

ABHIDHAMMA

The Discourse to Gods



**May the World be
Enlightened**

A Gift of Dhamma

Why this Discourse was delivered to Gods

Introduction:

This discourse, **Abhidhamma**, was the discourse given to the Gods in **Tavatimsa** heaven at the assembly of Gods presided over by his former mother **Mahamaya** reborn in Deva world as a male Deva by the name of **Matu Deva Putta**. It was in grateful gratitude to his former mother that he delivered this discourse, Abhidhamma, the higher teaching, in the course of three human months, the entire Lent. It is only proper for the readers to know that Buddha delivered this discourse to Gods in Tavatimsa heaven...

We need to understand why Buddha went to Tavatimsa heaven to deliver this discourse, the higher teaching, Abhidhamma. It was only proper for Buddha to repay his former mother in grateful gratitude with this higher teaching. When Bodhisatta ascetic Gotama was practicing the self-mortification, **Matu Deva Putta**, had appeared before Him and encouraged Him to persevere when he had fainted, weak from the practice of self-mortification. The Ascetic Gotama had practiced self-mortification to its fullest degree and reduced His meals to just one mustard seed a day. His flesh and muscle had withered and His skin had clung to His protruding bones. Weak with hunger, the Bodhisatta had fainted shortly. His former mother had appeared before Him and encouraged Him in His Noble Quest.

The role of the mother of the Buddha is a sacred role that requires great effort. **Queen Maha Maya** aspired to be a mother of a Buddha one hundred thousand world cycles ago at the time of the **Padumuttara Buddha**, the fifteenth Buddha preceding our Gotama Buddha. She then performed meritorious deeds and kept the precepts for one hundred thousand world cycles to fulfill her aspiration.

After his enlightenment, on the seventh year of His enlightenment, the Buddha went to Tavatimsa Heaven to preach the Abhidhamma (Higher teaching) to His deva mother and to observe the Vassana (**Rains Retreat**) for three months there. Many celestials, including a very large retinue headed by His deva mother, greatly benefited by attaining the various stages of Sainthood including Sotapanna (stream-winner), Sekadagami (Once-returner), Anagami. (Non-returner).

After His Abhidhamma lectures, the Buddha descended back to the human world at lake Anottata in the Himalaya Mountain, where the Venerable Sariputta waited to receive the daily briefing of His lectures. **Later the Venerable Sariputta would expound the same doctrine to his disciples, thereby spreading the Abhidhamma teaching of the Buddha in the human world. Thus how we come to learn the Abhidhamma, the higher teaching.**

Abhidhamma Day

The Lord Buddha spent his seventh Lent, the rain retreat at Tavatimsa heaven. For the entire lent, he delivered the higher teaching, Abhidhamma, to Gods for the benefit of Gods and men. At Tavatimsa heaven (The heaven of the thirty three), sitting on the brown emerald slab, "**Pandukambala**" the throne of Sakka, King of devas, he expounded the seven sections of Abhidhamma to his mother **Santussita deva (Matu Deva Putta.)** in the assembly of devas and Brahmas. The preaching of the Abhidhamma took the entire lent and ends in the full moon day of **Thadingyut - light festival**. In commemoration of this event, Buddhists all over the world celebrate this day as Abhidhamma day. At the end of the Lent, in the month of Thadingyut (October), our Lord Buddha descended from Tavatimsa heaven back to the human world. Buddhists commemorate this day as Abhidhamma day and Light festival held annually to emulate the scene of the Buddha return from Tavatimsa heaven.

The Thadingyut Light Festival

Buddhists commemorate the day of his return to the human world, as Abhidhamma day. To emulate the miraculous scene, an annual light festival is held in all Theravada countries. In Myanmar, the light festival is known as Thadingyut light festival. On his return to the human world, the **King of the Devas, Sakka**, created three stairways:

1. *one of gold on the right side for the devas,*
2. *one of silver on the left side for the Brahmas and*
3. *one in the middle of rubies for the Lord Buddha.*

Many deities accompanied the Lord Buddha. They held several celestial regalia.

- *Panca Thinkha deva on the right played the “Veluva” harp in praise of the Lord Buddha.*
- *Matali deva on the left carried flowers and fragrance to honor the Lord Buddha.*
- *Suyama deva carried the yak tail fly whisk,*
- *Santussita deva held the ruby-studded gold fan and*
- *Sakka deva blew the “Vizayuttara” Conch Shell to celebrate the occasion.*

All deities from the entire Universe gathered to pay homage to the Lord Buddha. The three stairways thus illuminated by the radiance from the Devas’ body lead the way to the gateway of the City of Sakassa on earth. When the Lord Buddha set foot upon the earth, the crowd that awaited at the city gate all paid obeisance to the Lord Buddha and a grand ceremony was held to welcome the blessed one. **The Buddha with his miraculous power opens the sight for the human to see the grandeur of the accompanying Devas and Brahmas.**

Thadingyut Light Festival

To commemorate this great event in the life of the Lord Buddha, which took place on the Full moon day of Thadingyut the Myanmar hold “**Tawedeintha**” (Tavatimsa) festival or “Myint Mo Festival” because Tavatimsa is said to be on the summit of Mt. Myint Mo (Mt-Meru)? In Myanmar, replicas of Myint Mo are constructed to represent the three stairways and candlelight lamps are lit in the Thadingyut festivals replicating the Lord Buddha descend from Tavatimsa heaven to the human world on this day of Thadingyut. Many made their offerings to shrines and pagodas and alms are given to the monks. Hymns are sung in praise of the Buddha and his teaching, the Dhamma.

Devotional Homage –Puja

Laymen to worship or making devotional offering perform the Puja. In Buddhism there are **five infinite debts of gratitude** –

1. *the gratitude owed to the Buddha,*
2. *the gratitude owed to the his teachings i.e. the Dhamma,*
3. *the gratitude owed to the Sangha (the assembly of monks)*
4. *the gratitude owed to the parents and*
5. *the gratitude owed to the teachers.*

It is a religious obligation to worship and make **devotional offerings to Buddha, Dhamma, Samghas**, the **parents, teachers and the elders**... In addition those who are senior in age, rank, and position and those who have helped you while you are in difficulty should be respected, worshipped and given due puja.

I will now present to you the very well written book on Abhidhamma translated by Prof. Mehm Tin Mon.

A

BUDDHA ABHIDHAMMA

THE ULTIMATE SCIENCE

by

Dr. Mehm Tin Mon

B.Sc.Hons. (Ygn), M.S., Ph.D. (U of Illinois)

Professor of Chemistry (Rtd.)

Professor of Samatha Meditation

International Theravàda Buddha Missionary University, Yangon

Adviser to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Union of Myanmar

A Gift of Dhamma

Chapter 9

KAMMATTHANA

Meditation Subjects

Introductory

In ‘*kammatthàna*’, ‘*kamma*’ means the act of meditation and ‘*thàna*’ means station, ground or place, implying subject or exercise. So ‘*kammatthàna*’ means ‘working-ground’ (for meditation) or ‘subject of meditation’. This ‘working ground’ or ‘subject of meditation’ will serve as the training ground or the training tool for mental culture. There are two aspects of mental culture – one dealing with ‘calm’ and the other with ‘insight’. Both aspects will be treated in the present chapter.

The methods of mental training, i.e. meditation, as taught by Buddha are unique in that they can stop worry, relax mental tension, eradicate mental depression, offer instant peace or mind, and lead to *samàdhi* (concentration), *jhàna* (ecstatic absorption), *vipassanà-nàna* (insight), and the four paths and their fruits (*maggas* and *phalas*) which are the highest and noblest attainment in life.

This chapter will give a brief authentic and fruitful account of *samatha-bhàvanà* (calm-meditation) and *vipassanàbhàvanà* (insight-meditation).

Bhàvanà (Meditation)

‘*Bhàvanà*’ is generally rather vaguely translated as ‘meditation’. It is a ‘mental development’. The process of mental culture that produces so much good effect that it should be developed repeatedly in one’s mind. There are two kinds of *bhàvanà*:

- 1 *Samatha-bhàvanà* – development of tranquility, and
- 2 *Vipassanà-bhàvanà* – development of insight.

Samatha-bhàvanà

‘*Samatha*’ means ‘tranquility’, which is the concentrated, unshaken, undefiled and peaceful state of mind. It is called ‘calm’ because it calms down the five hindrances (*nivàranas*) including passions. In essence, ‘*samatha*’ stands for the *ekaggatà-cetasika* (*samàdhi*) present in *lokiya-kusala cittas* or *lokiya-kiriya cittas*. It refers to that *samàdhi* (concentration) which can calm down the five hindrances and to the higher *jhàna-samàdhi*, which can calm down the lower *jhàna* factors viz., *vitakka*, *vicàra*, *pāti* and *sukha*.

Vipassanà-bhàvanà

‘*Vipassanà*’ means ‘insight’, i.e. the intuitive insight into the impermanent (*anicca*), miserable (*dukkha*) and impersonal (*anatta*) nature of all bodily and mental phenomena of existence. In essence, ‘*vipassanà*’ stands for the *paññà-cetasika* (wisdom) present in *mahà-kusala cittas* and *mahà-kiriya cittas*.

Kammatthàna

Here ‘*kammatthàna*’ is taken to mean the object of meditation. As consciousness cannot arise without an object, we need suitable objects for mental training. Buddha has prescribed 40 objects for *samatha-bhàvanà*. They are known as ‘*samatha-kammatthàna*’. They comprise the following seven classes:

- 1 *Kasina* — 10 *kasina* objects
- 2 *Asubha* — 10 loathsome objects
- 3 *Anussati* — 10 recollection objects
- 4 *Brahma-vihàra* — 4 sublime abodes
- 5 *àruppa* — 4 immaterial spheres
- 6 *àhàre-patikāla-sannà* — 1 object
- 7 *Catu-dhātu-vavatthàna* — 1 object

The object of meditation for *vipassanà-bhàvanà* is ‘*tilakkhana*’, i.e. the triple symbol comprising *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta* of all bodily and mental phenomena of existence.

Ten Kasinas

‘*Kasina*’ means ‘whole’, ‘all’, ‘complete’. It is so called because it should be observed wholly or completely in meditation, and because the light issuing from the conceptualized image is extended to all directions without any limitation. Because it should be observed wholly, the shape of *kasina* should be circular with its diameter equal to one span and four fingers, i.e. about a foot.

1 Pathavi-kasina – earth-circle, i.e. pure earth or dawn coloured clay spread in a tray of optimum size.

2 Apo-kasina – water-*kasina*, i.e. water placed in a suitable vessel or container.

3 Tejo-kasina – fire-*kasina*; it may be prepared by placing evenly burning charcoal in an old tray, or one may look through a hole of an old-tray into the middle part of a big fire.

4 Vāyo-kasina – air-*kasina*; to develop it, one concentrates on the wind which blows the hair-tops or the grass-tops or which touches the cheek.

5 Nīla-kasina – brown-*kasina*; take a brown circle of paper or cloth on a white background.

6 Pīta-kasina – yellow or golden-coloured *kasina*; prepare as above.

7 Lohita-kasina – red-*kasina*; prepare as above.

8 Odāta-kasina – white-*kasina*; take a white circle of paper or cloth on a black background.

9 āloka-kasina – light-*kasina*; it may be developed by concentrating on the morning or evening sun, on the moon, or on a circle of light cast on the floor or wall by sunlight entering through a hole in the wall.

10 ākāsa-kasina – space-*kasina*; it may be developed by looking through a hole in the wall towards the outside space having sky as background.

One can develop all the five *rupàvacara-jhānas* by meditating on a *kasina*. One can then proceed on to develop four *arupàvacarajhānas* and five *lokiya-abhinnānas* (mundane super-knowledge) based on the ten *kasinas*.

Ten Asubhas

They refer to ten kinds of corpses, which were found in ancient Indian cemeteries where dead bodies were not buried or cremated and where flesh-eating animals such as dogs, wolves and vultures frequent. In modern days, any kind of corpse, which shows the loathsomeness of the body, is a suitable object for meditation.

We are, as a rule, very strongly attached to our body as well as to others’ bodies by *rāga* (lust). The best way to suppress that *rāga* and the best remedy to cure the *rāga*-disease is *asubhakammatthāna*. It was made a standard or compulsory *kammatthāna* during the time of the Buddha, especially for young monks. Even today, it is included in the four *kammatthānas*, which serve as guardians or protectors. They are called *caturàrakkhakammatthānas* before one proceeds on to insight meditation.

The ten kinds of corpses are enumerated as follows.

1 *Uddhumātaka* – rotten and bloated corpse.

2 *Vinīlaka* – discoloured corpse that becomes brownish black.

3 *Vipubbaka* – one with cracked skin and pus oozing out.

4 *Vicchiddaka* – one that has been cut into two or three pieces.

5 *Vikkhàyitaka* – one that has been gnaw and mangled by dogs, vultures, etc.

6 *Vikkhittaka* – one that has been bitten and scattered into pieces by dogs, vultures, etc.

7 *Hatavikkhittaka* – one that has been mutilated and cut by knife, axe, etc., and thrown away as fragments.

8 *Lohitaka* – a bloody corpse.

9 *Puluvaka* – worm-infested corpse.

10 *Atthika* – a skeleton.

Meditation on any kind of corpse will lead to the first *jhàna*. As the object is very disgusting, it is impossible to fix the mind on the object without *vitakka*. Therefore, *vitakka* cannot be removed in order to attain the second *jhàna*.

Ten Anussatis

'Anussati' means **repeated reflection or constant mindfulness**. It stands for *sati-cetasika*.

1 Buddhànussati

Reflection on the virtues of the Buddha. One may reflect on the 9 virtues one by one as, for example,

“Such indeed is the Exalted one – worthy, fully enlightened, endowed with wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of the worlds, an incomparable charioteer for the training of individuals, teacher of gods and men, omniscient, and holy”.

Alternatively, one may choose the virtue one likes best and reflect on it repeatedly as, for example, '*Arahan, arahan*'. In so reflecting one should visualize the virtue as:

“Buddha is the holiest person as He has discarded all defilements completely, and thus He is worthy of worship by men and gods.”

The second method is more effective for development concentration.

2 Dhammànussati

Reflection on the virtues of **Dhamma** (the Doctrine) as, for example,

“Well-expounded is the doctrine by the Exalted One, to be realized by oneself, of immediate fruit, inviting investigation, leading to *Nibbàna*, to be understood by the wise, each one for himself”.

Here again one may choose the virtue one likes best and reflect on it repeatedly.

3 Sanghànussati

Reflection on the virtues of **Sangha** – the order of Brotherhood of the Noble Ones. One may reflect on the nine virtues as follows:

- “Of good conduct is the order of the disciples of the Exalted One;
- of upright conduct is the Order of the disciples of the Exalted One;
- of wise conduct is the Order of the disciples of the Exalted One;
- of dutiful conduct is the Order of the disciples of the Exalted One.

The four pairs of persons constitute eight individuals. This Order of the disciples of the Exalted One is worthy of offerings, is worthy of hospitality, is worthy of gifts, is worthy of reverential salutation, is an incomparable field of

merit for the world.”

Here also one may choose the virtue one likes best and reflect on it repeatedly.

4 Silànussati

Reflection on the perfection of one’s morality (*sila*).

5 Càgànussati

Reflection on one’s own charitable offering (*dàna*).

6 Devatànussati

Reflection on one’s own virtues with a consideration on deities as witnesses.

For example, “Deities are born in such exalted states on account of their faith, morality, charity, knowledge, wisdom, moral shame and moral dread. I too possess these virtues.

7 Upasamànussati

Reflection on the virtues of *Nibbàna*.

8 Maranànussati

Reflection on the nature of one’s own death as, for example,

“My death is certain, my being alive is uncertain.”

9 Kàyagatàsati

Reflection on the 32 impure parts of the body such as head-hair, body-hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, bowels, mesentery, stomach, faces, brain, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, lymph, tears, grease, saliva, nasal mucus, auricular fluid and urine.”

In Buddha’s time, many monks attained arahatship by meditating on these impure parts. *Kàyagatàsati* develops *asubhasannà* (notion of loathsomeness) on the body just as *asubhabhàvanà* does. This loathsomeness of the body leads to dispassion, i.e. the suppression of *ràga* (lust).

10 Anàpànassati

Mindfulness on the in breathing and out-breathing of one’s respiration.

A brief comment on Anussatis

Of the ten *Anussatis*, *kàyagatàsati* can lead to the first *jhàna*;

Anàpànassati, to all the five *rupàvacara jhànas*; and the rest, to neighbourhood concentration (*upacàra-samàdhi*). *Buddhànussati* and *maranànussati* are included in the four guardian-*kammatthànas*. By reflecting on the virtues of Buddha repeatedly for a long time, one’s body becomes venerable as a pagoda and so it may not be insulted by beasts, ghosts or wicked persons.

In addition, one has the notion of living together with Buddha, and thus one develops faith on Buddha, moral shame and moral dread largely.

Reflection on death repeatedly enables one to comprehend the fleeting nature of life. When one has the notion that one’s death may come at any moment, one sheds all pride, anger, attachment, etc., and one endeavors to make the best use of one’s life by working for self-development instead of wholly indulging in sensual pleasures.

Anàpànassati is one of the best *kammatthànas* for developing concentration as well as insight. It is the staple *kammatthàna* practiced by all Buddha’s. It is easy to practice and can be practiced anywhere at any time while sitting, standing, walking or lying. Breathing exists all the time and what is required is just to be mindful of it. The mindfulness (*sati*) should be placed at the tip of the nose where the breath touches and pushes itself in and out. From that watch-point, one must be aware of the in-going breath and the out-going breath. It is like sitting at the gate of entrance and checking the people going in and coming out.

In the suttas this simple method of mindfulness of respiration is explained as follows:-

1 Attentively he breathes in, attentively he breathes out.

2 When making a long inhalation he knows: “I make a long inhalation”, when making a short inhalation he knows: “I make a short inhalation”; when making a long exhalation he knows: “I make a long exhalation”; when making a short exhalation he knows: “I make a short exhalation”.

3 “Clearly perceiving the entire body (breath) I will inhale”; thus he trains himself; “clearly perceiving the entire body (breath) I will exhale”; thus he trains himself. (It means that one must be mindful to know every part of the breath; i.e. the whole breath.)

4 “Calming this breathing process I will inhale”; thus he trains himself; “calming this breathing process I will exhale”; thus he trains himself. As breathing occurs rhythmically it, can draw one’s attention towards it and builds up concentration very quickly. If the mind wanders out to some external object such as tea-shop, cafeteria, movie-house, etc., note that it is there and focus it back on respiration. When the five hindrances (*nivàranas*) are suppressed completely, **rapture** (*piti*), tranquility of mind (*passaddhi*), pleasant feeling (*sukha vedanà*) and concentration (*samàdhi*) will become distinct, and one experiences happiness one has never experienced before. One feels very light in body and mind and very peaceful. Some even feel as if they were floating in the air.

About this time a conceptualized light image (*nimitta*) in the form of a tube of rays or a sparkling diamond or a bright ruby or the like usually appears. The five *jhàna*-factors also become distinct and strong, and one may be assured that one has attained neighbourhood-concentration. If one carries on the mindfulness exercise earnestly and intensely, very soon one may attain the first *jhàna* and the higher *jhànas*.

Based on the *jhàna*-concentration, one may carry on the insight-meditation by investigating the mental and the corporeal phenomena in mind and body in detail. Then by contemplating on *tilakkhana*- i.e. the phenomena of impermanence, suffering and non-personality – one develops insight knowledge (*vipassanà-nàna*) which will gradually lead to the Path and its Fruition.

Four Brahma-vihàras

‘*Brahma*’ means ‘sublime’ and ‘*vihàra*’ means ‘abode’ or ‘state of living’. Thus, ‘*Brahmavihàra*’ refers to ‘sublime abode’ or ‘sublime state of living’. This ‘sublime state of living’ is similar to the moral living of celestial *Brahmas*. Therefore, it is called ‘*Brahmavihàra*’.

The four *Brahma-vihàras* are also known as ‘four *Appama nnàs*’ meaning ‘four boundless states’. They are so called because those who practise these exercises are radiating lovingkindness, compassion, or sympathetic joy to all beings without limit or obstruction.

1 Mettā – loving-kindness, benevolence, goodwill. It is defined as that which softens one’s heart. It is the wish for the good, safety and happiness of all beings. Benevolent attitude is its chief characteristic. It is not carnal love (*ràga*) or personal affection (*pema*). Its direct enemy is hatred or ill will (*dosa*) or aversion (*kodha*). Its indirect enemy is *pema* (*lobha*). It has the ability to quench ill will.

The culmination of *mettā* is the identification of oneself with all beings, i.e. one no longer differentiates between oneself and the others in the order of priority. *Mettā* stands for *adosa-cetasika*.

2 Karunā – compassion

It is defined as that which makes the hearts of the noble quiver when others are subject to suffering or that dissipates the sufferings of others. The wish to remove the sufferings of others is its chief characteristic. Its direct enemy is cruelty or wickedness (*hinsa*) and its indirect enemy is passionate grief (*domanassa*). It discards cruelty or wickedness.

Karunā embraces sorrow-stricken beings with the ardent wish to free them from all sufferings. It stands for the *karunā-cetasika*.

3 Mudità – sympathetic joy, appreciative joy. It is the congratulatory attitude of oneself. Its chief characteristic is to

be happy and full of joy in others' prosperity and success. Its direct enemy is jealousy, and its indirect enemy is exhilaration (*pahāsa*). It eliminates dislike (*arati*).

Mudita embraces all prosperous beings with the ardent wish that their prosperity will last for a long time. It stands for the *mudita-cetasika*.

4 Upekkhā – equanimity

It literally means 'to view impartially', that is, with neither attachment nor aversion. Impartial attitude is its chief characteristic. It is not hedonic indifference or the neutral feeling (*upekkhā-vedanā*). It stands for *tatramajjhataṭṭa-cetasika* and means perfect equanimity or a well-balanced mind. It stays in between *karunā* and *mudita*. It keeps the mind balanced and unwavering amidst vicissitudes of life such as praise and blame, pain and happiness, gain and loss, repute or disrepute. Its direct enemy is passion (*rāga*) and its indirect enemy is callousness. It eliminates clinging and aversion.

Living in the Sublime Abode

Any one who is practicing one of the four *Brahma-vihāras* is said to be living in the sublime abode.

To practise *mettā*, one extends one's loving-kindness towards all beings, sincerely wishing them to be happy and free from danger, free from bodily pain and mental suffering. To practise *karunā*, one embraces all sorrow stricken beings, sincerely wishing them to be free from all miseries. To exercise *mudita*, one embraces all prosperous beings, wishing them sincerely that all their gain and prosperity remain with them for a long time.

To exercise *upekkhā*, one embraces the good and the bad, the loved and the unloved, the sorrow-stricken or the prosperous, with equanimity contemplating that "**all beings are as they are conditioned by their own-kamma**".

Meditation practice of the first three *Brahma-vihāras* can lead to four *rupāvacara jhānas* whereas *upekkhā*-exercise leads to the fifth *jhāna*. Remember that only the fifth *jhāna* is associated with equanimity and indifferent feeling (*upekkhā-vedanā*).

To develop one's concentration up to *jhāna*, it is advisable to choose a suitable person and concentrate on him pervading him with *mettā*, *karunā* or *mudita*. Even then, it usually takes a long time to develop *jhāna*. The faster way is to develop *jhāna*, preferably to fifth *jhāna*, by meditating on respiration (*ānāpānassati*) or **another *kammaṭṭhāna* in which the object of meditation is well defined. Then, making concentration associated with the fifth *jhāna* as the base, one undertakes *mettā*-exercise.** In this way, one can develop the four *mettā-jhānas* very rapidly. This method is being successfully practiced in Pa-auk Tawya Meditation Centres in Myanmar. Only when one can pervade all beings with *jhāna-mettā*, *jhānakarunā*, *jhāna-mudita* and *jhāna-upekkhā*, one is living truly in the sublime state.

The stereotype text on the development of these four sublime states of living is mentioned in the Suttas as follows:

"There, O monks, the monk with a mind full of loving kindness pervading first one direction, then a second one, then a third one, then a fourth one, just so above, below and all around, and everywhere identifying himself with al. He is pervading the whole world with mind full of loving-kindness, with mind wide, developed, unbounded, free from hate and ill will".

The same theme follows with compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity.

Ahāre-patikula-sannā

(Perception of Loathsomeness on Food)

The contemplation is repeated to develop the perception of loathsomeness on the food and drinks we eat and swallow. How do we develop the notion of loathsomeness on the food we are eating? When the various dishes of food are arranged attractively, they appeal to our appetite. Note that when they are mixed up, their attractiveness is reduced. On chewing the food in our mouth, note how tiresome it is to lower the jaw and raise it repeatedly pounding on the food as if we are pounding chili in a mortar with pistle. Also note that, while chewing, saliva, bile, phlegm and other digestive juices are produced at the bottom of the tongue, and that the tongue is mixing them with food, which becomes sticky and loathsome. On swallowing the food, it reaches the stomach where it has to be

further digested. The undigested food collects in the bowels and it has to be discarded from time to time in the lavatory. As the excrement is very loathsome, one has to hide shamefully in the lavatory to discard it.

Now attachment to food (*rasa-tanhà*) is a strong form of *lobha*, which is a hindrance to the development of concentration. Therefore, the Buddha advised His Disciples to suppress it by means of *àhàre-patìkula-sannà*.

Catu-dhàtu-vavatthàna (Defining of the Four Elements)

‘*Catu-dhàtu*’ means the four essential elements namely, *pathavi*, *àpo*, *tejo* and *vàyo*. ‘*Vavatthàna*’ means the knowledge of characterizing (the elements). As the four essential elements form the basis of all corporeal phenomena, their characteristics must be investigated and put into knowledge.

In Chapter 6 we have learnt that our body is made up of 21 kinds of corporeal groups called *kalàpas*, and each *kalàpa* comprises at least the four essential elements and their four material qualities viz., visible form (*vanna*), smell (*gandha*), taste (*rasa*) and nutriment (*ojà*).

Thus, the four great elements are present in every part and particle of our body.

***Pathavi* must be characterized as the element of extension with the characteristics of hardness and softness.**

***Apo* must be known as the element of cohesion with the characteristics of cohesiveness and fluidity.**

***Tejo* is the element of heat with the characteristics of hot and cold.**

***Vàyo* is the element of motion with the characteristics of pushing and supporting.**

We must investigate in the body the characteristics of hardness and softness, cohesiveness and fluidity, hot and cold, pushing and supporting are present in every part and particle of the body. We must feel these characteristics and be conscious of them in the mind to be sure of their presence. When they become distinct in the mind, one keeps on concentrating on them and noting them to develop one’s *samàdhi*. The highest *samàdhi* attainable here is neighbourhood concentration as the object of meditation is too deep and vast.

According to the results discovered in Pa-uk Tawya Meditation Center, *catu-dhàtu-vavatthàna* is a very effective *kammatthàna* for developing concentration very quickly.

When one attains neighbourhood-concentration, one can see through the body to observe the flesh, the sinew, the bone, the heart, the liver, etc., as one should see in *kàyagatàsati* -meditation. Then one can use the skeleton which one sees penetrative in one’s body or in the body of another person as the object of *asubha-kammatthàna* and meditate on it to raise the concentration to the level of first *jhàna*.

Furthermore, the whiteness of the bone, preferably the skull, can be used as the object of *odàta-kasina*. One meditates on it to raise the concentration further to the level of fifth *jhàna*. These methods of developing concentration are described in *Visuddhi Magga* and they are successfully put into practice in Pa-Auk Tawya Meditation Centres.

Four Arupas (Four immaterial Spheres)

The four immaterial spheres of unbounded space (*àkàsa*), unbounded consciousness, nothingness, and neither-perception nor non-perception are employed as the objects of meditation to develop the four *arupàvacara-jhànas*, respectively. In practices, one has to develop the five *rupàvacara-jhànas* first on one of the *kasinas*, and then, making the fifth-*jhàna* as the base, one goes higher to the four *àruppas* to develop the four *arupàvacara-jhànas*.

Six Caritas (Six Types of Temperament or Nature)

There are six types of persons according to their temperament or nature.

1 *Ràga-carita* – the greedy-natured who indulge in sensuous pleasure without shame;

2 *Dosa-carita* – the hate-natured who get angry easily even over trivial things;

3 *Moha-carita* – the stupid or dull-natured;

4 *Saddhà-carita* – the faithful-natured who venerate the Triple-Gem piously;

5 *Buddhi-carita* – the intelligent-natured who rely on reason and would not believe easily;

6 *Vitakka-carita* – the ruminating-natured who think over this and that without accomplishing much.

Kammatthàna and Carita

The forty *kammatthànas* should be coupled with six *caritas* suitably for beneficial results.

1 The greedy-natured persons should exercise the ten *asubhas* and *kàyaratàsati* as these *kammatthànas* can suppress passion effectively.

2 The hate-natured persons should practise the four *Brahmavihàras* and the four colour-*kasinas*. i.e. *nila*, *pita*, *lohita* and *odàta kasinas*. These *kammatthànas* are pure and serene and can delight persons who exercise them.

3 The stupid and dull-natured persons as well as the ruminating-natured persons should practise *ànàpànassati*. The minds of these people are restless and distracted because of *uddacca*, *vicikicchà* and *vitakka*. In *Anàpànassati*, the in-breathing and the out-breathing have to be noted rhythmically. Therefore, *ànàpànassati* can control and calm down the restless minds.

4 The faithful-natured persons should practise *Buddhànussati*, *dhammànussati*, *sanghànussati*, *silànussati*, *càgànussati* and *devatànussati*. *Saddhà* (faith) is already strong in these persons and it will be further strengthened to great benefits by practising these *anussatikammatthànas*.

5 The intelligent-natured persons should practice *maranànussati*, *upasamànussati*, *àhàre-patikula-sannà* and *catudhātu-vavatthàna*. The subjects of these *kammatthànas* are deep and subtle, and thus they can stimulate and strengthen the wisdom of the intelligent-natured persons.

6 The *kammatthànas*, which are suitable to all types of persons, are *pathavi-kasina*, *àpo-kasina*, *tejo-kasina*, *vàyokasina*, *aloka-kasina*, *àkàsa-kasina* and the four *àruppas*.

Three Stages of Bhàvanà

Bhàvanà (meditation) may be divided into three classes in accordance with the degrees of concentration or mental culture they can give rise.

1 *Parikamma-bhàvanà* – the preparatory stage of meditation. The *kammatthàna*-objects such as *kasinas* are called *parikamma-nimitta*, meaning, preparatory image. By observing an earth circle, one may meditate “*Pathavi, pathavi*” repeatedly either by murmuring it slowly or by just noting it in the mind. This early stage of meditation that can develop ‘*parikamma-samàdhi*’ is called *parikamma-bhàvanà*. It paves the way for the arising of higher-*bhàvanàs* later on.

1. ‘*Parikamma-samàdhi*’ is ‘preparatory concentration’, which is the initial and still undeveloped concentration of mind. All stages of concentration starting from this initial stage up to the stage just below the neighbourhood-concentration are termed ‘*parikamma-samàdhi*’.

2 *Upacàra-bhàvanà* – the neighbourhood stage of meditation. ‘*Upacàra*’ means ‘neighbourhood’ or ‘moment of access’. ‘*Upacàra-bhàvanà*’ is that meditation which has come to the neighbourhood of *jhàna*, *magga* or *phala*. It may also be regarded as the meditation which about to enter the absorption-stage of meditation is called *appanà-bhàvanà*.

Parikamma-bhàvanà itself is developed into the *upacàra-bhàvanà*. The object of *upacàra-bhàvanà* is no longer ‘*parikamma-nimitta*’; it is ‘*patibhàga-nimitta*’, meaning ‘counter-image’. The concentration associated with *upacàra-bhàvanà* is called ‘*upacàra-samàdhi*’, which is translated as ‘neighbourhood-concentration or access-concentration’. It represents the degree of concentration just before entering any of the absorption (*jhànas*).

3 *Appanà-bhàvanà* – the absorption stage of meditation. The meditation, which has developed to *jhàna*, *magga* or

phala, is called ‘*appanà-bhàvanà*’. The *jhàna*, *magga* or *phala* remains absorbed or fixed in their respective objects. The object of *jhàna* is ‘*patibhàga nimitta*’ whereas the object of *magga* or *phala* is *Nibbàna*. The concentration associated with the *appanà-bhàvanà* is called the ‘*appanàsamàdhi*’.

Bhàvanà and Kammatthàna

1 *Parikamma-bhàvanà* is attainable in all the forty *kammatthànas*.

2 *Parikamma-bhàvanà* and *upacàra-bhàvanà* occur in the first eight *anussatis* and in *àhàre-patikula-sannà* and *catudhātu-vavatthàna* (totalling 10 *kammatthànas*).

3 All three types of *bhàvanà* occur in the remaining 30 *kammatthànas* viz., 10 *kasinas*, 10 *asubhas*, 4 *Brahmavihàras*,

4 *àruppas*, *kàyagatàsati* and *ànàpànassati*.

Jhàna and Kammatthàna

TABLE 9.1
Differentiation of *Kammatthànas* by means of *Jhànas*

No.	<i>Kammatthàna</i>	Total	<i>Jhànas</i> attainable
1	10 <i>Kasinas</i> , <i>Inàpànassati</i>	11	5 <i>Rupàvacara Jhànas</i>
2	10 <i>Asubhas</i> , <i>Kàyagatàsati</i>	11	<i>Rupàvacara</i> first <i>Jhàna</i>
3	<i>Mettà</i> , <i>Karunà</i> , <i>Mudità</i>	3	First-second-third-fourth <i>Rupàvacara Jhànas</i>
4	<i>Upekkhà</i>	1	<i>Rupàvacara</i> fifth <i>Jhàna</i>
5	4 <i>Arupas</i>	4	4 <i>Arupàvacara Jhànas</i>

Notes:

1 There are 25 *kammatthànas* which can produce *rupàvacara* first *jhàna* (add 1+2+3 in the above Table).

2 Fourteen *kammatthànas* can give rise to *rupàvacara* second-third-fourth *jhànas* (add 1+3)

3 Twelve *kammattanas* can give rise to *rupàvacara* fifth *jhàna* (add 1+4),

4 Four *àruppas* can produce four *arupàvacara jhànas*.

5 Ten *kammatthànas* comprising the first 8 *anussatis*, *àhàrepatikula- sannà* and *catu-dhātu-vavatthàna* cannot give rise to any *jhàna*. However, they can help to attain neighbourhood concentration.

Bhàvanà-nimitta (Meditation Image)

'*Nimitta*' means mark, sign, image, target, object, etc. Here it refers to the 'mental image' obtained in meditation. Three types of *nimitta* are to be noted.

1 *Parikamma-nimitta* – preparatory image It is the object of *parikamma-bhàvanà*. It is the object perceived at the early stages of meditations.

2 *Uggaha-nimitta* – acquired images As the meditation proceeds, the meditator finds that he can see the object, e.g. *kasina*, without looking at it directly. He has acquired the image in his mind, and he can see it with eyes closed. The acquired image is still unsteady and unclear; it arises when the mind has reached a weak degree of concentration.

3 *Patibhàga-nimitta* – counter image As the meditation proceeds on, at the point when the concentration reaches *upacàra-samàdhi*, the acquired image suddenly changes into a bright, clear and steady image. It is similar to the original object, but it is many times brighter and clearer than the acquired image. It is entirely free from faults such as unevenness, graininess, etc., that may be present in the original object. It is immovable as if it remains fixed in the eye. As soon as this image arises, the stage of *upacàra-bhàvanà* and neighbourhood concentration is reached.

Nimitta and Kammatthàna

TABLE 9.2

Differentiation of Kammatthànas by Nimittas

No.	Kammatthàna	Total	Nimittaattainable
1	All Kammatthas	40	<i>Parikamma-nimitta</i> and <i>Uggaha nimitta</i> (not distinguishable in some Kammatthànas)
2	10 <i>Kasinas</i> , 10 <i>Asubhas</i> <i>Kāyagatàsati</i> <i>Inàpānassati</i>	22	<i>Parikamma-nimitta</i> , <i>Uggaha-nimitta</i> , <i>Patibhàga-nimitta</i> may all appear.
3	First 8 <i>Anussatis</i> 4 <i>Brahma-vihàras</i> 4 <i>Irupas</i> , <i>Ihàre-patikula-</i> <i>sannà</i> , <i>Catudhàtuvavatthàna</i>	18	<i>Parikamma-nimitta</i> and <i>Uggaha-nimitta</i> only. <i>Patibhàga-nimitta</i> is not formed.

Practical Coupling of Bhàvanà with Nimitta

Parikamma-bhàvanà takes as its object *parikamma-nimitta* and *uggahanimitta*. *Upacàra-bhàvanà* and *appanà-bhàvanà* take *patibhàga nimitta* as their object. This coupling of *bhàvanà* with *nimitta* will be illustrated by the meditation on *pathavi-kasina*.

Pathavi-kasina is prepared by covering a tray or a circle about one span and four fingers (i.e. about 12 inches) in diameter with dawn-coloured clay. If there were not enough clay of dawn color, some other clay may be placed underneath. The surface of the clay should be made as smooth as possible. This hypnotic circle is known as *kasina-mandala*.

Now this earth-circle is placed at a suitable height about two and a half cubits (i.e. about 45 inches) away from the place where one is going to sit. One should sit comfortably keeping the upper part of the body erect.

1 Parikamma-nimitta and Parikamma-bhàvanà

The meditator looks at the earth-circle attentively, saying mentally or inaudibly: “*Pathavi, pathavi*” or “*earth, earth*”. Now, from this time onwards, the earth-circle that he is looking at is called ‘*parikamma-nimitta*’ and the meditation he is doing is called ‘*parikamma-bhàvanà*’.

2 Uggaha-nimitta and Parikamma-bhàvanà

After meditating for some time, perhaps weeks or months, he will be able to close his eyes and visualize the object. This means that he could see the earth-circle vividly in his mind as he has seen it with open eyes even though his eyes are closed. This visualized object or acquired image is called ‘*uggaha-nimitta*’. Although the image has changed, his *bhàvanà* does not change yet. At this stage, he is meditating on *uggaha-nimitta* with *parikamma-bhàvanà*.

3 Patibhàga-nimitta and Upacàra-bhàvanà

From the time the acquired image appears, it is no longer necessary to look at the original earth-circle, unless his concentration disperses. By concentrating on the acquired image, he keeps on meditating: “*Pathavi, pathavi*” or “*earth, earth*”.

When his concentration reaches the level of *upacàra-samàdhi*, the *uggaha-nimitta* changes into *patibhàga-nimitta* (counter-image). This change is very distinct and is easily noticed, as the *patibhàganimitta* is very different from *uggaha-nimitta*. The change is as distinct as taking out a mirror from its leather-case, or as a flock of herons flying out of dark clouds.

The *parikamma-bhàvanà* is now raised to the level of *upacàrabhàvanà*. The meditation is now at the stage of *patibhàga-nimitta* and *upacàra-bhàvanà*. At this stage, all the hindrances (*nivàranas*) are suppressed and the five *jhàna*-factors become stronger and function efficiently. Therefore, the mind is well fixed on the counter image. For this reason, *upacàra-bhàvanà* is also called ‘*upacàrajhàna*’.

4 Patibhàga-nimitta and Appanà-bhàvanà

Concentrating on the *patibhàga-nimitta*, the meditator carries on his meditation, noting “*Pathavi, pathavi*” as before. When the counter-image is firm and immovable, it is made to expand by will-power inch by inch until it fills every space in all directions. Concentrating on this new abstract image, he keeps on meditating: “*pathavi, pathavi*”.

If he is an intelligent, quick-witted person, he soon reaches *appanà-bhàvanà* when the first *jhàna* arises.

If he is a slow-witted person, he must try hard to maintain the *patibhàga-nimitta* with special care, and if he keeps on meditating, he too attains the first *jhàna* eventually.

He is now at the stage of *patibhàga-nimitta* and *appanà-bhàvanà*. This means that the object of *appanà-bhàvanà*. This means that the object of *appanà-bhàvanà* is the counter-image of the earth-circle.

Towards the Second and Higher Jhànas

The yogi (meditator), who has attained the first *jhàna*, should develop five kinds of abilities with respect to that *jhàna*. These abilities are called ‘*vasitàs*’, meaning literally ‘habits’.

1 *Avajjana-vasità* – the ability to reflect on the *jhàna* factors quickly;

2 *Samàpajjana-vasità* – the ability to attain the *jhàna* quickly;

3 *Adhitthàna-vasità* – the ability to remain in the *jhàna* as long as one wishes;

4 *Vutthàna-vasità* – the ability to come out from the *jhàna* (meditative absorption) at the moment one has predetermined, eg one hour after getting to *jhàna*;

5 *Paccavekkhana-vasità* – the ability to review the *jhàna* factors quickly by reducing the number of *bhāvāṅgacittas* between *vithis*.

Now in order to eliminate *vitakka* to go up to the second *jhàna*, the yogi contemplates on the coarse nature of *vitakka* how it can divert the mind towards a sensuous object and thus destroy the *jhàna*. He also contemplates on the subtle nature of the second *jhàna*, which is free from *vitakka*.

Then concentrating on the *patibhāga-nimitta* of *pathavi-kasina*, he tries to develop the three stages of *bhāvanā* in the normal order of *parikamma*, *upacāra* and *appanā*, without letting *vitakka* associate with the *citta*. This series of *bhāvanā* without a desire for *vitakka* is known as ‘*vitakka-virāga-bhāvanā*’. The culmination of this *bhāvanā* is the attainment of the second *jhàna*.

The second *jhàna* contains only four *jhàna*-factors viz. *vicāra*, *pīti*, *sukha*, *ekaggatā*, which are subtler than those present in the first *jhàna*. The yogi then tries to develop the five abilities called ‘*vasità*’ (habit) with respect to the second-*jhàna*. He then eliminates *vicāra* in a similar way to attain the third *jhàna*. The fourth and the fifth *jhānas* are attained by eliminating *pīti* and *sukha* respectively in a similar manner.

Towards Arupa-jhānas

Rupāvacara fifth *jhàna* is used as the base for going up to *arupāvacara jhānas*. First the five abilities called ‘*vasità*’ with respect to the fifth *jhàna* must be developed. then the yogi contemplates on the faults of corporeality (*rupa*) to suppress his attachment to corporeality. He may reason like this: “This body is subject to hot and cold, hunger and thirst, and to all kinds of diseases. Because of it, one quarrels with others. To clothe it, to feed it, and to house it, one has to go through many miseries.”

The yogi should also contemplate how subtle and calm the *arupāvacara jhàna* is to strengthen his desire to attain it. Then he develops the five *rupāvacara jhānas* one after one on any of the nine *kasinas*, excluding *ākāsa-kasina*. he comes out from the fifth *jhàna* and, without paying attention to the *patibhāganimitta*; he concentrates on the space behind it and meditates repeatedly: “**Space is infinite! space is infinite!**” This is *parikamma-bhāvanā* – the pre-requisite for the arising of higher *bhāvanās*.

The *patibhāga-nimitta* will be in front of him so long as he still has a subtle desire (*nikanti*) for it. When that desire is gone, the *patibhāga-nimitta* is also gone unfolding infinite space. Concentrating on this space, he meditates on “**Space is infinite! Space is infinite!**”

When his desire (*nikanti*) for the *rupāvacara* fifth *jhàna* disappears, he is said to reach *upacāra-bhāvanā*. If he goes on meditating earnestly and strenuously, he may soon reach the *appanā-bhāvanā* and attain the first *arupāvacara jhàna* called ‘*ākāsānācāyatana kusala citta*’.

He then develops the five abilities (*vasità*) with respect to the first *arupa jhàna*. Then to develop the second *arupa jhàna*, he contemplates on the unsatisfactoriness of the first *arupa jhàna* for being close to *rupāvacara-jhānas* and being coarse compared to the second *arupāvacara jhàna*. Then concentrating on *ākāsānācāyatana kusala citta*, which focuses on infinite space, he meditates: “consciousness is infinite; consciousness is infinite”.

This is the new *parikamma-bhāvanā*. When his subtle clinging (*nikanti*) to the first *arupāvacara jhàna* disappears, he comes to *upacāra-bhāvanā*. When he attains the second *arupāvacara-bhāvanā*. when he attains the second *arupāvacara jhàna* called ‘*vinnāna- cāyatana-kusala citta*’, he reaches *appanā-bhāvanā*. Similarly by practising the *parikamma-bhāvanā* on the nonexistence of *ākāsānācāyatana kusala citta*, mentally repeating:

“There is nothing whatsoever!” the third *arupāvacara jhàna*, called ‘*ākincannāyatana kusala citta*’, is attained. Furthermore by practising the *parikamma-bhāvanā* on *ākincannāyatana kusala citta*, mentally repeating: “This *citta* is calm! It’s excellent!” the fourth *arupāvacara jhàna* called ‘*nevasa nnā-nasannāyatana kusala citta*’ is finally attained.

Going higher to Abhinnā

‘*Abhinnā*’ is ‘higher power’ or ‘supernormal knowledge’. Those who have attained five *rupāvacara jhānas* and four *arupāvacara jhānas* may further develop five mundane (*lokiya*) supernormal knowledge by practising these *jhàna* in

various ways based on ten *kasinas*.

1 Iddhividha Abhinnà

Powers of creating forms, flying through the air, walking on water, diving into the earth, etc.

2 Dibba-sota Abhinnà

Divine ear or clairaudience, which enables one to hear subtle or coarse sounds far or near.

3 Paracitta-vijànàna (Ceto-pariya nàna)

Power of penetrating the mind of others to discern their thoughts.

4 Pubbenivàsànussati

Power to remember the former existences of oneself and the former worlds.

5 Dibba-cakkhu

Divine eye or clairvoyance, which enables one to see subtle or coarse things far or near and also the celestial worlds and the *apàya* abodes.

The last one, i.e. *dibba-cakkhu*, may be extended to two more Supernormal Powers:-

6 Yathàkammupaganàna

Power of seeing beings in the 31 planes of existence and knowing their respective kmmas, which have given rise to their rebirths.

7 Anàgatansanàna

Power of knowing future existences and future worlds. Therefore, we may say there are seven *lokiya-abhinnàs*. However, when we count five mundane supernormal knowledge (five *lokiya abhinnàs*), (6) and (7) are included in *dibba-cakkhu*. In addition, *catupapatanàna*, which is the knowledge with regard to the dying and reappearing of beings, is included in *dibba-cakkhu*. In counting six *abhinnàs*, a supermundane power (*lokuttara abhinnà*) is added to the five *lokiya abhinnàs*. This *lokuttara abhinnà* is called *Asavakkhaya-nàna*.

8 Asavakkhaya-nàna (Arahatta-magga-nàna)

Knowledge associated with *Arahatta-magga* that can extinct all cankers (*àsava*). *Chalàbhinna* is an *Arahat* who possess the six superknowledge mentioned above. It should be noted that the five supernormal mundane knowledge are attainable through the utmost perfection of mental concentration (*samàdhi*) and they are the culmination of *samatha-bhàvanà* (tranquility-meditation). The supermundane power, i.e. *Asavakkhaya-nàna*, is attainable through penetrating insight (*vipassanà*) and it is the culmination of *vipassanà-bhàvanà* (insight meditation).

Vipassanà Kammatthàna

In the exercises on *vipassanà-bhàvanà* (insight-meditation) one should have the knowledge of the following:

- 1 Sevenfold Visuddhi – seven stages of purity,
- 2 Ti-lakkhana – three characteristic marks,
- 3 Threefold Anupassanà – 3 methods of contemplation,
- 4 Ten Vipassanà-nànas – 10 insight-knowledge,
- 5 Threefold Vimokkha – 3 ways of emancipation,
- 6 Threefold Vimokkha-mukha – 3 doors of emancipation.

Sevenfold Visuddhi (Seven Stages of Purity)

‘*Visuddhi*’ means ‘purification’ or ‘purity’. There are seven stages in purifying the mind by insight-meditation.

- 1 *Sila-visuddhi* – purity of morality,
- 2 *Citta-visuddhi* – purity of mind,
- 3 *Ditthi-visuddhi* – purity of view,
- 4 *Kankhà-vitarana-visuddhi* – purity by transcending doubt,
- 5 *Maggàmagga-nànadassana-visuddhi* – purity of vision in discerning the Path and not-Path,

- 6 *Patipadà-nànadassana-visuddhi* – purity of vision of the Path-progress,
- 7 *Nanadassana-visuddhi* – purity of vision of the knowledge of the four Paths.

In *Majjhima Nikàya* (Sutta 24) the simile of the stage –coach is mentioned comparing the sevenfold *Visuddhi* with seven stage coaches. One mounts the first coach and travels to the second coach. Then one mounts the second coach and travels to the third coach, and so on.

In the same way, one purifies one’s morality to get to the starting point of the purification of the mind. Then one purifies the mind in order to get to the starting point of the purification of view. Then one purifies one’s view to arrive at the starting point of the purification by transcending doubt. One proceeds in this way until the four Paths and their Fruits are attained.

There in *Majjhima Nikàya* it is said that the real and ultimate goal does not consist in the purity of morality, or of mind, or of view, etc., but in total deliverance from and extinction of defilements.

Ti-lakkhana (Three Characteristic Marks)

There are three characteristic marks of mental and corporeal phenomena, i.e. of the five aggregates of existence. They form the objects of insight-meditation.

- 1 *Anicca-lakkhana* – the characteristic mark of impermanence
- 2 *Dukkha-lakkhana* – the characteristic mark of suffering
- 3 *Anatta-lakkhana* – the characteristic marks of not-self.

“Whether Perfect Ones (Buddhas) appear in the world or whether Perfect Ones do not appear in the world, it still remains a firm condition, and immutable fact and fixed law, that all formations are impermanent, that all formations are subject to suffering, that everything is without a self”.
(*Anguttara Nikàya*, Book IV, Sutta 134)

Threefold Anupassanà (Three Methods of Contemplation)

This topic describes three methods for conducting insight meditation on mental and corporeal formations, i.e. on the five aggregates of existence.

1 *Aniccànupassanà* – repeated contemplation on the impermanent nature of mind and matter in the five aggregates of existence.

2 *Dukkhànupassanà* – repeated contemplation on the unsatisfactory nature of mind and matter in the five aggregates of existence.

3 *Anattànupassanà* – repeated contemplation on the selfless or **no-soul nature** of mind and matter in the five aggregates of existence.

Note:

The meanings of the threefold *anupassanà* are described here as they are mentioned in most popular books. Actually, these meanings can be misleading. The word ‘contemplation’ itself is misleading. ‘Contemplation’ implies ‘deep thought’ or ‘to be in a thoughtful state’. In *vipassanà*-meditation, there is no place for thinking or for being thoughtful. With the help of concentration (*samàdhi*), one penetrates into the ultimate realities and sees with one’s own mind-eye the real nature of these realities – that is the three characteristic marks of *nàma* and *rupa*.

By observing the incessant arising and dissolving of the ultimate *nàma* and *rupa*, one understands the impermanent nature as well as the unsatisfactory nature of mental and corporeal formations. To be subject to incessant dissolving itself means suffering. Since the body and mind are made up of five aggregates and all these aggregates are incessantly forming and dissolving, leaving no single entity as permanent, one realizes that there is neither self nor soul.

Thus in *vipassanà-bhàvanà*, one actually sees the ultimate things and knows their nature. This ultimate nature cannot be known by mere contemplation.

In *aniccànupassana*, one concentrates on the impermanent nature of the ultimate *nàma* and *rupa*, and note repeatedly “**anicca, anicca, anicca...**” for ten to thirty minutes at a stretch.

Then one takes up *dukkhànupassana*. In *dukkhànupassana*, one concentrates on the unsatisfactory nature of the ultimate *nàma* and *rupa* and notes repeatedly “**dukkha, dukkha, dukkha,**” for ten to thirty minutes at a stretch.

Then one proceeds with *anattànupassana*. In *anattànupassana*, one concentrates on the **selfless or nosoul** nature of the ultimate *nàma* and *rupa*, and notes repeatedly “**anatta, anatta, anatta,**” for ten to thirty minutes at a stretch.

Then one takes up *aniccànupassana* again. As one carries on the *vipassanà* meditation in this manner, the ten-insight-knowledge (*vipassanà-nàna*) will arise in due course. Soon after the last insight-knowledge arises, *maggà-nàna* and *phala-nàna* (the Path and its Fruition) also arise.

Ten Vipassanà-nànas (Ten Insight Knowledge)

1 Sammasana-nàna

The knowledge that can investigate the three characteristic marks of *nàma* and *rupa* in the five aggregates of existence;

2 Udayabbaya-nàna

The knowledge that can investigate the arising and passing away of the ultimate *nàma* and *rupa* in the five aggregates of existence;

3 Bhanga-nàna

The knowledge of the incessant dissolution of the ultimate *nàma* and *rupa*;

4 Bhaya-nàna

The knowledge of realizing *nàma-rupa* and the five aggregates of existence as fearful as they are dissolving incessantly;

5 Adinava-nàna

The knowledge that realizes the fault and unsatisfactoriness in *nàma-rupa* as they have been known to be fearful;

6 Nibbidà-nàna

The knowledge of disgust in *nàma-rupa* as they have been known to be unsatisfactory;

7 Muncitukamyatà-nàna

The knowledge of the desire to escape from the entanglement of *nàma-rupa*;

8 Patisankhà-nàna

The knowledge to re-investigate *nàma-rupa* and the five aggregates of existence in order to escape there from;

9 Sankhàrupakkhà-nàna

The knowledge of equanimity towards *nàma-rupa* and conditioned things;

10 Anuloma-nàna

The knowledge of adaptation to the Path.

Threefold Vimokkha (Three Ways of Emancipation)

‘*Vimokkha*’ means ‘emancipation, liberation or deliverance’. It refers to the emancipation from the entanglement of *nàma-rupa*, i.e. from the round of rebirth or the *sansàra* of misery. Here ‘*vimokkha*’ stands for *maggà-phala* (the Path and its Fruition) which has emancipated from defilements (*kilesas*).

1 Sunnata-vimokkha – emancipation through the concept of void by *anattànupassana*. ‘Sunnata – void or emptiness’

here means the absence of ‘atta’ or ‘self’ or any permanent entity in *nàma-rupa* and the five aggregates of existence. The yogi who practices *anattànupassana* realizes this concept of void, and if he attains emancipation while practicing *anattànupassana*, his *magga-phala* or emancipation is known as ‘*Sunnata-vimokkha*’.

2 *Animitta-vimokkha* – emancipation through the concept of signlessness by *aniccànupassanà*.

‘*Nimitta*’ means mark, sign, image, object, etc. Therefore, ‘*animitta*’ means no mark, no sign, no image, no object, etc. While practising *aniccànupassana*, the yogi is observing the incessant dissolution of *nàma-rupa* in the five aggregates all the time. In the ultimate state the five aggregates, which are nothing but mental and corporeal groups, have no form and shape nor any sign or image. Therefore, while the yogi is observing the incessant dissolution of *nàma* and *rupa*, he observes no form and sign at all; he is having the concept of signlessness. If he emancipates from defilements through *aniccànupassana*, his *magga-phala* or emancipation is known as ‘*Animittavimokkha*’.

3 *Appanihita-vimokkha* – emancipation through the concept of desirelessness by *dukkhànupassana*.

The yogi, while practising *dukkhànupassana*, is observing the unsatisfactory or suffering nature of *nàma-rupa* in the five aggregates all the time. Therefore, he has neither desire for nor attachment to the *nàma-rupa*. In other words, he is having the concept of desirelessness (*appanihita*). In addition, if he emancipates from defilements through *dukkhànupassana*, his *magga-phala* or emancipation is called ‘*Appanihita-vimokkha*’.

Threefold *Vimokkha-mukha* (*Triple Gate-way to Liberation*)

‘*Mukha*’ means ‘door or gateway’. The three doors to emancipation or liberation from the entanglement of defilements refer back to the three *anupassanàs*.

1 *Anattànupassana* is *Sunnata-vimokkha-mukha*.

It realizes that the *nàma-rupa* formations are void of ‘atta’, ‘self’, or ‘ego’. *Sunnata* refers to ‘void of *atta*.’

2 *Aniccànupassana* is *Animitta-vimokkha-mukha*.

It understands that the *nàma-rupa* formations are formless, signless or imageless. *Animitta* refers to signless state of *nàma-rupa*.

3 *Dukkhànupassana* is *Appanihita-vimokkha-mukha*.

It understands that the *nàma-rupa* formations are just suffering or misery. So it develops no desire (*tanhà*) for *nàma-rupa* formation. *Appanihita* refers to the state of desirelessness.

In *Visuddhi Magga* (Chapter XXI, paragraph 70), the following message is given:

1 “Whosoever being filled with determination (*adhimokkha*), considers all formations as impermanent (*anicca*), such a person attains the signless liberation.

2 “Whosoever being filled with tranquility, considers all formations as painful (*dukkha*), such a person attains the desireless liberation.

3 “Whosoever being filled with wisdom, considers all formations as not-self (*anatta*), such a person attains the void (*sunnata*) liberation.

The Seven Stages of the Path of Purification

It is clearly stated in *Mahà-satipatthàna Sutta* that the only way towards absolute purity and extinction of all sufferings is the Noble Eightfold Path (*atthangika-magga*). The eight constituents of the Path can be divided into three groups called *sikkhà* (learning or training):

1 *Sila-sikkhà* – training in morality

It comprises three *maggangas* (constituents of the Path):

- i *Sammà-vàcà* – right speech
- ii *Sammà-kammanta* – right action
- iii *Sammà-ājīva* – right livelihood.

2 Samàdhi-sikkhà – training in concentration

This also comprises three *maggangas*:

- i *Sammà-vàyàma* – right effort
- ii *Sammà-sati* – right mindfulness
- iii *Sammà-samàdhi* – right concentration

3 Pannà-sikkhà – training in wisdom

This training consists of two *maggangas*:

- i *Sammà-ditthi* – right view
- ii *Sammà-sankappa* – right thought

Though the right view (wisdom) should guide the way throughout the course of purification, one should begin with *silā-sikkhà* for laying down the foundation of the Path. Based on *silā*-foundation, one shall develop concentration (*samàdhi-sikkhà*), and based on concentration, one shall practice *vipassanà* to develop wisdom (*paññā*).

Therefore, in the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi Magga*), *silāvisuddhi* (purity of morality) comes first, and *citta-visuddhi* (purity of the mind, which refers to *samàdhi-sikkhà*) comes next. The remaining five *visuddhis* correspond to *paññā-sikkhà* (training in wisdom). The progress along the Path will be marked by the seven *visuddhis*, the last *visuddhi* being the end of the Path. Each *visuddhi* is characterised by certain *vipassanà-nānas* (insight-knowledge).

These phenomena together with the practical aspects of *samathavipassanà* meditation will now be described.

1 Silā-visuddhi (Purity of Morality)

A lay-person can attain the purity of morality by fulfilling the three *silā-maggangas*:

1 Right speech – abstaining from lying, slandering, harsh speech and vain talk;

2 Right action – abstaining from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct;

3 Right livelihood – abstaining from a livelihood connected with immoral speech or immoral action.

A person can fulfill the above moral requirements by observing the five precepts. It is better if he can observe eight, nine or ten precepts. Most meditation centers in Myanmar ask their yogis to observe eight or nine precepts. One main reason is to save all the troubles and the money for preparing and serving food in the afternoon. Another reason is that yogis will have more time to meditate and will meditate better without consuming food in the afternoon and in the evening. However, Fresh fruit juices and certain light drinks without milk, barley or any cooked vegetables are allowed.

For monks the purity of morals consists of four kinds of *silā* or discipline:

1 *Pātimokkha-sanvara-silā* – moral discipline as prescribed by the *Pātimokkha*,

2 *Indriya-sanvara-silā* – mindfulness to prevent the arising of defilements (*kilesas*) at the five doors (eye, ear, nose, tongue and body),

3 *Ajivapārisuddhi-silā* – discipline as regards purity of livelihood.

4 *Paccayasannissita-silā* – contemplation of the purpose of using the necessities of life in order to prevent the arising of defilements in using them.

Lay-persons should also observe the above *silas* for these *silas* develop not only moral culture but also mental culture – both of which pave them way to the arising of concentration. Of course, eight or nine precepts serve as *Pātimokkha-sanvara-silā* for lay-people.

2 Citta-visuddhi (Purity of Mind)

For purity of mind, the yogis must develop the three *samàdhimagangas*:

- 1 Right effort – undertaking tranquility meditation,
- 2 Right mindfulness – being mindful on the object of meditation,
- 3 Right concentration – concentrating one’s mind on the object of meditation.

When the meditation progresses to the stage of *upacàrabhàvanà*, neighbourhood or access-concentration is attained. At this stage, all the hindrances (*nivàranas*) are temporarily driven away from the mind. Therefore, the mind is free from defilements (*kilesas*) and it is pure. The yogi is said to attain *citta-visuddhi* at this stage. If, however, the yogi can raise his concentration to *jhàna-samàdhi* (ecstatic absorption) by continuing his meditation until *appanàbhàvanà* is attained, then his mind will be free from defilements for longer periods. The *jhàna*-concentration is much more stable than access-concentration.

It is definitely stated in *Abhidhamma* that in order to attain purity of mind, one must attain either *upacàra-samàdhi* (access concentration) or *appanà-samàdhi* (*jhàna*-concentration). *Appanàsamàdhi* means the concentrations associated with the five *rupàvacara jhànas* or the four *arupàvacara jhànas*. Therefore, to attain Purity of Mind, one must at least develop access concentration.

Without this concentration, one cannot penetrate into the ultimate realities in insight-meditation, and so one cannot gain insight-knowledge. A thorough investigation has been carried out in Pa-auk Tawya Meditation Center that yogis cannot even penetrate through the body to see the internal organs, let alone to see the ultimate *rupa*, the *cittas* in the cognitive series and the *cetasikas* associated therewith. If one is not equipped with the *samàdhi* eye i.e. the mind-eye accompanied by access-concentration or *jhàna*-concentration, the more powerfully can one penetrate into the ultimate realities, and so the better.

The reader should not forget the simile of the stage-coach. If one misses one coach, one cannot catch the remaining coaches.

If one cannot develop Moral Purity, one shall miss the Purity of Mind.

If one cannot develop Purity of Mind, one shall miss the next coach, i.e. Purity of View, and so on.

3 Ditthi-visuddhi (Purity of View)

Equipped with *samàdhi*-eye, the yogi first looks into his body to see thousands and thousands of *rupa-kalàpas* (corporeal groups) arising and dissolving incessantly. He analyses the *kalàpas* to know the ultimate *rupas* viz., *pathavi, àpo, tejo, vayo, vanna, gandha, rasa, ojà, jivita-rupa* (physical vitality), *cakkhu-pasàda*, etc. Then he characterizes each *rupa* by means of its salient characteristic (*lakkhana*), its function or essential properties (*rasa*), the result of its function or the way it appears to the yogi’s mind (*paccu patthàna*), and the immediate causes which condition its arising (*padatthàna*).

Then he investigates his mind by observing the *vithi cittas* as they occur in succession in cognitive series. He investigates thoroughly all the *cittas* arising in all six types of *vithis* (cognitive series). After differentiating each *citta*, he investigates the *cetasikas*, which associate with each *citta*. He then characterizes each *citta* and each *cetasika* by means of *lakkhana, rasa, paccupatthàna* and *padatthàna* as he has done with each *rupa*.

By characterizing each type of *citta*, each type of *cetasika* and each type of *rupa* in his mind and body, he comes to know that only the feeling group (*vedanà*), the perception group (*sannà*), the group of mental formations (*sankhàra*), the consciousness group (*viññàna*) and the corporeality group (*rupa*) exist. Moreover, that nothing else, such as ‘atta’, ‘self’ or ‘ego’, ever exists.

He also understands that just as the combination of wheels, axle, vehicle-body, horse, etc., is called a carriage, so also the combination of the five groups (*khandhas*) is called ‘I, you, he, she or person’. His view is now free from the wrong notion that ‘I, you, he, she, *atta*, self or person exists’. He is said to attain the Purity of View (*Ditthi Visuddhi*).

The ability to characterise each type of *citta*, each type of *cetasika* and each type of *rupa* by means of *lakkhana, rasa, paccupatthàna* and *padatthàna* is called ‘*nàma-rupa-pariccheda-nàna*’ (the knowledge of characterization of

mental groups and corporeal group). This knowledge is the landmark of Purity of View.

Note:

The characterization of *cittas*, *cetasikas* and *rupas* by means of *lakkhana*, *rasa*, *paccupatthàna* and *padatthàna* is systematically carried out in Pa-auk Tawya Meditation Centres.

4 Kankhà-vitarana-visuddhi (Purity by Transcending Doubt)

'Kankhà' means 'doubt', it may be either intellectual or ethical doubt, i.e. methodical doubt or skeptical doubt. Only the sceptical doubt, which is identical with *vicikicchà*, is rejectable and kammically unwholesome, as it hinders the inner development of man.

The 16 doubts enumerated in the Suttas, such as the second Sutta in *Majjhima Nikàya*, are as follows.

a Five doubts concerning the past:

- i Have I been in the past?
- ii Or, have not been in the past?
- iii What have I been in the past?
- iv How have I been in the past?
- v From what state into what state did I change in the past?

b Five doubts concerning the future:

- i Shall I be in the future?
- ii Or, shall I not be in the future?
- iii What shall I be in the future?
- iv How shall I be in the future?
- v From what state into what state shall I change in the future?

c Six doubts concerning the present:

- i Am I?
- ii Or, am I not?
- iii What am I?
- iv How am I?
- v Whence has this being come?
- vi Whether will it go?

'Kankhà-vitarana-visuddhi' means 'purity by transcending doubt' or 'purification by overcoming doubt'. Thus in order to reach this stage of purity, one need to transcend or overcome the 16 doubts mentioned above as well as the 8 types of *vicikicchà* described in *Abhidhamma* (See Chapter 2, p.58).

So one need to know one's past lives as well as one's future lives and how the past, the present and the future are inter-related by the Law of Dependent Origination. It is stated clearly in *Visuddhi Magga* (II, 221 Myanmar) and *Abhidhamma-atthakathà* (II, 189 Myanmar) that **there is no one, even in dreams, who became enlightened without seeing the causal relations of Dependent Origination with his own wisdom eye.**

In order to correlate the past mental and corporeal phenomena with those of the present, one must know the mental and corporeal groups of the past lives as well as those of the present life. Again, to correlate the present with the future, one should also know the mental and corporeal groups of the future lives.

How can one know the past mental and corporeal phenomena, which have already dissolved, and the future phenomena, which do not come into existence yet?

Well, the ability of the *samàdhi*-mind is marvelous. We have learnt about *pubbenivàsànussati-abhinnà*, which can remember thousands of one's past lives, and *anàgatansanàna*, which can know one's future existences.

In the case of insight-meditation (*vipassanà*), we need not go to the *Abhinnà*-stage and we have no *Abhinnà*- the power of which we could make use. However, if we have the necessary *samàdhi* and the knowledge to characterize the mental and corporeal phenomena (*nàma-rupa*) both internally (in one's self) and externally (in the others), then we can trace the current or stream of arising and dissolving *nàma-rupa* backwards to the past lives. The method is described in *Samyutta Nikàya* (II, 71 Myanmar), in *Khajjaniya Sutta*, and it is being practised satisfactorily in Pa- auk Tawya Meditation Centres.

The future mental and corporeal groups may also be observed in a similar way by examining the probable results of the five causes of the present life. In Pa- auk Tawya Meditation centre, the yogi performs some meritorious at the shrine by offering candles and flowers. He makes the usual prayers and makes a wish as to the kind of person he wants to be in the next future existence as the result of that good deed. He characterizes the mental and corporeal phenomena, which arise during this performance.

He then goes to the common meditation hall and meditates together with the other yogis. He develops concentration, recalls the previous performance of the meritorious deed and again analysis the mental and corporeal phenomena arising at that time. If he observes the same results as he has noted before, he is assured that he can characterize external *nàma-rupa* phenomena.

Now based on the present five causes viz., *avijjà*, *tanhà*, *upàdàna*, *sankhàra* and *kamma-bhava* – he tries to visualize the future life, which will be formed as a result. He may see the same life as he has wished for at the shrine, or it may be a different one, which is more often the case. Whatever the new life may be the yogi again analyses the *nàma-rupa* phenomena of the new person and correlates the five future effects viz., *vinnàna*, *nàmarupa*, *saëyatana*, *phassa* and *vedanà* (see Chapter 8, page 312) with the five present causes. If he can actually observe the five future effect being formed as the results of the five present causes, then he is assured convincingly that the present and the future correlation of the Law of Dependent Origination hold.

The causal relations as described by the Law of Dependent Origination and the 24 conditions of *Patthàna* are the major causal relations, which govern the arising and dissolving the mental and corporeal phenomena occurring in ourselves as well as in others. There are certain immediate causes, which the yogi has to investigate. For example, four causes must be present for the arising of *cakkhu-dvàra vithi* (the eye-door cognitive series). These causes are the eye-door, the visible object, light and *manasikàra* (attention). similar four causes are respectively required for the arising of the other door-cognitive series.

Again in each cognitive series (*vithi*), *kusala cittas* (moral *kamma*-formations) arise as *javanas* if there is '*yoniso manasikàra* (wise reflection), and *akusala cittas* (immoral *kamma*-formations) arise as *javanas* if there is '*ayoniso manasikàra*' (unwise reflection). **Depending on these *kamma*-formations again, rebirth consciousness as well as other resultant consciousness arise in the next life.**

The corporeal groups are produced by four causes viz., *kamma*, *citta*, *utu (tejo)* and *àhàra (ojà)*. These causes together with their resultants **should be seen vividly by the *samàdhi*-eye.** When the immediate causes as well as the major causes for the arising of mental and corporeal groups have been thoroughly investigate, the yogi knows definitely that the five groups of existence that constitute each living being are being produced by the respective appropriate causes. So he is able to eliminate the "**View of Uncausedness**" (*Ahetuka-ditthi*) which believes in the arising of living beings without any cause, and also the '**View of the Wrong Cause**' of existence (*Visama-hetuka-ditthi*) which believes in the creation of living beings by a Creator.

Furthermore, since the yogi has observed the continuous chain of cause and effect relations occurring in accordance with the Law of Dependent Origination, he can discard the '**View of the Inefficacy of Action**' (*Akiriya-ditthi*), the '**View of Nihilism**' (*Natthika-ditthi*), the '**View of Eternity of the Soul or Ego**' (*sassataditthi*) and the '**View of Annihilation of the Soul or Ego**' (*ucchedaditthi*).

Numerous speculative opinions and theories, which at all times have influenced and still are influencing mankind, and which are not in accord with the causal relations, can all be eliminated. Now the mind of the yogi is free from all false views. Thus, the stage of the '**Purity of View**' (*Ditthi Visuddhi*) is further reinforced. Besides since the yogi has now overcome all the 16 doubts (*kankhà*) mentioned above as well as the skeptical doubt (*vicikicchà*) with respect to the causal relations, he is said to overcome or transcend all doubts. Therefore, he has also attained the '**Purity by**

Transcending Doubt' (*kankhà-vitarana Visuddhi*).

The landmark of this stage of purity is *Yathà-bhuta-nàna* (the knowledge that can discern the reality correctly) or *Paccayapariggaha-nàna* (the knowledge that embraces all the causes of mental and corporeal phenomena).

Cula-Sotàpanna (Junior Stream-winner)

'Sotàpanna' is a noble person (*Ariya*) who has eliminated *ditthi* and *vicikicchà*. He will never be reborn in the *apàya* abodes and he is destined to enter *Nibbàna* in no more than seven rebirths in the *kàma*-planes. Now the yogi, who has attained *Nàma-rupa-pariccheda-nàna* and *Paccaya-pariggaha-nàna*, has temporarily eliminated *ditthi* and *vicikicchà* as described above. Therefore, he resembles a *sotàpanna* but he is not a *sotàpanna* yet. He is called a *cula-sotàpanna* meaning a junior-*sotàpanna*. He will not be reborn in the *apàya* abodes in his subsequent life.

The two knowledge, i.e. ***Nàma-rupa-pariccheda-nàna* and *Paccaya-pariggaha-nàna* are very important. They are the basic knowledge in insight-meditations and they constitute the foundations for the arising of ten *vipassanà-nànas* in later stages.**

They are not included in *vipassanà-nànas* because they do not concentrate on the three characteristic marks (*Tilakkhana*) of existence. Nevertheless, they reveal the insight nature of the ultimate realities concerning *nàma* and *rupa*. They are important because they eliminate the wrong or evil views (*micchà-ditthi*) and strengthens the right view (*sammàditthi*).

The wrong views are rejected for being a source of evil aspirations and conduct. It is stated in *Anguttara Nikàya* (Book II, Sutta 22) that:

"No other thing than evil views do I know, O monks, whereby to such an extent the unwholesome things not yet arisen arise, and the unwholesome things already arisen are brought to growth and fullness. No other things than evil views do I know, whereby to such an extent the wholesome things not yet arisen are hindered in their arising, and the wholesome things already arisen disappear. No other thing than evil views do I know, whereby to such an extent human beings at the dissolution of the body at the death are passing to a way of suffering into a world of woe into hell."

Furthermore, in *Anguttara Nikàya* (Book II, Sutta 23) it is stated that:

"Whatever a man filled with evil views performs or undertakes, or whatever he possesses of will, aspiration, longing and tendencies, all these things lead him to an undesirable, unpleasant and disagreeable state, to woe and suffering".

5 Maggàmagga-nànadassana Visuddhi

(Purity of Vision in Discerning the Path and not-Path)

The criteria of this Purity of Vision are *Sammasana-nàna* and the first part of *Udayabbaya-nàna*. *Sammasana-nàna* is the knowledge that can investigate the three characteristic marks of *nàma-rupa* in the five aggregates of existence. *Udayabbaya-nàna* is the knowledge that can investigate the arising and passing away of the ultimate *nàma* and *rupa*. **Strictly speaking, *vipassanà-bhàvanà*, which is the investigation of the three characteristic marks of *nàma* and *rupa* in the thirty-one planes of existence, begins at this stage.** There are four methods for investigating the three characteristic marks of existence.

1 Kalàpa-sammasana Method

This is the investigation of all conditioned things (*sankhàra* or *nàma-rupa*) in the thirty-one planes of existence in terms of five groups or aggregates without differentiating them as belonging to the past, present or future. Considering all the corporeal groups in the 31 planes that have arisen with causes, he meditates:

*"This material group has the nature to dissolve and pass away, so it is impermanent (*anicca*). It has the nature of fearfulness because of their incessant dissolution, so it is unsatisfactory or suffering (*dukkha*). It possesses no substantial entity, which does not dissolve, so it is not 'I', not 'person', not 'ego' nor 'atta' (*anatta*).*

Then he considers all the feeling group, the perception group, the group of mental formations and the consciousness group in turn and meditates in the same way as above.

2 Addhàna-sammasana Method

This method investigates the conditioned things in the 31 planes of existence by way of duration. He divides the conditioned things into the past, the present and the future group. He meditates like this:

“The material group in the past life has all dissolved in the past life. It does not proceed or pass on to the present. Because of its nature of dissolving and passing away, it is anicca. Because of its nature of fearfulness it is dukkha. Because of its nature of not ‘ego or atta’ it is anatta”.

Then considering the fact that all the material group in the present life will dissolve in this life and will not pass on to the future life, he again meditates on the present material group as *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*.

He meditates in the same way on the four mental groups, considering one group at a time.

3 Santati-sammasana Method

This method investigates the conditioned things in the 31 planes of existence in terms of continuous series. To practise this method the yogi divides the corporeal groups in one life as a series of hot *rupa*, a series of cold *rupa*, etc. He then meditates thus: “The hot series or *rupa* has all dissolved. It does not pass on to the cold series of *rupa*. Because of its nature of dissolution, it is *anicca*. Because of its nature of fearfulness, it is *dukkha*. Because of its nature of not ‘ego or *atta*’, it is *anatta*”.

Similarly considering the various cognitive series of consciousness, he meditates that *cakkhu-dvāra vithi-cittas* dissolve soon after they are formed and they do not pass on to *sota-dvāra vithi-cittas* that *sota-dvāra vithi-cittas* also dissolve soon after they are formed and they do not pass on to *ghāna-dvāra vithi-cittas*, and so on. Therefore, they are *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta* because of their dissolution, fearfulness and not ‘ego or *atta*’ natures.

4 Khana-sammasana Method

This method investigates the conditioned things in the 31 planes of existence by way of momentariness. He meditates like this: “The corporeal group which is formed in the past moment has all dissolved in the past. It does not pass on to the present moment. Because of its dissolution nature, it is *anicca*. Because of its nature of fearfulness, it is *dukkha*. Because of its nature of not ‘ego or *atta*’ it is *anatta*.”

“The mental groups (*citta* and *cetasikas*) that have arisen at the moment of *atita-bhavangā* have all dissolved at that moment. They do not pass on to the moment of *bhavangā-calana*. Because of their nature of dissolution, they are *anicca*. Because of their nature of fearfulness, they are *dukkha*. Because of their nature of not ‘ego or *atta*’, they are *anatta*”.

“The mental groups (*citta* and *cetasikas*) that have arisen at the moment of *bhavangā-calana* have all dissolved at that moment. They do not pass on to the moment of *bhavangu-paccheda*. Because of their nature of dissolution, they are *anicca*. Because of their nature of not ‘ego or *atta*’, they are *anatta*”.

The yogi can extend this method as far as his knowledge can embrace the natural phenomena of *nāma* and *rupa*. Those yogis, who have systematically investigated the **five groups of existence** in the present as well as in the past and the future lives, and have characterized each type of *rupa*, *citta* and *cetasika* by means of *lakkhana*, *rasa*, *paccupatthāna*, *padatthāna*, and have correlated these ultimate realities according to the Law of Dependent Origination. They can vividly see the long chain of arising and dissolving of *nāma-rupa* phenomena extending from the earliest past life they have investigated to the subsequent past lives, to the present life and then to the future lives. Since they can see the arising and the dissolution of individual *nāma* and *rupa* in the chain, they can easily meditate on the three characteristics of existence.

According to the experience of Pa-auk Tawya yogis, the long chain of arising and dissolving of the mental and corporeal phenomena is so distinct that they just watch the arising and the dissolving of the phenomena and meditate on them by way of *aniccānupassanā* for 10-15 minutes. They then by way of *dukkhānupassanā* for another 10-15 minutes and again by way of *anattānupassanā* for 10-15 minutes. As they keep on meditating and rotating the

anupassanàs in turn, their ability to investigate the three characteristic marks of *nàma* and *rupa* become better and better until they are able to see the arising instant, the existing instant and the dissolving instant of each *nàma* and *rupa*. This is the culmination of *Sammasana-nàna*.

Then the conditioned things are investigated according to the causal relations. Because the cause arises, the effect arises. When the cause dissolves, the effect also dissolves. The causes that condition *rupa* to arise are *avijjà*, *tanhà*, *kamma* and *àhàra*. The causes that condition the *cetasikas* to arise are *avijjà*, *tanhà*, *kamma* and *phassa*. The causes that condition the arising of *cittas* are *avijjà*, *tanhà*, *kamma* and *nàma-rupa*. These the yogi comes to know well.

By meditating in this way for thousands of times, the yogi's investigating knowledge improves more and more until he is able to see the arising instant and the dissolving instant of *nàmarupa* very clearly. At this stage, the yogi stops considering the cause-effect relations, and concentrates on the arising instant and the dissolving instant of *nàma-rupa*. The arising and the dissolving phenomena of mental and corporeal groups become very distinct when the knowledge known as *Udayabbaya-nàna*, which observes these phenomena, also arises. As this knowledge gathers in strength, the ten *Upakkilesas* (impurities or corruption) normally arise. These *upakkilesas* are very distinct, and so they represent a very good criterion for judging whether one has really attained *Udayabbaya-nàna*.

Upakkilesa (Ten Impurities of Vipassanà)

- 1 *Obhàsa* – rays emitting from the body on account of insight,
- 2 *Piti* – five kinds of rapture (unprecedented joy),
- 3 *Passaddhi* – both *kàya-* and *citta-passaddhi* – tranquility or quietude.
- 4 *Adhimokkha* – the controlling faculty of strong faith,
- 5 *Paggaha* – intense effort which supports *vipassanà-citta*
- 6 *Sukha* – pleasant feeling in the whole body due to wholesome *cittaja-rupa*,
- 7 *Nàna* – quick insight wisdom,
- 8 *Upatthàna* – mindfulness fixed on *kammattthàna*,
- 9 *Upekkhà* – *tatramajjatupekkhà* and *avajjanupekkhà*, (the former represents *tatramajjattatà cetasika* which can observe phenomena effortlessly; the latter refers to the *cetana* associated with *avajjana-citta* that can reflect on phenomena quickly)
- 10 *Nikanti* – mild attachment to *vipassanà-nàna*, which is accompanied by *piti*, *passaddhi*, *sukha* and *obhàsa*.

Of the ten impurities mentioned above, only *nikanti* (attachment) belongs to *kilesas* (defilements). The remaining ones are wholesome qualities. When one is presented with these qualities, especially the body-rays, unprecedented joy, quietude and happiness on account of pleasant feeling, strong religious fervor due to intense faith, the insight wisdom and the ability to observe the arising and passing away of conditioned things quickly and effortlessly. One may develop grasping *ditthi* (the wrong view that they occur in me), vicious *màna* (the pride that I alone possess these marvelous qualities) and grasping *tanhà* (strong attachment that the qualities are mine). These *ditthi*, *màna* and *tanhà* really defile one's meditation because they are real defilements (*kilesas*).

Some yogis with poor knowledge of Dhamma even think that they attain *Magga* and *Phala* when they have the unusual aura, joy, tranquility and happiness. All these people who have such a wrong view (*ditthi*) or a vicious pride (*màna*) or a grasping attachment (*tanhà*) are on the wrong Path; their meditation will be at a standstill and may even decline.

Those people, who have sufficient knowledge of Dhamma, know very well that these unusual phenomena of aura, joy, happiness; etc., are just *upakkilesas* and that they do not represent a *Magga* or *Phala* yet. To be on the right Path, **one must meditate on the arising and passing away of the conditioned things**. This knowledge, which can differentiate between the wrong Path and the right Path, is called *Maggàmagga-nànadassana Visuddhi*. The yogi who possesses this knowledge is said to attain the Purity of Vision discerning the Path and not-Path.

6 Patipadà-nànadassana-visuddhi (Purity of Vision of the Path-progress)

The Purity of Vision of the Path-progress ranges from the later part of *Udayabbaya-nàna* to the last *vipassanà-nàna*,

covering nine insight knowledge in all. These knowledge have to be developed one after another earnestly and strenuously meditating on the three characteristic marks of the conditioned things (*sankhàra – nàma-rupa*).

Udayabbaya-nàna

After attaining the Purity of Vision discerning the Path and not-Path, the yogi earnestly undertakes the *vipassanà*-meditation again, meditating on the three characteristic marks of existence, with particular attention to the arising phenomena and the dissolving of the conditioned things. Gradually the yogi's *Udayabbaya-nàna* becomes matured.

Bhanga-nàna

As the insight knowledge of the yogi gradually developed, the yogi is able to note the arising and passing away of *nàma* and *rupa* more and more quickly. Since *nàma* and *rupa* are arising and passing away at a tremendous rate of many billions per second, no yogi would be able to observe all *cittas* and *cetasikas* as they arise and perish. Even when he can note along quickly, he will not observe the arising phenomena any more; all he observes is only the dissolving phenomena. Whatever he looks at, he observes the dissolution of conditioned things. The knowledge that observes the incessant dissolution of the ultimate *nàma* and *rupa* is called *Bhanga nàna*. If the yogi can observe the dissolving instant of the *Bhanga nàna*, that investigates the dissolving instant of a conditioned thing, with a subsequent *Bhanga nàna*, then his *Bhanga-nàna* is said to reach its culmination.

Bhaya-nàna

When the yogi observes the incessant dissolution of the conditioned things continuously, he realizes the fearful nature of *nàma-rupa* and the five aggregates of existence. The yogi is said to attain *Bhaya-nàna*, which is the knowledge that realizes the fearful nature of *nàma-rupa*.

Adinava-nàna

When the yogi possesses the knowledge that realizes the fearful nature of *nàma-rupa*, he finds the faulty and unsatisfactory nature of *nàma-rupa*. Thus, he also attains *Adinava-nàna*, which is the knowledge that realizes the fault and unsatisfactoriness in *nàma-rupa*.

Nibbidà-nàna

When the yogi finds fault in *nàma-rupa* and knows well how unsatisfactory the conditioned things are, he develops disgust in these things. He is no longer happy to possess them. He is said to develop *Nibbidà-nàna*, which is the knowledge of disgust in *nàma-rupa*.

Muncitukamyatà-nàna

When the yogi has disgust in *nàma-rupa*, the conditioned things, he wants to escape from the entanglement of *nàma-rupa* just as the fish in the net of the fisherman and the little frog in the mouth of the snake want to escape. Thus, *Muncitukamyatà-nàna*, i.e. the knowledge of the desire to escape from the entanglement of *nàmarupa* arises in the mind of the yogi.

Patisankhà-nàna

The yogi, who wants to escape from the net of *nàmarupa*, finds no way out other than to meditate on the three characteristics of existence in the five aggregates both internally and externally. There is a good example here. A fisherman uses a bell-shaped bamboo-basket with a wide opening at the bottom to catch fish. He lowers the basket into water in a creek until it touches the bottom of the creek, puts his hand in from a narrow mouth at the top of the basket, and stirs the water in the basket with his hand to see whether the basket has enclosed some fish. If his hand touches a fish, he will catch it. Otherwise, he lifts the basket and lowers it repeatedly into water a few steps away from the previous place. Now his hand touches something like a fish. He grasps it and pulls it out of water. When the upper part of the animal comes over the surface of water, he sees three stripes around its neck and he knows it to be a water-cobra. Now the snake has poisonous venom. It can kill him if it has the chance to bite him.

At first, he thought that he had caught a big fish and so he was delighted. Every worldling feels delighted in a similar way to possess mind and body because he does not know the fearful nature of *nàma-rupa* yet. When the fisherman saw the three stripes on the neck of the snake, he knew the snake to be a water-cobra and to be very dangerous. This is analogous to the situation when the yogi saw the three characteristic marks of existence and the fearful nature of the conditioned things (*nàma-rupa*). This is the time when the yogi attains *Bhaya-nàna*.

When the fisherman saw danger, he found the situation to be unsatisfactory and the snake to be disgusting. In the same way the yogi, who realized the fearful nature of the conditioned things, found them to be unsatisfactory and developed disgust on them. These correspond to the times when the yogi developed *Adinava-nàna* and *Nibbidà-nàna*, respectively.

Now the fisherman was no longer happy to have the snake in his hand and he developed a strong desire to escape from the snake. This is analogous to the situation when the yogi wanted to escape the entanglement of *nama-rupa* after he attains *Muncitukamyatà-nàna*. The fisherman, who wants to escape from the snake, dares not free the snake, because it will bite him if he frees it. So, whether he likes it or not, he grips the snake, pulls it out of the water, raises it over his head, swirls it around three or four times, throws it away as far as he can and hurries to the high ground.

In the same way, the yogi, who wants to escape from *nàma* and *rupa*, cannot neglect them and forget them. He must take a firm grip on them by meditating on the three characteristic marks of existence. This corresponds to *Patisankhà-nàna*.

Sankhàrupekkhà-nàna

The fisherman, who has thrown away the snake and hurried to the high ground, soon feels safe and relaxed. In a similar manner, the yogi, who earnestly meditates on the three characteristics of the conditioned things, soon develops equanimity towards *nàma-rupa*. He has either disgust on or attachment to *nàma-rupa*. He can keep a balanced mind even though he is observing the true nature of *nàma* and *rupa*.

Here again there is a good illustration. A man had a beautiful wife. We might think that he was lucky. However, his wife's beauty attracted the attention of other men, some of whom went out of their way to use every means to win her love. If she was not faithful or if her mind was not firm, she might commit adultery. Now this man's wife was not faithful. She went out with several men. Here husband was very unhappy and he pleaded with her to be faithful to him. She refused to comply. She kept on going out with other men. The man was so upset that he could not bear it any more. Therefore, he divorced her at court. After that, even though the man knew that she was going out with several men as usual, he did not feel upset, as her conduct was not concerned with him any more.

Similarly, the yogi, who has developed *Sankhàrupekkhà-nàna*, can maintain equanimity towards *nàmarupa* and conditioned things even though he is observing the incessant dissolution and the unsatisfactory nature of them.

Anuloma-nàna

The yogi, who can maintain equanimity towards *nàmarupa* and conditioned things, carries on his meditation on the three characteristics of existence by way of the three *Anupassanàs*. However, his mind no longer wants to observe the conditioned things. His mind is looking out for *Nibbàna*, and so long as it does not find *Nibbàna*, it keeps on observing the conditioned things. When it finds *Nibbàna*, however, it departs from the conditioned things and enters the realm of *Nibbàna*.

Here again we find a beautiful simile. In the old days sailors used to take some crows with them on voyage. After sailing the ship for a certain number of days, they expected to see land. If no sign of land was in sight, they seize a crow free to fly in the direction the ship was sailing. The crow would fly as far as it could, and if it did not spot land, it came back to the ship and rested on the mast. After sailing on for a couple of days, the sailors again set free another crow. The crow would fly as far as it could and, if it did not see land, it would come back. However, if it saw land, it would fly on to the land without returning to the ship. Then the sailors know that land was near and sailed the ship towards the land.

In the same way, the investigating mind would keep coming back to *Sankhàrupekkhà-nàna* so long as it did not see *Nibbàna*. Once it saw *Nibbàna*, it did not come back; it proceeded on towards *Nibbàna* through *Maggavithi*. The *Magga-vithi* has been discussed Chapter IV. It occurs like this:

a *Magga-vithi in manda-pannà* (slow-witted) person:
“Na-Da-Ma-Pa-U-Nu-Go-Magga-Phala-Phala”-Bha-

b *Magga-vithi in tikkha-pannà* (quick-witted) person:

“Na-Da-Ma-U-Nu-Go-Magga-Phala-Phala-Phala”-Bha-

In the above *vithis*, the insight knowledge associated with ‘Pa-U-Nu’ is known as *Anuloma-nàna*.

Pa – *Parikamma* – preparation for the arising of *magga*.

(It is absent in *tikkha-pannà* person.)

U – *upacàra* – proximity of *magga*

Nu – *anuloma* – adaptation or connection,

Go – *gottrabhu* – the *citta* that cuts the *putthujjana*-lineage to form the *ariya*-lineage.

In the above cognitive series, *parikamma*, *upacàra* and *anuloma citta*s take *tilakkhana* as their object and thus they are included in *vipassanà citta*s.

Gottrabhu-nàna

Gottrabhu, on the other hand, takes *Nibbàna* and not *tilakkhana* as its object. therefore, it is not included in *vipassanà citta*s. The insight knowledge associated with *gottrabhu* is called *Gottrabhu nàna*.

Magga-nàna and Phala-nàna

As *gottrabhu* points the way towards *Nibbàna*. *Maggacitta* and *Phala-citta*s follow immediately taking *Nibbàna* as their object. The wisdom (*pannà*) associated with *Magga* and *Phala* are called *Magga-nàna* and *Phala-nàna*, respectively.

The *Magga-nàna*, though it arises just once, is very powerful. It simultaneously accomplishes four functions namely,

- 1 comprehension of the Truth of suffering,
- 2 eradication of craving which is the cause of suffering,
- 3 realization of *Nibbàna* and
- 4 full development of the eight constituents of the Path.

“As the traveler by night sees the landscape around him by a flash of lightening and the picture so obtained swims long thereafter before his dazzled eyes, so the individual seeker, by the flashing light of insight, glimpses *Nibbàna* with such clearness that the after picture never more fades from his mind.” ~ DR. PAUL DAHLKE

The Path (*Magga*) is immediately preceded by two or three *Phalas*, which are the Fruits of the Path. This is the reason why the Dhamma is called ‘*akàlika*’ (immediately effective).

Paccavekkhana-nàna

After the *magga-vithi* and a few *bhavaṅgà-citta*s, five *paccavekkhana-vithi*s normally arise. By these *vithi*s the yogi

- (1) reflects on the Path,
- (2) reflects on the Fruits,
- (3) reflects on the *Nibbàna* he has realized,
- (4) reflects on the defilements he has annihilated and
- (5) reflects on the defilements he has yet to annihilate.

The knowledge associated with *paccavekkhana-javana citta*s is called *Paccavekkhana-nàna*.

Sixteen Nānas in Series

Up to now, the yogi has attained 16 *nānas* viz., *Nāma-rupapariccheda- nàna*, *Paccaya-pariggaha-nàna*, ten *vipassanà nānas* (*Sammasana-nàna* to *Anuloma-nàna*), *Gottrabhu nàna*, *Magga-nàna*, *Phala-nàna*, and *Paccavekkhana-nàna*.

7 Nānadassana-visuddhi

(Purity of Vision of the knowledge of the four Paths)

The effort to purify the mind stage by stage begins with *silavisuddhi*. When *anuloma-nàna* is attained, the first six

stages are completed. On attainment of *Magga* and *Phala*, the final stage of purification called *Nānadassana-visuddhi* is reached.

Nānadassana-visuddhi comprises four *maggas*, which comprehend the four Noble Truths directly and purify the mind from all defilements stage by stage as described below.

1 *Sotāpattimagga* – It is the first *magga* attainable by yogis. It may be regarded as the first stage of Sainthood.

Sota – the stream leading to *Nibbāna*,
Apatti – entering for the first time,
Magga – the noble Eightfold Path.

Sotāpattimagga annihilates two *kilesas* (defilements) viz., *ditthi* and *vicikicchā* and three Fetters (*Samyojana*) namely, *sakkāya-ditthi*, *vicikicchā* and *silabbataparāmāsa*. *Sakkāya-ditthi* – personality belief taking the complex combination of psycho-physical aggregates as person or self or I. *Vicikicchā* – **Sceptical doubt about**

- (1) the Buddha,
- (2) the Dhamma,
- (3) the Sangha,
- (4) the Training,
- (5) the past lives,
- (6) the future lives,
- (7) both the past and the future lives, and
- (8) the Law of Dependent Origination.

Silabbataparāmāsa – adherence to the false view that one becomes pure and liberated by bovine and canine morality or by rites and ceremonies.

2 *Sakadāgāmi-magga* – It is the second *magga* attainable and may be regarded as the second stage of Sainthood. It does not annihilate any of the remaining *kilesas* and Fetter; but it reduces the strength of these defilements.

3 *Anāgāmi-magga* – It is the third *magga* attainable and may be regarded as the third stage of Sainthood. It annihilates one more *kilesa*, i.e., *dosa* (hatred), and two more Fetters – namely, *kāmarāga* and *patigha*.

Dosa – *Patigha* – hatred or illwill
Kāmarāga – attachment to sense-objects.

4 *Arahatta-magga* – It is the fourth *magga* attainable by yogis and it may be regarded as the fourth and last stage of Sainthood. It annihilates all the remaining *kilesas* and Fetters.

Ariyas (Noble Persons)

There are eight types of *ariyas* – namely, four *maggattha*-persons and four *phalattha*-persons. The *maggattha*-persons, however, exist only for a conscious moment each, i.e., during the *magga-citta* they are experiencing. After the dissolution of the *magga-citta*, they become *phalattha*-persons.

For example, a person is called *sotāpatti-maggattha* person while the *sotāpatti-magga citta* is arising in him. After the dissolution of this *citta*, *sotāpatti-phala citta* arises in him and he is known as a *sotāpatti-phalattha* person or *sotāpanna* from this moment onwards.

If a *sotāpanna* again undertakes *vipassanā* meditation, he will attain *sakadāgāmi-magga* in due course. During this second *maggacitta*, he is called a *sakadāgāmi-maggattha* person. After the dissolution of this *citta*, *sakadāgāmi-phala citta* arises in him and he is known as a *sakadāgāmi-phalattha* person or *sakadāgāmi* from this moment onwards.

A *sakadāgāmi* may again undertake *vipassanā* meditation. When he attains the third *magga*, he is known as an *anāgāmi-maggattha* person while that *magga-citta* last. As soon as the *maggacitta* dissolves, *anāgāmi-phala citta*

arises in him and he is called an *anàgàmi-phalattha* person or *anàgàmi* from that moment onwards.

Again, an *anàgàmi* may undertake *vipassanà* meditation, and when he attains the fourth *magga*, he becomes an *arahattamaggattha* person. However, as soon as the *arahatta-magga citta* dissolves, *arahatta-phala citta* arises and he becomes an *arahatta-phalattha* person or *arahat* from that moment onwards.

Thus, the four *maggattha* persons exist for so short a duration that they cannot be pointed. Only the four *phalattha* persons can be pointed. Their distinct characteristics may be noted as follows:

1 *Sotàpanna* or *Sotàpan*

A *sotàpanna* is one who has attained *sotàpatti-magga* and *sotàpattiphala*.

He (or she) can enjoy the peace or *Nibbàna* whenever he (or she) wishes by developing the meditative absorption corresponding to *sotàpatti-phala-samàpatti*. He (or she) is called a stream-winner because he has entered the stream that leads to *Nibbàna*. The stream entered is the stream that leads to *Nibbàna*. **The stream represents the noble Eightfold Path.** He is no longer a worldling (*putthujjana*), but an *ariya* (noble person).

A *sotàpanna* has eradicated the two worst defilements, i.e., *ditthi* and *vicikicchà*, and three basic Fetters namely, *sakkàya ditthi*, *vicikicchà* and *silabbataparàmàsa*. He has also eliminated the coarse properties of the remaining defilements—the properties that can cast a person to the *apàya* abodes. Therefore, to him, the doors of the *apàya* abodes are closed for ever; neither will he be reverted to a worldling again.

He has unwavering faith in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha.

He will also steadfastly observe the five precepts and will abstain from committing any of the ten *akusala-kamma*-*pathas*, i.e., ten *ducaritas* or unwholesome actions. The four *lobha-mula ditthigata sampayutta citta*s and the *moha-mula vicikicchà-sampayutta citta* will never arise in him. However, he may, enjoy the sense pleasures as an ordinary person. However, he will not be reborn more than seven times in the sense-sphere (*kàma-loka*). **He (or she) will become an arahat in due course and after that last life, he will enjoy the peace of Nibbàna for ever.**

There are three types of *sotàpanna*:

1 *Sattakkhattu-parama-sotàpanna* – one who enters *Nibbàna* after seven lives,

2 *Kolankola-sotàpanna* – one who enters *Nibbàna* after two to six lives,

3 *Ekavijji-sotàpanna* – one who enters *Nibbàna* after one life.

2 *Sakadàgàmi* or *Sakadagam*

A *sakadàgàmi* is one who has attained *sakadàgàmi-magga* and *phala*. He (or she) can enjoy the peace of *Nibbàna* whenever he wishes by developing the meditative absorption corresponding to *sakadàgàmi-phala-samàpatti*. ‘*Sakadàgàmi*’ literally means ‘once returner’. A *sakadàgàmi* will be reborn only once in the sense sphere. He will then become an *arahat* and, **after that last life**, will be in *Nibbàna* for ever.

The *citta*s that arise in a *sakadàgàmi* are the same as those, which arise in a *sotàpanna* with the only exception that a *sakadàgàmi* enjoys *sakadàgàmi-phala-samàpatti* instead of *sotàpattiphala-samàpatti*. Compared to a *sotàpanna*, a *sakadàgàmi* has less *ràga*, (lust, greed), *dosa* (ill will, hatred) and *moha* (delusion). Thus, he is nobler than a *sotàpanna*.

There are six kinds of *sakadàgàmis*, namely:

1. Those who attain *sakadàgàmi* in the human world and attain *parinibbàna* here,
2. Those who attain *sakadàgàmi* in the human world and attain *parinibbàna* in a heavenly realm,
3. Those who attain *sakadàgàmi* in a heavenly realm and attain *parinibbàna* there,
4. Those who attain *sakadàgàmi* in a heavenly realm and attain *parinibbàna* in the human world,
5. Those who attain *sakadàgàmi* in the human plane, and after being born once in a heavenly realm, attain *parinibbàna* in the human plane,
6. Those who attain *sakadàgàmi* in a heavenly realm, and after being born once in the human plane, attain

parinibbàna in a heavenly realm.

3 *Anàgàmi* or *Anàgam*

An *anàgàmi* is one who has attained *anàgàmi-magga* and *phala*.

He (or she) can enjoy the peace of *Nibbàna* whenever he wishes by developing the meditative absorption corresponding to *anàgàmi-phala-samàpatti*. ‘*Anàgàmi*’ literally means ‘no returner’. An *anàgàmi* will not be reborn in the sense sphere. If he does not attain the arahatship in the present life yet, he will be reborn in a *Brahma* realm or Pure Abode (*Suddhàvāsa*), where he will attain arahatship and pass to *Nibbàna*.

Since the *anàgàmi-magga* eliminates the *kilesa: dosa* (hatred) and the two Fetters namely, *kàmarāga* (sense desire) and *patigha* (hatred or illwill), and *anàgàmi* will no longer experience **anger, hatred, worry, despair, fright, and any unpleasant mental feeling**, neither will he enjoy sense pleasures.

His mind will always be in peace and he will enjoy the ecstatic peace of *Nibbàna* whenever he wishes by developing *anàgàmi-phala-samàpatti*. If he attains all the eight *jhānas*, he can also enjoy *Nirodha-samàpatti* during which all consciousness and mental activity are suspended.

There are five types of *anàgàmis*:

- 1 Those who attain arahatship within the first half of the life of the Pure Abode where they are reborn,
- 2 Those who attain arahatship within the second half of the life of the Pure Abode where they are reborn,
- 3 Those who attain *kilesa-parinibbàna* (i.e., arahatship) without having to struggle very hard,
- 4 Those who attain *kilesa-parinibbàna* after struggling very hard,
- 5 Those that do not attain arahatship in the four lower abodes of the five Pure Abodes but attain arahatship in the highest Pure Abode (i.e., *Akanittha*).

4 *Arahat*

An *arahat* is one who has attained *arahatta-magga* and *phala*. He (or she) can enjoy the peace of *Nibbàna* whenever he wishes by developing the meditative absorption corresponding to *arahattaphala-samàpatti*. He can enjoy *Nirodha-samàpatti* if he attains the eight *jhānas*. Since *arahatta-magga* eliminates all the defilements (*kilesas*), an *arahat* has no greed, ill-will, delusion, conceit, personality belief and other bad mental factors. He has no attachment to anything so he is free from all entanglements. He does not regard anything as his own; thus, he has no reason to feel sad because something is taken or stolen from him.

Because he has uprooted all *dosa* (anger, hatred or ill-will) from his mind, he will never experience unpleasant mental feeling, which accompanies *dosa-mula cittas*. The twelve *akusala-cittas* (immoral consciousness) will never arise in him. As his mind is always free from all defilement’s, it is at the purest state making him the noble’s one. He is a true Saint worthy of respect by men and devas and worthy of receiving alms, which are offered to him with the intention of enjoying the benefits in the present life as well as in future, lives.

As *arahat*, literally meaning a worthy one, does not accomplish fresh kammic activities, and he is not subject to rebirth because the conditions for his reproduction in matter have been destroyed. *Sotāpannas*, *sakadàgàmis* and *anàgàmis* are called *sekhas* because they have yet to undergo a training. *Arahats* are called *asekhas* because they no longer need to undergo any training.

The *arahat* realizes that what is to be accomplished has been done. A heavy burden of misery has finally been thrown away, and all forms of craving and all shades of delusion have been annihilated. He now stands on heights higher than celestial, far removed from uncontrolled passions and the defilements of the world.

There are five types of *arahats*:

- 1 *Pannàvimutta-arahat* – one who is emancipated through *pannà* (wisdom),
- 2 *Ubhatobhàgavimutta-arahat* – one who is emancipated in two ways, namely by *arupajjhàna* and by *ariyamagga*,
- 3 *Tevijja-arahat* – one who possesses the three *vijjàs*,

4 *Chalàbhinna-arahat* – one who possesses the six *abhinnàs* (supernormal powers),

5 *Patisambhidhàpatta-arahat* – one who possess the four *sambhidhàs*, i.e. the knowledge of the meaning of the each

word, the knowledge of the text (*pàli*), the knowledge of the origin of the words, and the determinate knowledge together with the accurate discrimination of the first three.

Conclusion

Cittena niyate loko. The *citta* (consciousness) rules over all the world. The *citta* of every person controls the person, leads his every action and shapes his destiny. Men's mind has produced modern science, has been developing it very rapidly and controls all the science technology including the atomic energy and the atomic weapons.

It is men's mind, which has shaped various cultures of the world, and it will be men's minds again which will direct the hands to pull the triggers of the atomic weapons, which will wipe out the human civilization and the human race from the surface of the earth.

Indeed the mind is the most powerful agent in all the worlds. It is the mind, which manipulates the fate of each individual to be born in an *apàya* abode, in the human world or in a *deva* realm. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to understand the true nature of the mind and the function of each constituent of the mind.

There is no doubt that only the Buddha *Abhidhamma* can analyse the mind in detail and correctly describe the functions of the *citta* and the *cetasikas*, which constitute the mind. Moreover, it is only Buddha *Abhidhamma*, which fully and correctly explains the co-relations between the various factors of mind and matter in the form of the majestic Law of Dependent Origination, which vividly describes the rounds of rebirth undergone by each individual. Furthermore, the *Abhidhamma* clearly exposes the theoretical as well as the practical aspects of the Noble Eightfold Path, also known as the Middle Path by which the mind is purified from the defilements in seven stages by developing mental concentration and *vipassanà* insight.

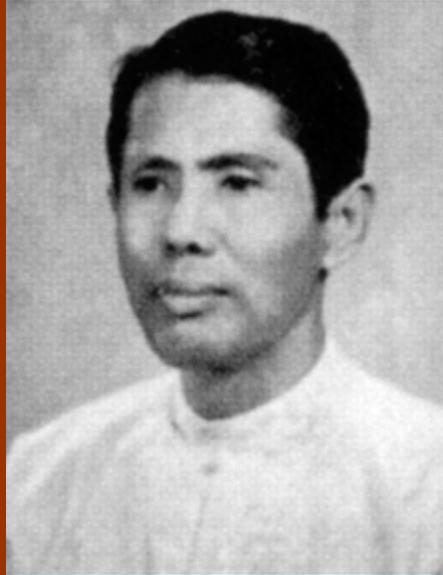
The attainment of various blissful experiences, which surpass sensual enjoyment, and the realization of the unique peace of *Nibbàna* in this very life are very real, and the *Abhidhamma* brightly illuminates the right path to be followed by every person for the attainment of the highest goal in life. Everybody should study *Abhidhamma* very seriously and use the *Abhidhamma* knowledge as the guiding torch of his life

May the guiding torch of Abhidhamma shine forever

May the supreme knowledge of Abhidhamma ever enlighten the whole world!

**The Author is Open to Invitation
To lecture on Abhidhamma**

Dr. M. Tin Mon
15/19 U Wisara Estate
Dagon P.O. Yangon
Union of Myanmar.
Phone: 95-01-286610



Dr. Mehm Tin Mon was born in Kamawet village, Mudon township, Mon State, Union of Myanmar, on January 13, 1934. His parents were U Yaw In and Daw Sein Tan who were devout Buddhists. They belonged to the Mon race and made their living by farming.

Mehm Tin Mon attended Kamawet Primary School and Mudon State High School where he topped his class every year. He passed the High School Leaving Examination in 1951 with distinctions in Mathematics and General Science. He also passed the Matriculation Examination in the same year from the first division with distinction in Mathematics. He joined the University of Yangon in 1951. In the Intermediate Examination held in 1953, he scored the highest marks in mathematics and Chemistry, and University awarded him the University Hoe Wah Kain Gold Medal as well as the University Scholarship.

In the Bachelor of Science Examination held in 1955, he stood first with distinctions in Physics, Chemistry and Pure Mathematics. Again, the University awarded him the University gold medal called Esoof Bimiah Gold Medal. In 1956, he passed the B.Sc. Honors Examination in Chemistry with excellence and the University awarded him the third University gold medal called U Shwe Lay Gold Medal.

In 1957, he went to the United States of America to study at the University of Illinois on a State Scholarship sponsored by the Government of the Union of Myanmar. The University of Illinois awarded him the University Fellowship record. He received the Master of Science Degree in 1958 and the Doctorate Degree in 1960. He also won membership to **Phi Lambda Upsilon** Society and Sigma Xi Society.

He served his country for more than 36 years from 1956 to 1992 working as Lecturer and Head of Department of Chemistry in several Institutes and finally as Professor of Chemistry in the University of Mawlamyine. He retired from Professorship on December 1, 1992. During his service to the State, he headed the Buddhist Association of the Institute of Medicine (1), the Buddhist Association of the Institute of Education and the Buddhist Association of Mawlamyine University. He also served as Secretary and later as President of the Central Buddhist Association of Universities and Institutes in Yangon from 1983 to 1986. He had successfully raised funds for building the beautiful two-storey Dhammayone (Community Hall for religious purposes) and the sacred Shrine (Pagoda) in the University of Mawlamyine.

Dr. Tin Mon also excelled in Religious examinations. He stood first in the Abhidhamma Examination (Ordinary Level) in 1981. He also stood first in the Abhidhamma Examination (Honors Level) in 1983. Again, in 1984 he stood first in the Visuddhi Magga Examination. The Department of Religious Affairs held these examinations annually in Myanmar... Dr. Tin Mon has written over thirty books on education as well as on Buddhism. He traveled throughout Myanmar and abroad delivering lectures on Buddhism and conducting short intensive classes on Abhidhamma and meditation. The Government of Union of Myanmar awarded him the title of Saddhamma Jotakadhaja in 1994 for his outstanding contribution to the propagation of Buddhism.

Dr. Tin Mon was appointed as an Adviser to the Ministry of Religious Affairs on August 1, 1993 and he has been serving the State in this capacity ever since. He also serves as **Professor of Samatha** in the International Theravada Buddha Missionary University, Yangon. In addition, conducted Lectures on Abhidhamma and Buddhism.

Any interested society or organization may invite Dr. M. Tin Mon to lecture on Buddhism or teach Abhidhamma in any town or country.

A full course on Abhidhamma by Dr. M. Tin Mon takes about 30 lecturing hours. Please contact:

Dr. M. Tin Mon
15/19 U Wisara Estate
Dagon P.O. Yangon
Union of Myanmar.
Phone: 95-01-286610