

Satipaṭṭhāna Online Course

Audio meditation transcription

Guided Meditation – 7 Awakening

We are aware of the body in the sitting posture, and we let the mind rest on the body just as the body rests on the cushion. And without losing this embodied presence of mindfulness, we will now proceed through all seven spokes in the wheel of *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation: three body contemplations, contemplations of feeling and mind, and two contemplations of dharmas – the hindrances and the awakening factors.

But before that we take a moment to formulate our intention.

And having formulated our intention, we start with the anatomical parts:

Skin:

From the head, moving... down... to... the... feet.

Flesh:

From the feet, moving... up... to... the... head.

Bones:

From the head, moving... down... to... the... feet.

And we are aware of this body in the sitting posture, as made up of skin, flesh, and bones - cultivating an attitude of non-attachment.

And the elements:

Earth element:

From the head, moving... down... to... the... feet.

Water element:

From the feet, moving... up... to... the... head.

Fire element:

From the head, moving... down... to... the... feet.

And wind element:

From the feet, moving... up... to... the... head.

And we are aware of this body in the sitting posture, as pervaded by these four elements – with an understanding of their empty nature.

And we connect with the breath as that which connects us to life. And we may bring to mind the image of a skeleton as a reminder of the ultimate destiny of this body – of its fate to fall apart. And with every inhalation, we are aware – this could be my last breath. I cannot be sure. And even if it is not my last breath, it is certainly one breath closer to death. And with every exhalation, we relax and let go, relax and let go.

Feelings:

Pleasant feelings:

From the head, moving... down... to... the... feet.

Unpleasant or painful feelings:

From the feet, moving... up... to... the... head.

And neutral feelings:

From the head, moving... down... to... the... feet.

And we are aware of this body in the sitting posture, of any feeling manifesting in or on this body - of the pleasant type, of the unpleasant type, or of the neutral type.

And from having contemplated bodily feelings, we open up the vista of our awareness to include any feelings, even those that are predominately manifesting on the mental level, without a clearly discernable bodily component. Just noting the hedonic quality, the affective tone of our experience. Pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.

And the mind: that which knows feelings, knows the breath, knows the body. And due to the practice we have been doing so far, this is a state of mind in which mindfulness is established. And we take time to savor, flavor, distinctly experience the characteristic of our mind when mindfulness is present. Familiarizing ourselves with this beneficial condition of our mind, so that we can easily recognize – recognize when mindfulness is there, and recognize when mindfulness is about to be lost. And as we keep observing the mind, at times with defilements, at times without defilements - we also keep noticing, changing mind. Mind keeps changing all the time.

And often enough, it keeps doing what we do not really want it to do. It goes to places where we really do not want to be. We are not in control, even in our own mind. And the same goes for body and feelings. Body, feeling, mind – impermanent phenomena. And what is impermanent

cannot yield lasting satisfaction. It is *dukkha*. Body, feeling, mind – *dukkha*. Ultimately unsatisfactory. And what is impermanent, *dukkha*, of a nature to change, cannot be the self. Body, feeling, mind: empty phenomena. Empty of a self.

And we proceed to checking in for the hindrances. Let me see if any of these five hindrances is now manifesting on the surface level of the mind. Any sensual desire, anger, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, doubt. And if we find that any of these hindrances is manifesting, we explore their conditionality. Understanding the causes that led to the arising of the hindrance, and the causes and conditions that help us to emerge from it, and to prevent its recurrence.

And sooner or later the time comes, no hindrance is right now present in the mind. Although the roots of unwholesomeness are still present, on the surface level of the mind, right now no hindrance manifests. And we rejoice. Such a beautiful mind. Crystal clear, like clean water. Not colored by sensuality; not boiling in anger; not overgrown by the algae of sloth and torpor; not tossed around by the winds of restlessness and worry; not muddied and darkened by doubt. Crystal clear quality of the mind. What a relief. As if having paid off a debt; having recovered from a disease; having been released from prison and slavery; having safely completed a dangerous journey. What a relief. And we rejoice.

And with that joy present in our mind, we continue onwards to the cultivation of the awakening factors. This wholesome joy: How did it happen? What caused it to arise? We were practicing *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation, establishing mindfulness. And based on mindfulness established, we investigated – closely investigating this mind to see if any hindrance was there. And this was a sustained investigation. We had perseverance. We had energy. And then we aroused joy, joy on finding that the mind was temporarily free from the hindrances. And this wholesome type of joy leads on naturally to tranquility of the mind. To the mind becoming concentrated, collected. And becoming balanced, equipoise. These are the seven factors of awakening. They may be just tiny little buds, but however small or tiny they may be, every bud can grow into a flower. And anyone who has these awakening factors in the mind is capable of awakening. We are capable of flowering into awakening if we keep cultivating these qualities. Mindfulness, investigation, energy, joy, tranquility, concentration, and equipoise, *upekkhā*.

And having aroused these seven awakening factors based on the joy of seeing the mind free from the hindrances, we continue in the company of these awakening factors to move on into

our open practice. Open awareness at any of the six sense doors. Whatever manifests, we are aware of it. And at the same time, aware of the condition of our own mind – of balancing these awakening factors. Mindfulness serves throughout as the foundation. Whenever the mind becomes slightly sluggish, we give more emphasis to the three energizing awakening factors: investigation, energy, joy. And whenever the mind becomes slightly agitated, we give more importance to the three calming awakening factors: tranquility, concentration, equipoise. In this way we maintain the awakening factors' balance. And we keep cultivating them by the very fact of our practice. Cultivating these jewels of the mind. Nurturing these tiny buds so that one day our mind will flower into awakening.

And with open awareness of anything that happens at any of the six sense doors, we keep noticing impermanence. Changing phenomena. Arising and passing away, arising and passing away. And as we keep cultivating these seven awakening factors, in a mind that is secluded, secluded from the hindrances, we cultivate the response in the mind to impermanence – dispassion. Allowing the flow of impermanence to wash away our passion, wash away our attachments, wash away our clingings. What passion for things that are anyway changing? What clinging? What attachment? Dispassion. *Virāga*.

And the more we become dispassionate, the easier it is for us to be at ease with the ending of things. We keep noting in particular, the disappearance aspect of phenomena – their passing away, their ending, their ceasing. Cessation. Noting the ending of impermanent things. Whatever comes up at any of the six sense doors, giving particular emphasis and importance to its disappearing, passing away, and ceasing. And the clearer we see the inevitable passing away of things, the more we come to be at peace. *Nirodha* is peaceful. Then based on seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, we let go. Letting go. Letting go of what is outside. Letting go of what is inside. Letting go of all our attachments and clingings, our sense of identity and appropriation as “I”, “me” and “mine”. And eventually, letting go of all that is conditioned. Inclining the mind towards the unconditioned, the supreme peace, the supreme happiness, the supreme release from all that is conditioned. Letting go into *Nibbāna*.

Keep practicing like this.