



Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering

The First Noble Truth, the Noble Truth of Suffering (*dukkha*) was discussed in the February 2023 Newsletter; the Second Noble Truth, the Noble Truth of the Origination of Suffering (*samudaya*) was discussed in the March 2023 Newsletter; and the Third Noble Truth, the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (*nirodha*) was discussed in the April 2023 Newsletter. This essay will discuss the Fourth Noble Truth, the Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*magga*).

The following is a recap of the Noble Truths discussed in previous newsletters.

I. The Noble Truth of Suffering is summarized in eight kinds of suffering (*dukkha*).

physiological suffering:

1. birth,
2. old age,
3. sickness, and
4. death.

psychological suffering:

5. union with the unpleasant,
6. separation from the pleasant, and
7. not getting what one wants.

existential suffering:

8. five clinging-aggregates: material form, feeling, perception, mental formations, and sense consciousness.

Every experience within the world is potentially *dukkha* when the experiencer identifies with and have passion or craving for impermanent material or immaterial objects and conditions.

II. The Noble Truth of the Origination of Suffering is craving (*taṇhā*). The thirst for pleasure, existence, and annihilation is the proximate cause of *dukkha*. The impossibility of permanently satisfying desires produces frustration, disappointment, and discontent. *Taṇhā*, the craving for becoming and existence, is the cause of repeated birth and death and the subsequent suffering that is experienced within the cycle.

III. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering is *nibbāna* and is realized by uprooting *taṇhā* from the subtle levels of mind. *Nibbāna*, the goal of practicing the Dhamma, is perfect peace, contentment and liberation from *dukkha*.

The Fourth Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*magga*) is the Noble Eightfold Path also known as the Middle Way. The following excerpts are definitions and insights of the Noble Eightfold Path - the Middle Way.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
Part V.56.11(1) Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma

“Bhikkhus, these two extremes should not be followed by one who has gone forth into homelessness. What two? The pursuit of sensual happiness in sensual pleasures, which is low, vulgar, the way of worldlings, ignoble, unbeneficial; and the pursuit of self-mortification, which is painful, ignoble, unbeneficial. Without veering towards either of these extremes, the Tathāgata has awakened to the middle way, which gives rise to vision, which gives rise to knowledge, which leads to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nibbāna*.

“And what, bhikkhus, is that middle way awakened to by the Tathāgata, which gives rise to vision ... which leads to *Nibbāna*? It is this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

273. Of all paths the Eightfold Path is the best; of all truths the Four Noble Truths are the best; of all things passionlessness is the best; of humans, the Seeing One (the Buddha) is the best.

The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya translated by Maurice Walshe
22 Mahāsātipaṭṭhāna Sutta: The Greater Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness

'And what, monks, is Right View? It is, monks, the knowledge of suffering, the knowledge of the origin of suffering, the knowledge of the cessation of suffering, and the knowledge of the way of practice leading to the cessation of suffering. This is called Right View.

'And what, monks, is Right Thought? The thought of renunciation, the thought of non-ill-will, the thought of harmlessness. This, monks, is called Right Thought.

'And what, monks, is Right Speech? Refraining from lying, refraining from slander, refraining from harsh speech, refraining from frivolous speech. This is called Right Speech.

'And what, monks, is Right Action? Refraining from taking life, refraining from taking what is not given, refraining from sexual misconduct. This is called Right Action.

'And what, monks, is Right Livelihood? Here, monks, the Ariyan disciple, having given up wrong livelihood, keeps himself by right livelihood.

'And what, monks, is Right Effort? Here, monks, a monk rouses his will, makes an effort, stirs up energy, exerts his mind and strives to prevent the arising of unarisen evil unwholesome mental states. He rouses his will . . . and strives to overcome evil unwholesome mental states that have arisen. He rouses his will . . . and strives to produce unarisen wholesome mental states. He rouses his will, makes an effort, stirs up energy, exerts his mind and strives to maintain wholesome mental states that have arisen, not to let them fade away, to bring them to greater growth, to the full perfection of development. This is called Right Effort.

'And what, monks, is Right Mindfulness? Here, monks, a monk abides contemplating body as body, ardent, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside hankering and fretting for the world; he abides contemplating feelings as feelings . . .; he abides contemplating mind as mind . . .; he abides contemplating mind-objects as mind-objects, ardent, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside hankering and fretting for the world. This is called Right Mindfulness.

'And what, monks, is Right Concentration? Here, a monk, detached from sense-desires, detached from unwholesome mental states, enters and remains in the first jhāna, which is with thinking and pondering, born of detachment, filled with delight and joy. And with the subsiding of thinking and pondering, by gaining inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, he enters and remains in the second jhāna, which is without thinking and pondering, born of concentration, filled with delight and joy. And with the fading away of delight, remaining imperturbable, mindful and clearly aware, he experiences in himself the joy of which the Noble Ones say: "Happy is he who dwells with equanimity and mindfulness", he enters the third jhāna. And, having given up pleasure and pain, and with the disappearance of former gladness and sadness, he enters and remains in the fourth jhāna, which is beyond pleasure and pain, and purified by equanimity and mindfulness. This is called Right Concentration. And that, monks, is called the way of practice leading to the cessation of suffering.'

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
12:65 Nagarasutta: The City

"So too, bhikkhus, I saw the ancient path, the ancient road travelled by the Perfectly Enlightened Ones of the past. And what is that ancient path, that ancient road? It is just this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. I followed that path and by doing so I have directly known aging-and-death, its origin, its cessation, and the way leading to its cessation. I have directly known birth ... existence ... clinging ... craving ... feeling ... contact ... the six sense bases name-and-form ... consciousness ... volitional formations, their origin, their cessation, and the way leading to their cessation.

Finding the Middle Way by Jack Kornfield

The middle way describes the middle ground between attachment and aversion, between being and non-being, between form and emptiness, between free will and determinism. The more we delve into the middle way the more deeply we come to rest between the play of opposites. Sometimes Ajahn Chah described it like a koan, where "there is neither going forward, nor going backward, nor standing still." To discover the middle way, he went on, "Try to be mindful, and let things take their natural course. Then your mind will become still in any surroundings, like a clear forest pool. All kinds of wonderful, rare animals will come to drink at the pool, and you will clearly see the nature of all things. You will see many strange and wonderful things come and go, but you will be still. This is the happiness of the Buddha."

The Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga) is composed of eight factors.

1. Right View (sammā-diṭṭhi),
2. Right Intention (sammā-saṅkappa),
3. Right Speech (sammā-vācā),
4. Right Action (sammā-kammanta),
5. Right Livelihood (sammā-ājiva),
6. Right Effort (sammā-vāyāma),
7. Right Mindfulness (sammā-sati), and
8. Right Concentration (sammā-samādhi).

The Noble Eightfold Path is also described in terms of three aspects:

1. Moral Conduct (sīla). The morality division includes path factors right speech, right action and right livelihood.
 2. Meditation (samādhi). The meditation division includes path factors right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.
 3. Wisdom (paññā). The wisdom division includes path factors right view and right intention.
- “These three aspects are the conditions for eradicating the three kinds of defilements, or kilesa: (1) mental defilements that arise by transgression of ethical precepts; (2) mental obsessions that arise due to conditions; and (3) latent tendencies or dispositions.”¹

The above path factors are not listed in a specific order to be accomplished, not as successive stages of practice. All eight path factors are practiced and developed together. Each path factor is interconnected with and mutually support each other. All eight path factors comprise a whole unit and are practiced simultaneously.

Right View, also translated as Right Understanding, is of two kinds: mundane right view and supramundane right view. Note that conceptual understanding of the Four Noble Truths is included under mundane right view, while the direct penetration and realization of the Four Noble Truths is accomplished under supramundane right view.

Mundane Right View

- A. One is the owner of the kamma one makes; i.e. moral causation. Wholesome volitions-intentions (cetanā) and the resulting actions produce happiness while unwholesome intentions and the resulting actions produce dukkha. Wholesome kamma are meritorious and lead to happiness in this life and in future rebirths. Unwholesome kamma are demeritorious and produce misery in this life and in future rebirths.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

63 (9) Penetrative, paragraph 5

“It is volition, bhikkhus, that I call kamma. For having willed, one acts by body, speech, or mind.

The ten kammically wholesome actions (kusala kamma or kusala kammāpatha) are:

1. generosity (dāna maya),
2. morality (sīla maya),
3. meditation (bhāvanā maya),
4. respectfulness (apacāyana),
5. service (veyyāvacca),
6. sharing of merit (patti dāna),
7. rejoicing in the merit of others (pattānumodana),
8. listening to the Dhamma (dhamma savana),
9. teaching the Dhamma (dhamma desanā), and
10. straightening of views (ditṭhi'jju kamma).

The ten kammically unwholesome actions (akusala kamma or akusala kammāpatha) are:

1. killing (pāṇātipātā),
2. stealing (adinnādānā),
3. sexual misconduct and wrong conduct in regard to sense pleasures (kāmesu micchācārā),
4. lying (musāvādā),
5. slanderous speech (pisuṇāya vacāya),
6. harsh speech (pharusāya vācāya),
7. idle chatter (samphappalāpā),
8. covetousness (anabhijjhā),
9. ill will (abyāpāda), and
10. wrong views (adiṭṭhi).

- B. There is moral significance in:
1. giving alms,
 2. large offerings,
 3. small gifts,

4. well-done and ill-done karmas, and the result thereof,
5. the behavior towards one's mother,
6. the behavior towards one's father,
7. the possibility that some beings arise from instantaneous rebirth,
8. the [mundane] reality of this world,
9. the possibility of another world, and
10. acknowledging recluses (samaṇas) who have realized the truth regarding this world and other worlds.

C. Conceptual understanding of The Four Noble Truths.

Supramundane Right View is accomplished through the elimination of the fetters that result in the penetration and realization of The Four Noble Truths and the Noble Four Paths.

Fetters (samyojana) that tie beings to mundane existence (saṃsāra):

1. personality belief (sakkāya diṭṭhi),
2. doubt (vicikicchā),
3. clinging to rites and rituals (sīlabbata parāmāsa),
4. sensual desire (kāma rāga),
5. ill will (vyāpāda),
6. craving for existence in the Form World, fine material existence (rūpa rāga),
7. craving for existence in the Formless World, immaterial existence (arūpa rāga),
8. conceit (māna),
9. restlessness (uddhacca), and
10. ignorance (avijjā).

The Noble Four Paths:

1. Streamwinner (sotāpanna) is free from fetters 1-3.
2. Once Returner (sakadāgāmi) is free from fetters 1-3 and has overcome 4 and 5 in their grosser form.
3. Non-Returner (anāgāmi) is free fetters from 1-5.
4. Perfect Holy One (arahat) is free from all 10 fetters.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
117 Mahācattārīsaka Sutta: The Great Forty

6. "And what, bhikkhus, is right view? Right view, I say, is twofold: there is right view that is affected by taints, partaking of merit, ripening in the acquisitions; and there is right view that is noble, taintless, supramundane, a factor of the path.
7. "And what, bhikkhus, is right view that is affected by the taints, partaking of merit, ripening in the acquisitions? 'There is what is given and what is offered and what is sacrificed; there is fruit and result of good and bad actions; there is this world and the other world; there is mother and father; there are beings who are reborn spontaneously; there are in the world good and virtuous recluses and brahmins who have realised for themselves by direct knowledge and declare this world and the other world.' This is right view affected by taints, partaking of merit, ripening in the acquisitions.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

24. "And what, friends, is right view? Knowledge of suffering, knowledge of the origin of suffering, knowledge of the cessation of suffering, and knowledge of the way leading to the cessation of suffering — this is called right view.

Right Intention are wholesome thoughts that promote Right Speech and Right Action.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

25. "And what, friends, is right intention? Intention of renunciation, intention of non-ill will, and intention of non-cruelty — this is called right intention.

Defined in negative terms:

1. thoughts of renunciation and detachments to sense pleasures (nekkhamma vitakka),
2. thoughts of non-ill will (abyāpāda vitakka), and
3. thoughts of non-cruelty (avihiṃsā vitakka).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
note 108

Avihiṃsā which is a synonym for compassion (karuna) is the root of all virtues, especially the root-cause of morality.

Defined in positive terms:

1. thoughts of generosity (dāna vitakka),

2. thoughts of loving-kindness (metta vitakka), wishing others well and
3. thoughts of providing protection to living beings and radiating compassion (karunā vitakka).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
19 Dvedhāvitakka Sutta

6. “Bhikkhus, whatever a bhikkhu frequently thinks and ponders upon, that will become the inclination of his mind. If he frequently thinks and ponders upon thoughts of sensual desire, he has abandoned the thought of renunciation to cultivate the thought of sensual desire, and then his mind inclines to thoughts of sensual desire. If he frequently thinks and ponders upon thoughts of ill will... upon thoughts of cruelty, he has abandoned the thought of non-cruelty to cultivate the thought of cruelty, and then his mind inclines to thoughts of cruelty.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
note 241

Calling to mind the unworthiness of evil thoughts produces hiri, a sense of shame; calling to mind their dangerous consequences produces ottappa, fear of wrongdoing.

Right Speech is wholesome speech that is truthful, gentle, beneficial and encourages harmony.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

26. “And what, friends, is right speech? Abstaining from false speech, abstaining from malicious speech, abstaining from harsh speech, and abstaining from idle chatter — this is called right speech.

1. abstaining from false speech, lying (musāvāda veramaṇī),
2. abstaining from malicious speech, slanderous speech, divisive tale-bearing speech that incites one against another (pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī),
3. abstaining from harsh speech and rude talk (pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī), and
4. abstaining from idle speech, useless chatter, foolish babble, vain talk and gossip (samphappalāpā veramaṇī).

“As one progressively attains the stages of sainthood, one gradually uproots mental defilements which are the cause of wrong speech. It is said that the first stage of sainthood (sotāpanna) dispels false speech or telling lies; the third stage of sainthood (anāgāmi) dispels slandering and abusive language; the fourth and final stage of sainthood (arahant) dispels frivolous talk or useless chatter.”²

Right Action is wholesome physical conduct that causes no harm to others or to oneself.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

27. “And what, friends, is right action? Abstaining from killing living beings, abstaining from taking what is not given, and abstaining from misconduct in sensual pleasures — this is called right action.

1. abstaining from killing (pāṇātipātā veramaṇī),
2. abstaining from stealing (adinnādānā veramaṇī), and
3. abstaining from wrong conduct in regard to sensual objects and not to engage in sexual misconduct (kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī).

Right Livelihood is an occupation that abstains from wrong conduct: the fourfold unwholesome verbal actions and the threefold unwholesome bodily actions; i.e., Right Livelihood does not transgress Right Speech and Right Action. This is the path factor that encourages compassionate work which does not cause harm.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

28. “And what, friends, is right livelihood? Here a noble disciple, having abandoned wrong livelihood, earns his living by right livelihood — this is called right livelihood.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
Book 5, 177 (7) Trades

“Bhikkhus, a lay follower should not engage in these five trades. What five? Trading in weapons, trading in living beings, trading in meat, trading in intoxicants, and trading in poisons. A lay follower should not engage in these five trades.”

Right Livelihood does not employ the following five occupations:

1. trading in weapons (satthavaṇijjā),
2. trading in living beings (sattavaṇijjā),
3. trading in meat (maṃsavaṇijjā),
4. trading in intoxicants (majjavaṇijjā), and
5. trading in poisons (visavaṇijjā).

The following sutta excerpt teaches how to live a balanced and wholesome life.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
Book of Eights, 54 (4) Dīghajāṇu

(4) “And what is balanced living? Here, a clansman knows his income and expenditures and leads a balanced life, neither too extravagant nor too frugal, [aware]: ‘In this way my income will exceed my expenditures rather than the reverse.’ ... “The wealth thus amassed has four sources of dissipation: womanizing, drunkenness, gambling, and bad friendship, bad companionship, bad comradeship. ...

“The wealth thus amassed has four sources of accretion: one avoids womanizing, drunkenness, and gambling, and cultivates good friendship, good companionship, good comradeship.

Right Effort diminishes and eliminates unwholesome contents of mind and to encourage the emergence and maintenance of wholesome contents of mind. This is the arousal of energy to purify the mind of defilements: ignorance, ill will and greed.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

29. “And what, friends, is right effort? Here a bhikkhu awakens zeal for the non-arising [anuppādāya] of unarisen evil unwholesome states, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his mind, and strives. He awakens zeal for the abandoning [pahānāya] of arisen evil unwholesome states, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his mind, and strives. He awakens zeal for the arising [uppādāya] of unarisen wholesome states, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his mind, and strives. He awakens zeal for the continuance [ṭhitiyā], non-disappearance, strengthening, increase, and fulfillment by development of arisen wholesome states, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his mind, and strives. This is called right effort.

Right Effort consists of generating four states of mind:

1. the effort to avoid unwholesome states of mind from arising (saṃvara-padhāna),
2. the effort to overcome unwholesome states of mind that have arisen (pahāna-padhāna),
3. the effort to cultivate wholesome states of mind (bhāvanā-padhāna), and
4. the effort to maintain wholesome states of mind that have arisen (anurakkhaṇa-padhāna).

The following sutta teaches the importance of cultivating a ‘balance of energy’ and an ‘evenness of the spiritual faculties’. The Five Spiritual Faculties (indriya) are:

1. faith (saddhā),
2. energy (virīya),
3. mindfulness (sati),
4. concentration (samādhi), and
5. wisdom (paññā).

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
Book Six, 55 (1) Soṇa

“Soṇa, when you were alone in seclusion, didn’t the following course of thought arise in your mind: ‘I am one of the Blessed One’s most energetic disciples, yet my mind has not been liberated from the taints by non-clinging. Now there is wealth in my family, and it is possible for me to enjoy my wealth and do meritorious deeds. Let me then give up the training and return to the lower life, so that I can enjoy my wealth and do meritorious deeds?’”

“Yes, Bhante.”

“Tell me, Soṇa, in the past, when you lived at home, weren’t you skilled at the lute?”

“Yes, Bhante.”

“What do you think, Soṇa? When its strings were too tight, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?”

“No, Bhante.”

“When its strings were too loose, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?”

“No, Bhante.”

“But, Soṇa, when its strings were neither too tight nor too loose but adjusted to a balanced pitch, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?”

“Yes, Bhante.”

“So too, Soṇa, if energy is aroused too forcefully this leads to restlessness, and if energy is too lax this leads to laziness. Therefore, Soṇa, resolve on a balance of energy, achieve evenness of the spiritual faculties, and take up the object there.”

“Yes, Bhante,” the Venerable Soṇa replied.

When the Blessed One had finished giving the Venerable Soṇa this exhortation, just as a strong man might extend his drawn-in arm or draw in his extended arm, he disappeared in the Cool Grove and reappeared on Mount Vulture Peak. Then, some time later, the Venerable Soṇa resolved on a balance of energy, achieved evenness of the spiritual faculties, and took up the object there. Then, dwelling alone, withdrawn, heedful, ardent, and resolute, in no long time the Venerable Soṇa realized for himself with direct knowledge, in this very life, that unsurpassed consummation of the spiritual life for the sake of which clansmen rightly go forth from the household life into homelessness, and having entered upon it, he dwelled in it. He directly knew: “Destroyed is birth, the spiritual life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming back to any state of being.” And the Venerable Soṇa became one of the arahants.

Right Mindfulness is careful attention and recollection of the Dhamma. This is the faculty of mind that constantly watches sensory experience in order to prevent the arising of craving which would condition future rebirths, watches for unwholesome states of mind in order to let them go, and watches for wholesome states that are to be encouraged. Right Mindfulness also remembers to concentrate the mind on the meditation anchor during the practice of meditation.

Mindfulness (sati) has the characteristic of remembering, its function is not to forget, and it is manifested as guarding.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi note 560

“... sati, mindfulness, by reference to its original meaning of memory. The relationship between the two senses of sati – memory and attentiveness – may be formulated thus: keen attentiveness to the present forms the basis for an accurate memory of the past.”

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi 141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

30. “And what, friends, is right mindfulness? Here a bhikkhu abides contemplating the body as a body, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief for the world. He abides contemplating feelings as feelings, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief for the world. He abides contemplating mind as mind, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief for the world. He abides contemplating mind-objects as mind-objects, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief for the world. This is called right mindfulness.

Right Mindfulness may be developed in the following four contemplations:

- I. mindful contemplation of the body (kāyānupassanā),
 - II. mindful contemplation of feelings (vedanā sañña),
 - III. mindful contemplation of the mind (citta sañña), and
 - IV. mindful contemplation of mind-objects or dhammas (dammā sañña).
- I. Mindful Contemplation of the Body may be practiced in the following six ways:
 1. mindfulness of the sensations of breathing (ānāpānasati),
 2. mindfulness of the four postures: walking, standing, sitting, and lying down (iriyāpatha-sañña),
 3. full awareness or clear comprehension of arising and vanishing with regard to the body (sampajañña),
 4. foulness of the body: the 32 bodily parts (asubha: dvattiṃs-ākāra),
 5. elements of the body: earth, water, fire, and air (dhātu: mahābhūta), and
 6. the nine charnel ground contemplations: reflection on corpses in different stages of decomposition (āmakasusān-sañña).
 - II. Mindful Contemplation of Feeling is practised by remaining focussed on feelings in themselves, or clear comprehension of arising and vanishing with regard to feelings, or sustained mindfulness of the presence of feelings.
 1. pleasant bodily and mental, worldly and unworldly feelings,
 2. painful bodily and mental, worldly and unworldly feelings, and
 3. neither-painful-nor-pleasant (neutral) bodily and mental, worldly and unworldly feelings.
 - III. Contemplation of Mind refers to the states of mind that are wholesome or unwholesome and developed or undeveloped. There is focus on the mind itself, clear comprehension of arising and vanishing with regard to the states of mind, and sustained mindfulness on the presence of mind. There is the awareness that the mind is with any of the following seven states:
 1. affected or unaffected by lust, hate and delusion,
 2. contracted - due to sloth and torpor,
 3. distracted - due to restlessness and remorse,
 4. exalted due to jhānas or unexalted due to sense consciousness,
 5. surpassed or unsurpassed,
 6. concentrated or unconcentrated, and
 7. liberated due to the absence of defilements or unliberated due to the presence of defilements.
 - IV. Mindful Contemplation of Mind-Objects or dhammas

- Awareness of the presence or absence, arising and abandoning, and no future arising of the the Five Hindrances (nīvaraṇā):
 1. sensual desires (kāmacchanda),
 2. ill will (vyāpāda),
 3. sloth and torpor (thīna-middha),
 4. restlessness and remorse (uddhaccakukkucca), and
 5. doubt (vicikicchā).
- Awareness of the existence, the origination, and the disappearance of the Five Clinging Aggregates (pañcupādānakkhandhā):
 1. material form (rūpa khandha),
 2. feeling (vedanā khandha:),
 3. perception (saññā khandha),
 4. mental formations (saṅkhāra khandha), and
 5. sense consciousness (viññāṇa khandha).
- Awareness of the existence, the origination, and the disappearance of the Six Sense Bases (saḷāyatana):
 1. eye & forms,
 2. ear & sounds,
 3. nose & odors,
 4. tongue & flavors,
 5. body & tangibles, and
 6. mind & mind-objects.
- Awareness of the presence or absence of the Seven Enlightenment Factors (bojjhanga):
 1. mindfulness (sati),
 2. investigation of dhammas (dhamma-vicaya),
 3. energy (viriya),
 4. joy (pīti),
 5. tranquility (passaddhi),
 6. concentration (sāmādhi), and
 7. equanimity (upekkhā).
- Contemplation of the Four Noble Truths:
 1. the Noble Truth of Suffering (dukkha),
 2. the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (dukkha samudaya),
 3. the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (dukkha nirodha), and
 4. the Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (dukkha nirodhagāminī paṭipadā).

The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya translated by Maurice Walshe

22 Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta: The Greater Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness

22. 'Whoever, monks, should practise these four foundations of mindfulness for just seven years may expect one of two results: either Arahantship in this life or, if there should be some substrate left, the state of a Non-Returner. Let alone seven years – whoever should practise them for just six years . . . , five years . . . , four years . . . , three years . . . , two years . . . , one year may expect one of two results . . . ; let alone one year – whoever should practise them for just seven months . . . , six months . . . , five months . . . , four months . . . , three months . . . , two months . . . , one month . . . , half a month may expect one of two results . . . ; let alone half a month – whoever should practise these four foundations of mindfulness for just one week may expect one of two results: either Arahantship in this life or, if there should be some substrate left, the state of a Non-Returner.

'It was said: "There is, monks, this one way to the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and distress, for the disappearance of pain and sadness, for the gaining of the right path, for the realisation of Nibbāna: – that is to say the four foundations of mindfulness", and it is for this reason that it was said.'

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

117 Mahācattārīsaka Sutta: The Great Forty

9. "... Mindfully one abandons wrong view, mindfully one enters upon and abides in right view: this is one's right mindfulness.

15. "... Mindfully one abandons wrong intention, mindfully one enters upon and abides in right intention: this is one's right mindfulness.

21. "... Mindfully one abandons wrong speech, mindfully one enters upon and abides in right speech: this is one's right mindfulness.

27. "... Mindfully one abandons wrong action, mindfully one enters upon and dwells in right action: this is one's right mindfulness.

33. "... Mindfully one abandons wrong livelihood, mindfully one enters upon and dwells in right livelihood: this is one's right mindfulness.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

47.20 (10) The Most Beautiful Girl of the Land

"Bhikkhus, suppose that on hearing, 'The most beautiful girl of the land! The most beautiful girl of the land!' a great crowd of people would assemble. Now that most beautiful girl of the land would dance exquisitely and sing exquisitely. On hearing, 'The most beautiful girl of the land is dancing! The most beautiful girl of the land is singing!' an even larger crowd of people would assemble. Then a man would come along, wishing to live, not wishing to die, wishing for happiness, averse to suffering. Someone would say to him: 'Good man, you must carry around this bowl of oil filled to the brim between the crowd and the most beautiful girl of the land. A man with a drawn sword will be following right behind you, and wherever you spill even a little of it, right there he will fell your head.'

"What do you think, bhikkhus, would that man stop attending to that bowl of oil and out of negligence turn his attention outwards?"

"No, venerable sir."

"I have made up this simile, bhikkhus, in order to convey a meaning. This here is the meaning: 'The bowl of oil filled to the brim': this is a designation for mindfulness directed to the body. Therefore, bhikkhus, you should train yourselves thus: 'We will develop and cultivate mindfulness directed to the body, make it our vehicle, make it our basis, stabilize it, exercise ourselves in it, and fully perfect it.' Thus, bhikkhus, should you train yourselves."

Right Concentration is a state of focus and unification of mind, and the development of a luminous mind which is equanimous and mindful. In the early Buddhist texts, concentration is associated with the term calm abiding (samatha). The commentaries define concentration as one-pointedness of mind (ekaggata).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

31. "And what, friends, is right concentration? Here, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. With the stilling of applied and sustained thought, he enters upon and abides in the second jhāna, which has self-confidence and singleness of mind without applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of concentration. With the fading away as well of rapture, he abides in equanimity, and mindful and fully aware, still feeling pleasure with the body, he enters upon and abides in the third jhāna, on account of which noble ones announce: 'He has a pleasant abiding who has equanimity and is mindful.' With the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy and grief, he enters upon and abides in the fourth jhāna, which has neither-pain-nor-pleasure and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity. This is called right concentration.

Theravada Pali texts mention four kinds of samadhi:

1. Momentary Concentration (khaṇika samādhi) is directed mindfulness and focus on the changing states of mind and body. The mind observes the three characteristics of phenomena that are characteristics of the contents of consciousness: impermanence, suffering and not-self. The mind grows still for momentary periods.
2. Preliminary Concentration (parikamma samādhi) or Preparatory Concentration pertains to the initial focus on the meditation anchor. The Pāli Canon have recorded forty meditation objects that may be used to anchor the mind in stillness and silence.
3. Access Concentration (upacāra samādhi) or Neighborhood Concentration approaches but does not yet attain absorption (jhāna). Arises when the five hindrances (nīvaraṇā) are absent from the gross level of mind.
4. Absorption Concentration (appanā samādhi) or Attainment Concentration is present during the absorptions (jhāna). Concentration is stable and fixed on the meditation anchor. There may arise the appearance of the counter-image (paṭibhāga nimitta) or counterpart sign. The nimitta is an image on which the mind focuses attention.

There are four stages of rupa jhāna. Rupa refers to the material realm, as different from the kama realm (lust, desire) and the arupa-realm (non-material realm). Each jhāna is characterized by a set of qualities which are present in that jhāna.

1. First jhāna has five factors: applied thought (vitakka), sustained thought (vicāra), joy (pīti), pleasure (sukha), and one-pointedness of mind (ekaggata). There is seclusion from sensuality and unwholesome states of mind.

2. Second jhāna is detached from applied and sustained thoughts. There are three factors: joy, pleasure, and one-pointedness of mind.
3. Third jhāna is without applied and sustained thoughts, and joy. There are two factors: pleasure and one-pointedness of mind.
4. Fourth jhāna is without applied and sustained thoughts, joy and pleasure. There are two factors: equanimity (upekkhā) and one-pointedness of mind.

The three phases of the Fourth Noble Truth.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi Part V.56.11(1) Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma

“This is the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering’: thus, bhikkhus, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, true knowledge, and light.

“This noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering is to be developed’: thus, bhikkhus, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, true knowledge, and light.

“This noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering has been developed’: thus, bhikkhus, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, true knowledge, and light.

The first phase is knowledge of the Truth of the Eightfold Path.

The Noble Truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering, nibbāna, is the Noble Eightfold Path. There is the understanding that the Noble Eightfold Path is a direct path for finding freedom from suffering.

The second phase is knowledge of the Truth of the Eightfold Path is to be developed.

The Eightfold Path is developed, perfected and known with direct experience. The degree of freedom from suffering is in direct proportion to the degree that the Noble Eightfold Path is perfected within oneself.

The third phase is knowledge of the Truth of the Eightfold Path has been developed.

This is the recollection that the Noble Eightfold Path has been perfected within oneself and nibbāna has been realized.

Notes:

1. The First Discourse of the Buddha: Turning the Wheel of Dhamma by Dr. Rewata Dhamma; 1997; p. 67
2. The First Discourse of the Buddha: Turning the Wheel of Dhamma by Dr. Rewata Dhamma; 1997; p. 35

Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planning to attend at www.MeetUp.com. Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at www.google.com/maps.

Activities of the Meditation Center

- Sitting meditation is held everyday at 6:30AM and 5:30PM. After meditation, Ajahn Kumāro is available to answer questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com on the days and time you would like to participate.
- The days of the full moon, new moon and the two half moons are called in Pāli: The Uposatha, and is a Buddhist day of observance. A lunar calendar is available at <https://cal.forestsangha.org>. Ajahn Kumāro will perform the ceremony of giving the five precepts on the full and new moon days after the 5:30PM meditation. You may elect to keep the precepts as long as you see fit (one night, a week, a lifetime, etc).

- Meditation Workshop is held on the first Sunday of each month between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. The workshop will provide instruction and practice for sitting and walking meditation. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- A recording of a Dhamma Talk from an experienced Thai Forest Teacher will be played on the third Sunday of each month. Sitting meditation starts at 4:30PM and the Dhamma Talk will be played afterwards. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- Every Saturday at 4:15PM the Meditation Center will be cleaned. Please join us in maintaining a clean space for practicing and discussing the Dhamma.
- There is a Library at the Meditation Center. You may browse for books to borrow at 5:00PM and check out the books for three weeks.
- Everyday at 8:40AM Ajahn Kumāro leaves for alms-round in order to give residents of Asheville the opportunity to earn merit by practicing generosity of giving food and placing it into the alms bowl. Ajahn does not accept or handle money. Ajahn usually arrives at the Whole Foods Market, 70 Merrimon Ave. just before 9:00AM and stands in front of the store for alms.
- Ajahn is available at other times during the day to meet with individuals or groups when requested.
- For more additional information please send an email to mittameditation@gmail.com. We also have a presence on Facebook and Meet-Up social media.

Request for Support

The Meditation Center is in need of support in order to accomplish its' mission and vision. The support may take various forms. You will support the Meditation Center by:

- Being present at the Meditation Center for group meditation.
- Giving alms during alms-round.
- Bringing to the Meditation Center items that are listed on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com.
- Volunteering your skills, energy and time at the Meditation Center.
- Informing your family and friends about the Meditation Center and encouraging them to participate in the activities.
- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyana-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.