Dhamma in Times of Illness                |
| Oct 1-6      | (5 days)        | <i>Daeja Napier</i>                                       | The Four Brahma Viharas                                   |
| Oct 9        | (Saturday)      | <i>Narayan &amp; Michael<br/>Liebenson-Grady</i>          | Mindfulness in Relationship                               |
| Oct 10       | (Sunday)        | <i>Andrew Olendzki</i>                                    | The Metta Sutta   |
| Oct 16-23    | (7 days)        | <i>Gregory Kramer</i>                                     | Insight Dialogue  |
| Oct 29-31    | (Weekend)       | <i>Chip Hartranft &amp; Andrew Olendzki</i>               | Patanjali & Buddha: Awakening to The Yoga Sutras          |
| Nov 6        | (Saturday)      | <i>Mu Soeng</i>   | Heart Sutra: Form as Emptiness, Emptiness as Form         |
| Nov 7        | (Sunday 1-5 pm) | <i>Sharon Salzberg</i>                                    | The Power of a Loving Heart: Metta Meditation             |
| Nov 19-21    | (Weekend)       | <i>Christina Feldman</i>                                  | Fear, Contraction and Release                             |
| Nov 28-Dec 3 | (5 days)        | <i>Andrew Oldenzki. et. al.</i>                           | Essentials of Buddhist Psychology                         |
| Dec 4-11     | (7 days)        | <i>Andrew Olendzki &amp;<br/>Gloria Taraniya Ambrosia</i> | Bhavana Program: Contentment                              |
| Dec 17-20    | (3 days)        | <i>Sumi Loundon, et. al.</i>                              | Dharma for Young Adults (ages 18 to 24)                   |
| Jan 7-9      | (Weekend)       | <i>Andrew Olendzki &amp;<br/>Rajesh Kasturirangan</i>     | Cognitive Science & The Buddhist<br>Understanding of Mind |
| Jan 14-17    | (3 days)        | <i>Bill &amp; Susan Morgan &amp; Ron Siegel</i>           | Meditation for Psychotherapists                           |





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PALI POETRY

## Crossing the Rohiõi

Kàëudàyin Thera

Theragàthà 527-9

aìgarino dani dumà bhadante  
phalesino chadanaü vippahàya  
te accimanto va pabhàsayanti,  
samayo mahàvāra bhagā rasànaü.

Crimson now, Sir, are the trees of the forest,  
Having shed their foliage, they're eager to fruit,  
(Their flowers are) blazing forth like brilliant flames,  
—It is a luscious time of year, Great Hero.

dumàni phullàni manoramàni  
samantato sabbadisà pavanti  
pattaü pahàya phalam àsasànà;  
kàlo ito pakkamanàya vāra.

The blossoming trees, so pleasing to the mind,  
Spread their fragrance in every direction,  
Surrendering their leaves and longing for fruit;  
—The time has come to depart from here, Hero.

n' evàtisātaü na panàtiuõhaü  
sukhà utu addhaniyà bhadante;  
passantu taü Sàkiyà Koëiyà ca  
pacchàmukhaü Rohiõiyaü tarantaü.

It is neither too cold, nor again too hot,  
The season is pleasant, suited for travel.  
My Lord, let the Sàkyas and Koëiyas see you  
—Facing westward and crossing the Rohiõi.

These verses are said to have been uttered by Udàyin (nick-named Kàla Udàyin or “Dark Udàyin”). He was the son of king Suddhodhana’ chief minister, and is said to have been the childhood companion of prince Siddhartha. Soon after Gotama’s awakening, the king sent several messengers to ask his son to return home. Each one, upon hearing the Buddha’s teaching, apparently joined his movement and gave up the king’s mission. Finally Suddhodhana sends Kaludayin, who agrees on condition that he can become a follower of the Buddha upon getting him to return home for a visit.

The Rohiõi river runs through the heart of the Buddha’s homeland, marking the border between the lands of the Sàkyas and the Koëiyas (his father’s and mother’s families, respectively). Since the verses are uttered in Ràjagaha, well to the southeast, a returning journey would face the traveller westward. One commentary says that Kaludayin went on for sixty stanzas of this beautiful nature poetry before asking the Buddha to return, but we only have the first few of these. The language is rich and evocative of spring sights and smells. It is composed in a meter of eleven syllables per line.

The Buddha does indeed go home soon after his awakening, where he picks up a number of family members to join his order. These include his half brother (Nanda), several cousins (Ananda, Anuruddha, and Devadatta), and his son (Ràhula). Eventually his wife (Yosodharà), step-mother (Mahàpajàpatā) and many other Sàkyas will also become nuns and monks.