

BBCRMC TRUE VIPASSANA RETREAT BOOK

by John Haspel

Becoming Buddha Cross River Meditation

Center True Vipassana Retreat

November 5 to November 8, 2020

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WELCOME

Dear Friends,

Thank you for allowing me the honor of leading our Becoming Buddha – Becoming Awakened True Vipassana Fall 2020 retreat. Matt, Jen, Ram, Kevin, and I hope to establish a most skillful and peaceful retreat environment.

Much like the setting of the first Buddhist Sangha, a retreat guided by the Eightfold Path will provide refuge from the entanglements of the world and the opportunity to deeply engage with the Buddha's Dhamma. To that end, be mindful of the eight factors of the Eightfold Path. The Buddha's words offer simple and profound guidance:

- . Be mindful of wrong view and remain in Right View.

- Be mindful of wrong intention and remain in Right Intention.
- Be mindful of wrong speech and remain in Right Speech.
- Be mindful of wrong action and remain in Right Action.
- Be mindful of wrong livelihood and remain in Right Livelihood.
- Be mindful of wrong effort and remain in Right Effort.
- Be mindful of wrong mindfulness and remain in Right Mindfulness
- Be mindful of wrong meditation and practice Right Meditation.

Thursday dinner and Sunday lunch will be an opportunity to practice Right Speech. Our meals on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday breakfast will be taken in Noble

Silence. All other times please support yourself and others in the Dhamma and observe Right Speech.

Retreats guided by the Buddha's Dhamma are not retreats *from the Dhamma* or from the opportunity for skillful interaction with each other, and so are not silent.

Our retreat environment will be very similar to the Buddha's Sangha 2,600 years ago. The first Sangha was guided by a simple observance: When gathered as a sangha be mindful of the Dhamma and support others in remaining mindful of the Dhamma. As with the first Sangha, the Eightfold Path will guide our thoughts, our speech, and our actions, providing the ongoing experiential opportunity to deepen and refine mindfulness of all aspects of the Path.

A retreat guided by the Buddha's Dhamma is an auspicious time to engage deeply in the Dhamma. This is how useful insight is developed – from a quiet and well-concentrated mind that supports the refined mindfulness for True Vipassana: Skillful Introspective Insight into the Three Marks Of Existence.

Remaining mindful of Right Speech in your conversations with each other during our retreat is the most practical and effective way of beginning to integrate the Eightfold Path and Become Awakened. Supporting each other in maintaining Right Speech is one aspect of Right Speech and unites and supports our retreat Sangha within the guiding framework of the Eightfold Path. The Buddha's words from the Magga Vibhanga Sutta:

” And what is Right Speech?

- Abstaining from lying
- Abstaining from divisive speech
- Abstaining from abusive speech
- Abstaining from gossip
- Abstaining from idle chatter

This, friends, is Right Speech.”

This is your retreat. This truly is an auspicious time. Gently leave the world, its “spiritual” concepts and ideologies, and its fabricated distractions behind. This is your opportunity to engage wholeheartedly with these profound teachings. The world will still be the world Sunday afternoon. By recognizing and abandoning clinging to wrong views you may very well be quite different!

Be mindful of Right Speech and the entire Eightfold Path. Deepen your understanding.

Be gentle with yourself and in your skillful interactions with others. This is how practical understanding is developed within the Framework of The Eightfold Path.

Take true refuge in the Buddha, his Dhamma, and our wonderful and well-focused Sangha.

Peace.

John Haspel

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SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- . The Ministers have asked that all guests wear a mask when interacting with Won Dharma staff and practice social distancing.
- . Upon arrival stop at Won Dharma Center office to check-in, and for a temperature check by Won staff.
Anyone with a temperature above 100

will be asked to leave the property.

Furthermore, each guest will be asked to have a temperature check daily, administered by the Won staff.

- We will remain on Won Dharma Center grounds throughout our retreat.
- Upon arrival, change your travel clothes, place in a bag, and don not wear again while on retreat. Laundry facilities are also available.
- Wearing masks in our residence and during sessions is encouraged but not required. When not wearing a mask, indoors or out, please maintain a reasonable distance from each other.
- Wash hands before and after each session.
- Reasonable social distancing will be observed. Our group of approximately

10 attendees will be able to sit approximately 3 to 4 feet apart during our sessions.

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Retreat Schedule

Thursday

- 3:00 pm to – 5:30 pm Check-in
- 5:30 Dinner – Right Speech
- 7:00 to 9:00 – Jhana meditation, Dhamma Talk, Sangha Q&A, and Discussion, with John Haspel
- - The importance of retreat and taking refuge in the Buddha, his Dhamma, and a well-focused Sangha, Developing Right View from Wrong View.
 - Dependent Origination – Paticca Samuppada Sutta (excerpt)

- Sacca-Vibhanga Sutta – Analysis Of Four Noble Truths (excerpt)
- Magga-Vibhanga Sutta – Analysis Of The Eightfold Path

Friday

- 6:45 To 7:15 am – 30-minute Jhana meditation (Optional) With Matt Branham
- 7:30 – Breakfast – Noble Silence
- 8:45 to 9:15 – QiGong with Matt Branham
- 9:30 to 11:00 – Jhana Meditation and Dhamma Talk, Sangha Q&A, and Discussion, with John Haspel
 - Nagara Sutta – The Buddha’s Noble Search For The Noble Path

- . Dhatu-Vibhanga Sutta – Nothing Personal – The Buddha’s Analysis of Self
- . 12 noon Lunch – Noble Silence
- . 1:30 to 2:00 – QiGong with Matt Branham
- . 2:15 to 4:00 – Jhana Meditation and Dhamma Talk, Sangha Q&A, and Discussion, with John Haspel
 - . Adhipateyya Sutta – Three Governing Principles For Vipassana
- . 5:30 Dinner – Noble Silence
- . 7:00 to 9:00 – Jhana Meditation and Dhamma Talk, Sangha Q&A, and Discussion, with John Haspel
 - . Cula-Dukkhakkhanda Sutta – The Lesser Discourse on Dukkha

Saturday

- . 6:45 To 7:15 am – 30-minute Jhana meditation (Optional) With Matt Branham
- . 7:30 Breakfast – Noble Silence
- . 8:45 to 9:15 – QiGong with Matt Branham
- . 9:30 to 11:00 – Jhana meditation, Dhamma Talk, Sangha Q&A, and Discussion, with John Haspel
- .
 - . Culavedalla Sutta – Dhammadinna Instructs Her Ex-Husband
- . 12 noon Lunch – Noble Silence
- . 1:30 to 2:30 – Qigong with Matt Branham
- . 2:30 – 5:30 – Quiet Time
- . 5:30 Dinner – Noble Silence

- 7:00 to 8:30 – Jhana meditation, Dhamma Talk, Sangha Q&A, and Discussion, with John Haspel
 - Anatta-Lakkhana Sutta – The Not-Self Characteristic
- 8:30 Mindful Social – Right Speech In Practice

Sunday

- 6:45 To 7:15 am – 30-minute Jhana meditation (Optional) With Matt Branham
- 7:30 Breakfast – Noble Silence
- 8:45 to 9:15 – QiGong with Matt Branham
- 9:30 to 11:00 – Jhana meditation, Dhamma Talk, Sangha Q&A, and Discussion, with John Haspel

- Sariputta Sutta – Jhana And The Cessation Of Ignorance
- 12 noon Lunch – Right Speech
- 1:00 pm – Closing Talk and Sangha Appreciation (Group Hug and Pic)

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SESSION 1

THE PATICCA-SAMUPPADA-VIBHANGA SUTTA (EXCERPT)

The Buddha was at Savatthi, at Jeta's Grove, Anathapindika's monastery. There he addressed those assembled: "Friends, I will describe in detail Dependent Origination. Listen carefully. And what is Dependent Origination?"

- From ignorance as a requisite condition come fabrications.

- . From fabrications as a requisite condition comes consciousness.
- . From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-and-form.
- . From name-and-form as a requisite condition comes the six-sense-base.
- . From the six-sense-base as a requisite condition comes contact.
- . From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling.
- . From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving.
- . From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging and maintaining.
- . From clinging and maintaining as a requisite condition comes becoming.
- . From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth.

- . From birth as a requisite condition comes aging, sickness, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair.”

The Buddha never addressed questions directly that would not lead to ending craving and clinging and cessation of dukkha. Answering questions about the nature of self originating from a deluded belief (in self) would only reinforce delusion and lead to more delusion, confusion suffering. These questions were consistently left unanswered as they were improper questions rooted in ignorance. The Buddha described these questions as arising from “Inappropriate views not fit for attention. These views will continue to generate confusion and suffering.”

The Buddha teaches what is fit for attention while maintaining the context of The Four Noble Truths:

1. Understanding Stress.
2. Understanding the Origination of Stress.
3. Understanding the Cessation of Stress.
4. Understanding the path leading to the cessation of Stress.

“As one attends appropriately in this way, three fetters are abandoned: identity-view, doubt, and grasping at precepts and practices.”

“Now what is becoming? Becoming is sensual becoming, form becoming and formless becoming.”

“And what is clinging and maintaining?

There are four types of clinging: Clinging to sensory stimulus, clinging to views (conditioned thinking), clinging to precepts

and practices, and clinging to a doctrine of self.”

“And what is name and form?

- . Feeling
- . Perception.
- . Intention.
- . Attention (all mental aspects)
- . Contact.

“Discriminating self-referential consciousness is name. The elements of water, fire, earth, and wind, that which makes up physical forms is called form.

“Name-and-form is discriminating consciousness bound to or clinging to physical form.

“And what is consciousness?

“There are six classes of consciousness:

- . Eye-consciousness.
- . Ear-consciousness.

- . Nose-consciousness.
- . Tongue-consciousness.
- . Body-consciousness.
- . Intellect-consciousness.

And what are fabrications?

“There are three fabrications:

- . Bodily fabrications.
- . Verbal fabrications.
- . Mental fabrications.

“And what is ignorance?

- . Ignorance is not knowing stress.
- . Not knowing the origination of stress.
- . Not knowing the cessation of stress.
- . Not knowing the (Eightfold) path leading to the cessation of stress.

“This is called ignorance.

ANALYSIS OF FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS – THE SACCA-VIBHANGA SUTTA (EXCERPT)

On one occasion the Buddha was staying at the Deer Park in Isipatana. He addressed those gathered: “Friends, it was here that I set in motion the unexcelled Wheel Of Dhamma. My Dhamma cannot be corrupted by any brahman, deva, Mara, Brahma, or any one in the entire world.

No one can corrupt the revelation, declaration, the description, the structure, the explanation, and the clear and direct teaching of Four Noble Truths:

1. The Noble Truth of stress and suffering.
2. The Noble Truth of the origination of stress.
3. The Noble Truth of the cessation of stress.

4. The Noble Truth of the Eightfold Path of practice leading to the cessation of stress.

“Friends, associate with wise disciples such as Sariputta and Moggallana. Sariputta and Moggallana are well-trained, focused, wise, and sympathetic to those developing a life integrated with the Eightfold Path.

“Sariputta is like a mother giving birth and Moggallana is like the nurse that attends to the baby. Sariputta trains others on developing the Dhamma, Moggallana, to the highest culmination.

Having said these words, the Buddha left for the days abiding.

Sariputta then addressed those gathered:

“Friends, it was here that the Tathagata set in motion the unexcelled Wheel Of Dhamma. This Dhamma cannot be

corrupted by any brahman, deva, Mara, Brahma, or any one in the entire world. No one can corrupt the revelation, declaration, the description, the structure, the explanation, and the clear and direct teaching of Four Noble Truths:

1. The Noble Truth of stress and suffering.
2. The Noble Truth of the origination of stress.
3. The Noble Truth of the cessation of stress.
4. The Noble Truth of the Eightfold Path of practice leading to the cessation of stress.

Friends, what is the noble truth of stress and suffering?

- . Birth is stressful.
- . Sickness is stressful.
- . Aging is stressful.

- . Death is stressful.
- . Sorrow, regret, pain, distress, and despair are all stressful.
- . Not getting what is desired is stressful.
- . Receiving what is undesired is stressful.
- . In short, the Five-Clinging-Aggregates are stressful.

MAGGA-VIBHANGA SUTTA: ANALYSIS OF THE PATH

“Friends, I will now give you a detailed analysis of the Noble Eightfold Path. Listen mindfully.

This is the Noble Eightfold Path:

1. Right View
2. Right Intention
3. Right Speech
4. Right Action
5. Right Livelihood

6. Right Effort
7. Right Mindfulness
8. Right Meditation

And what is Right View?

- Knowledge with regard to stress
- Knowledge with regard to the origination of stress
- Knowledge with regard to the cessation of stress
- Knowledge with regard to the way of practice leading to the cessation of stress

This, friends, is Right View.

And what is Right Intention?

- Being mindful of the intention to recognize and abandon wrong views
- Being mindful of the intention to remain free from ill will

- . Being mindful of the intention to remain harmless to all beings

This, friends, is Right Intention

And what is Right Speech?

- . Abstaining from lying
- . Abstaining from divisive speech
- . Abstaining from abusive speech
- . Abstaining from gossip
- . Abstaining from idle chatter

This, friends, is Right Speech.

And what is Right Action?

- . Abstaining from taking life
- . Abstaining from taking what is not freely given
- . Abstaining from sexual misconduct

This, friends, is Right Action.

And what is Right Livelihood?

- . Right Livelihood abandons dishonest livelihood.

- Right Livelihood is honest Livelihood.
- This, friends, is Right Livelihood.
- And what is Right Effort?
- Right Effort is effort developing the skillful desire and ongoing persistence to avoid unskillful qualities that are not present.
- Right Effort is effort developing the skillful desire and ongoing persistence to to abandon unskillful qualities that are present
- Right Effort is effort developing the skillful desire and ongoing persistence to establish skillful qualities that are not yet present
- Right Effort is effort developing the skillful desire and ongoing persistence to end confusion and increase the full

development of skillful qualities that are present

This, friends, is Right Effort.

And what is Right Mindfulness?

- Right Mindfulness is remaining mindful of the body free of distraction, ardent, alert, and mindful of abandoning greed and reaction to worldly events.
- Right Mindfulness is remaining mindful of feelings arising and passing away free of distraction, ardent, alert, and mindful of abandoning greed and reaction to worldly events.
- Right Mindfulness is remaining mindful of mental qualities arising and passing away free of distraction, ardent, alert, and mindful of abandoning greed and reaction to worldly events.

- Right Mindfulness is remaining mindful of the quality of mind arising and passing away free of distraction, ardent, alert, and mindful of abandoning greed and reaction to worldly events.

This, friends, is Right Mindfulness.

And what is Right Meditation?

- For one who has developed Right Meditation their concentration increases and they withdraw from the need for sensual stimulation
- For one who has developed Right Meditation their concentration increases and they withdraw from unskillful mental qualities
- For one who has developed Right Meditation their concentration increases and they enter and remain in the first Jhana, the first level of meditative

absorption, which is joyful engagement and pleasure in the Dhamma born from withdrawal, and accompanied by directed thought and mindful evaluation.

- For one who has developed Right Meditation their concentration increases and their directed thoughts and mindful evaluation quiets. They enter and remain in the second Jhana, the second level of meditative absorption, which is joyful engagement and pleasure born of deepening concentration free from directed thought and mindful evaluation and confident within.
- For one who has developed Right Meditation their concentration increases and their joyful engagement fades. Equanimity arises with mindfulness of pleasure in a mind united with the body.

They enter the third Jhana. The wise know this as equanimous and mindful – a pleasant abiding.

- For one who has developed Right Meditation their concentration increases, their mind rests in equanimity, neither pleasure nor pain have a footing. They enter and remain in the Fourth Jhana. Their mindfulness and equanimity is pure, free of wrong views rooted in ignorance of Four Noble Truths.

This, monks, is Right Meditation.”

This is what the Buddha declared. Those gathered were gratified and delighted at his words.

End Of Sutta

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SESSION 2

THE NAGARA SUTTA

The Buddha describes his awakening
The Buddha was at Savatthi at Jeta's
Grove, Anathapindika's monastery. There
he addressed those gathered:

“Friends, before my awakening, when I was
only an unawakened Bodhisatta, (Sanskrit:
Bodhisattva) I came to the realization of the
difficulties of the world. The world is born, it
ages, it dies, it falls away and returns, but
there is no understanding of ending the
stress and suffering of aging and death.
When will the world understand the
cessation of the stress and suffering from
aging and death?

“Then I had the thought: What initiates
aging and death? What is the requisite
condition that aging and death are
dependent on for arising?

“From my appropriate mindfulness came a breakthrough of understanding: From birth as the requisite condition comes aging and death.

“Then I had the thought: What initiates birth? What is the requisite condition that birth is dependent on for arising?

“From my appropriate mindfulness came a breakthrough of understanding: From becoming as the requisite condition comes birth.

“Then I had the thought: What initiates name-&-form? What is the requisite condition that name-&-form is dependent on for arising?

“From my appropriate mindfulness came a breakthrough of understanding: From consciousness as the requisite condition comes name-&-form.

“Then I had the thought: What initiates consciousness? What is the requisite condition that consciousness is dependent on for arising?”

“From my appropriate mindfulness came a breakthrough of understanding: From name-&-form as the requisite condition comes consciousness.”

“Then I had the thought: This consciousness turns back at name-&-form, and goes no farther. It is to this extent that there is birth, aging, death, falling away and returning. This is where ignorance is established. From (self-referential views) name-&-form is the requisite condition that brings consciousness and from (self-referential views) consciousness is the requisite condition that brings name-&-form.”

“Then I had the thought: The six-sense base (five physical senses and consciousness) is dependent on the condition of name-&-form, dependent on self-referential views, and this is the origination of the entire mass of suffering.

“Vision arose, understanding arose, discernment arose, knowledge arose, illuminating insight arose within me with regard to things never known before.

“Then I had the thought: What is the condition that the cessation of the stress of aging and death is dependent on?

“From my appropriate mindfulness came a breakthrough of understanding: From the cessation of birth (birth of ignorance) as the requisite condition comes the cessation of the stress of aging and death.

“From my appropriate mindfulness came a breakthrough of understanding: From the cessation of consciousness (thinking rooted in ignorance) as the requisite condition comes the cessation of name-&-form.

“From my appropriate mindfulness came a breakthrough of understanding: From the cessation of name-&-form as the requisite condition comes the cessation of consciousness.

“I have attained the following path to awakening:

- From the cessation of name-&-form comes the cessation of consciousness.
- From the cessation of consciousness comes the cessation of name-&-form.
- From the cessation of name-&-form comes the cessation of the six sense media.

- . From the cessation of the six sense media comes the cessation of contact.
- . From the cessation of contact comes the cessation of feeling.
- . From the cessation of feeling comes the cessation of craving.
- . From the cessation of craving comes the cessation of clinging and maintaining.
- . From the cessation of clinging and maintaining comes the cessation of becoming.
- . From the cessation of becoming comes the cessation of birth.
- . From the cessation of birth, then aging & death, sorrow, regret, pain, distress, & despair all cease.

“This is the cessation of the entire mass of stress. Vision arose, understanding arose,

discernment arose, knowledge arose, illuminating insight arose within me with regard to things never known before.

“In this way I saw a timeless path to be traveled by the Rightly Self-awakened Ones. And what is this timeless path traveled by the Rightly Self-awakened Ones?* Just this noble eightfold path:

“Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Meditation.

“This is the ancient timeless path traveled by the Rightly Self-awakened Ones. I followed this path. Following it, I came to direct knowledge of (the stress of) aging & death, direct knowledge of the origination of (the stress of) aging & death, direct knowledge of the cessation of (the stress of) aging & death, direct knowledge of the

path leading to the cessation of (the stress of) aging & death.

“I followed this path. Following it, I came to direct knowledge of birth... becoming... clinging... craving... feeling... contact... the six sense media... name-&-form... consciousness, direct knowledge of the origination of consciousness, direct knowledge of the cessation of consciousness, direct knowledge of the path leading to the cessation of consciousness. I followed that path.

“Following it, I came to direct knowledge of fabrications, direct knowledge of the origination of fabrications, direct knowledge of the cessation of fabrications, direct knowledge of the Eightfold Path leading to the cessation of fabrications. Knowing this directly, I have revealed it to monks, nuns,

male lay followers & female lay followers, so that this undefiled life has become powerful, rich, detailed, well-populated, wide-spread, proclaimed among many beings.”

End Of Sutta

DHATU-VIBHANGA SUTTA – AN ANALYSIS OF THE SIX HUMAN PROPERTIES

On one occasion the Buddha was wandering among the Magadhans. He entered Rajagaha and went to the potter Bhaggava. He asked Bhaggava “If it is no inconvenience for you, friend, I will stay for one night in your shed.”

“It is no inconvenience for me but the wanderer Pukkusati has already taken up residence there. If he gives his permission, you may stay there as you like.”

Pukkusati, a fellow Sakyan, had gone forth into homelessness and was developing the Buddha's Dhamma. The Buddha approached Pukkusati and asked him if he could stay one night in his shed.

Pukkusati replied, "This shed is roomy my friend, stay as you like."

The Buddha entered the shed and sat on a pile of leaves and grass. Folding his legs crosswise and holding his body erect he set mindfulness to the fore and began Jhana. Pukkusati joined him in meditation for most of the evening.

As morning approached, the Buddha had the thought "How inspiring Pukkusati behaves! Let me question him on his understanding.

"Venerable Pukkusati, out of dedication to whom have you gone forth? Who is your

teacher and whose dhamma are you practicing?”

“My teacher is Gotama the contemplative, a Sakyan son. He is known far and wide as a Buddha, a rightly self-awakened one who is consummate and clear knowing and of pure conduct. He is an expert of worldly affairs, and the unsurpassed teacher of those fit to be taught. I have gone forth with dedication to him as my teacher and it is his Dhamma that I am practicing.”

“Friend Pukkusati, where is the Buddha staying now?”

“Wanderer, I have heard that the Buddha is in Savatthi.”

“Have you met the Buddha, would you recognize him.”

“No, I have never met the Buddha and I would not recognize him.”

The Buddha understood Pukkusati's devotion. Without identifying himself he said to Pukkusati "I will teach you the Dhamma, friend. Listen and pay close attention as I speak.

"A person has six properties, six media of sensory contact leading to eighteen distinct considerations. Furthermore, a well-focused Dhamma practitioner establishes four wise determinations. Having established these four wise determinations this one has stilled the distraction of fabricated speculation and supposition. When the distraction of fabricated speculation and supposition has stilled, this one is said to be a sage at peace. A well-focused Dhamma practitioner should not neglect wise discernment, should always guard the truth, should

always be devoted to unbinding, and train their minds only for calm.

“This is my summary and analysis of these six properties:

1. The earth property.
2. The liquid property.
3. The fire property.
4. The wind property.
5. The space property.
6. The consciousness property.

“A person has these six properties.

“Furthermore, a person has six media of sensory contact:

1. The eye.
2. The ear.
3. The nose.
4. The tongue.
5. The body.
6. The intellect.

“A person has these six media of sensory contact. (*The Six Sense-Base*)

“Furthermore, a person has eighteen considerations:

- . On seeing form with the eye, one considers form as a basis for pleasure, or form as a basis for disappointment, or form as a basis for equanimity.
- . On hearing sound with the ear, one considers sound as a basis for pleasure, or sound as a basis for disappointment, or sound as a basis for equanimity.
- . On smelling an aroma with the nose, one considers aroma as a basis for pleasure, or aroma as a basis for disappointment, or aroma as a basis for equanimity.
- . On tasting flavor with the tongue, one considers taste as a basis for pleasure,

or taste as a basis for disappointment,
or taste as a basis for equanimity.

- . On feeling a tactile sensation with the body, one considers feeling as a basis for pleasure, or feeling as a basis for disappointment, or feeling as a basis for equanimity.
- . On cognizing an idea with the intellect, one considers the idea as a basis for pleasure, or the idea as a basis for disappointment, or the idea as a basis for equanimity.

“These are the six considerations that are conducive to pleasure, six considerations that are conducive to disappointment, and six considerations that are conducive to equanimity. A person has these eighteen considerations.

“Furthermore, a wise Dhamma practitioner has four determinations:

1. The determination for discernment.
2. The determination for truth.
3. The determination for relinquishment.
4. The determination for calm.

“A wise Dhamma practitioner has these four determinations.

“A Dhamma practitioner should not neglect discernment, should guard the truth, be devoted to relinquishment, and train only for calm.

“And how does one not neglect discernment? Through mindfulness of the six properties:

“And what is the earth property? The earth property can be internal or external. The internal earth property is anything within oneself that is hard, solid, and sustained by

craving – head, hair, body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, membranes, spleen, lungs, intestines, contents of the stomach, feces, and anything else internal within oneself that's hard solid and sustained by craving. This is called the internal earth property. Both internal earth property and external earth property are simply earth property.

“This is how the earth property should be seen by one with right discernment: ‘this is not me, this is not mine, this is not what I am, this is not my self.’ When one sees this as it has come to be with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the earth property and, through lack of sustenance, the earth property fades from the mind. [10]

“And what is the liquid property? The liquid property can be internal or external. The internal liquid property is anything belonging to oneself that is liquid, watery, and sustained by craving – bile, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, oil, saliva, mucus, urine, and anything else internal, within oneself that is liquid, watery, and sustained by craving. This is called the internal liquid property. Both internal and external liquid property are simply liquid property.

“This is how the liquid property should be seen by one with right discernment: ‘this is not me, this is not mine, this is not what I am, this is not my self.’ When one sees this as it has come to be with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the liquid property and, through lack of sustenance, the liquid property fades from the mind.

“And what is the fire property? The fire property can be internal or external. The internal fire property is anything belonging to oneself that is fire, fiery, and sustained by craving. The internal fire property is that by which the body is warmed, ages, consumed by fever, that which is eaten, drunk, chewed, and savored that is digested, or anything else internal, within oneself, that is fire, fiery and sustained, is called the internal fire property. Both internal and external fire property are simply fire property.

“This is how the fire property should be seen by one with right discernment: ‘this is not me, this is not mine, this is not what I am, this is not my self.’ When one sees this as it has come to be with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the fire

property and, through lack of sustenance, the fire property fades from the mind.

“And what is the wind property? The wind property can be internal or external. The internal wind property is anything belonging to oneself that is wind, windy, and sustained by craving. The internal wind property is rising or falling wind, wind in the stomach, wind in the intestines, wind that courses through the body, in-and-out breathing, or anything else internal, within oneself, that is wind, windy and sustained, is called the internal wind property. Both internal and external wind property are simply wind property.

“This is how the wind property should be seen by one with right discernment: ‘this is not me, this is not mine, this is not what I am, this is not my self.’ When one sees this

as it has come to be with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the wind property and, through lack of sustenance, the wind property fades from the mind.

“And what is the space property? The space property can be internal or external. The internal space property is anything belonging to oneself that is space, spatial, and sustained by craving. The internal space property is the holes of the ears, the nostrils, the mouth, the throat passage whereby what is eaten, drunk, consumed, and tasted gets swallowed, and where it collects, and whereby it is excreted from the body, or anything else internal, within oneself, that is space, spatial, and sustained. This is called the internal space property. Both the internal and external space property are simply space property.

“This is how the space property should be seen by one with right discernment: ‘this is not me, this is not mine, this is not what I am, this is not my self.’ When one sees this as it has come to be with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the space property and, through lack of sustenance, the space property fades from the mind.

“And what is the consciousness property? Consciousness free of fabrication remains pure and bright. What is perceived by consciousness? One perceives pleasure. One perceives pain. One perceives neither pleasure nor pain.

In dependence on sensory contact that is to be felt as pleasure, there arises a feeling of pleasure. (*Due to self-identification*) One perceives ‘I am sensing a feeling of pleasure.’

In dependence on sensory contact that is to be felt as pain, there arises a feeling of pain. (*Due to self-identification*) One perceives ‘I am sensing a feeling of pain.’

In dependence on sensory contact that is to be felt as neither pleasure nor pain, there arises a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain. (*Due to self-identification*) One perceives ‘I am sensing neither pleasure nor pain.’

“Through refined mindfulness, one understands that with the cessation (*of self-identification*) of that very sensory contact the feeling of pleasure has arisen independently of that contact. What is to be felt as pleasure ceases— is stilled.

“Through refined mindfulness, one understands that with the cessation (*of self-identification*) of that very sensory contact

the feeling of pain has arisen independently of that contact. What is to be felt as pain ceases— is stilled.

“Through refined mindfulness, one understands that with the cessation (*of self-identification*) of that very sensory contact the feeling of neither pleasure nor pain has arisen independently of that contact. What is to be felt as neither pleasure nor pain ceases— is stilled.

“Just as when two sticks are brought together and agitated, heat and fire are born dependent on contact and agitation. When the sticks are separated and the agitation ceases, heat subsides and fire is extinguished.

“In this same manner, an agitated mind, lacking concentration, in dependence on contact will feel feelings of pleasure, or

feelings of pain, or feelings of neither pleasure nor pain.

“A wise Dhamma Practitioner understands that with the cessation of (*self-referential*) sensory contact, feelings of pleasure, or pain, or neither pleasure nor pain are stilled.

“Now there remains only a mind established in equanimity, luminous, pure, supple, and spacious. Just as if a skillful goldsmith were to take raw gold, and through skillful effort transform this raw gold into a refined and flawless ornament, malleable and luminous. The gold would now suit the Goldsmith’s purpose.

“In this same manner, one whose mind is established in equanimity, luminous, pure, supple, and spacious, knows that ‘If I were to direct my thinking toward non-physical

dimensions of infinite consciousness, or infinite space, or infinite emptiness or nothingness, or the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, I would know these (*distracted mind-states*) as fabricated.

“A wise Dhamma practitioner does not fabricate, or mentally construct, for the sake of self-establishment in this physical realm or any (*fabricated or imaginary*) non-physical realm. Fabrications abandoned, this one is not sustained through craving. This one is released from clinging to anything in the world.

“(*Released from wrong views ignorant of Four Noble Truths*) This one is no longer agitated, their mind is calm and well-concentrated. This one knows their mind is calm and well-concentrated. This one

knows 'Birth is now ended, a life well-integrated (*with the Eightfold Path*) has been lived, my task is complete, there is nothing further in this world.'

"Friend, Pukkusati, when sensing a feeling of pleasure, understand it as impersonal and as such impermanent. Understanding thus, craving and clinging vanish. Likewise, when sensing a feeling of pain, or sensing a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, understand these feelings as impersonal and as such impermanent. Understanding thus, craving and clinging vanish.

Understanding brings the awareness that pleasure, pain, and neither pleasure nor pain are impersonal and as such impermanent and are not craved after or self-identified with.

“When feeling pleasure, pain, or neither pleasure nor pain, a wise Dhamma practitioner remains disjointed (*through lack of self-identification*) from these feelings. This one understands feelings in the body are limited to the body. This one understands feelings limited to human life are limited to human life. This one understands that with the ending of life and the break-up of the body that all that is experienced and not joined to will grow cold and end right then.

“Just as an oil lamp burns in dependence on wick and oil, from the termination of wick and oil it would be unnourished and cease. In this same manner when a wise Dhamma practitioner is feeling a feeling limited to the body they understand ‘I am sensing a feeling that is limited to this body.’ When

wise Dhamma practitioner is feeling a feeling limited to human life they understand 'I am sensing a feeling limited to human life.' This wise Dhamma practitioner understands that with the ending of life and the break-up of the body that all that is experienced and not joined to will grow cold and end right then.

“In this manner, when one has the highest determination for understanding, for the knowledge of the arising and passing away of suffering and stress, this one has achieved the greatest noble understanding.

“This Dhamma practitioner has gained release from all views ignorant of Four Noble Truths. Their mind has established Right View now resting in pure truth. This view will no longer fluctuate due to distraction. This one knows whatever is

deceptive and remains free from associating with deception. This Dhamma practitioner is established with the highest determination for truth. This is the foremost unbinding from wrong views and is the highest Noble Truth.

“Formerly, when still ignorant of Four Noble Truths, this Dhamma practitioner foolishly craved after mental acquisitions and created self-identities clinging to these mental acquisitions. This Dhamma practitioner has completely abandoned them. Through the Eightfold Path, this one has cut fabrications off at the root of ignorance. Like the stump of a palmyra tree, now deprived of the conditions of sustenance, fabrications will no longer arise.

“Likewise, when still ignorant of Four Noble Truths, this Dhamma practitioner foolishly was driven by desire and self-infatuation, by ill-will and hatred, by delusion and ignorance, and created self-identities clinging to these unskillful qualities. Now, this Dhamma practitioner has completely abandoned them. Through the Eightfold Path, this one has cut fabrications off at the root of ignorance. Like the stump of a palmyra tree, now deprived of the conditions of sustenance, fabrications will no longer arise.

“This Dhamma practitioner has established the highest determination for calm – for the calming of greed, aversion, and deluded thinking. This one has established the Highest Noble Calm. This Dhamma practitioner knows to never neglect Right

View, to always guard the Truth and to always train for establishing a calm and well-centered mind. [14]

“This Dhamma practitioner understands where, through wise restraint, the currents of speculation and supposition do not flow, this one is known as ‘a sage at peace.’

“With reference to what I am saying to you, all of the following is speculation and supposition:

- . I am.
- . I am this.
- . I will be.
- . I will not be.
- . I will have this form.
- . I will not have this form.
- . I will have psychic powers.
- . I will not have psychic powers.

“Speculation and supposition are diseases, a cancer, an arrow. By abandoning all speculation and supposition this Dhamma Practitioner is known as a ‘sage at peace.’

[15]

“A sage at peace is no longer distracted or agitated by birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, regret, greed, aversion, or deluded thinking. With no distraction or agitation, what would this Dhamma practitioner crave for or cling to?

“This Dhamma practitioner understands where the currents of speculation and supposition do not flow. When, through wise restraint, the currents of speculation and supposition do not flow, this one is known as ‘a sage at peace.’

“Now, friend Pukkusati, you should remember my brief analysis of the six properties.”

Then the thought occurred to Venerable Pukkusati: ‘Surely the Great Teacher has come to me! Surely the Rightly Self-Awakened one has come to me! Pukkusati rose and bowed to the Buddha and said: ‘I was foolish, confused, and unskilled to address you merely as friend. Please accept my apology so that I may restrain myself in the future.’

The Buddha replied ‘Yes, confusion overcame you. But, most importantly, you have recognized your confusion and, in accordance with my Dhamma, have made the strong determination to end your confusion. It is just this determination and

discipline that one grows in the Dhamma and practices restraint in the future.

“Great Teacher, please accept me into the order to follow your Dhamma.

“Do you have an alms bowl and robes?”

“No” Replied Pukkusati.

“Then gather a bowl and robes and I will give you the going forth.”

Pukkusati was delighted. He bowed to the Buddha and left in search of an alms bowl and robes for his ordination. While searching, a runaway cow trampled and killed Pukkusati.

A large group from the Sangha found the Buddha and told him of Pukkusati demise. They asked the Buddha what Pukkusati’s future state would be.

“Friends, Pukkusati was wise. He practiced the Dhamma in accordance with my

instruction. He never pestered me with unrelated issues. He has abandoned the five fetters of:

1. Self-identification.
2. Grasping at rituals and practices.
3. Doubt and uncertainty.
4. Sensual craving.
5. Deluded thinking.

“He is now free of fabricated views will never again be subject to the suffering born of ignorance.

Those that heard these words of the Buddha were delighted.

End Of Sutta

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SESSION 3

THREE GOVERNING PRINCIPLES FOR
VIPASSANA – ADHIPATEYYA SUTTA

The Buddha teaches: “There are three governing principles for the cessation of ignorance:

1. The self is a governing principle.
2. The world is a governing principle.
3. The Dhamma is a governing principle.

“How is the self a governing principle for the cessation of ignorance? A skillful disciple having established seclusion and quiet reflects on this: ‘It is not for the sake of robes, alms, lodging, or future becoming that I am practicing the Dhamma. I am afflicted by birth, sickness, aging, and death; by sorrows, regret, pain, distress, and despair; overcome by stress. Perhaps the cessation of this entire mass of suffering can be known!’

‘What if I were to seek the same sort of sensual pleasures that I abandoned? I would lose the way.

‘I will maintain persistence, my mindfulness refined and not confused, my body calm and not aroused, my mind well-concentrated and united with my body.

“The skillful disciple, having established themselves as a governing principle, abandons what is unskillful and develops what is skillful. The skillful disciple remains well-focused and pure. This is how a skillful disciple establishes themselves as a governing principle in ending ignorance of Four Noble Truths.

“How is the world a governing principle for the cessation of ignorance? A skillful disciple having established seclusion and quiet reflects on this: ‘It is not for the sake

of robes, alms, lodging, or future becoming that I am practicing the Dhamma. I am afflicted by birth, sickness, aging, and death; by sorrows, regret, pain, distress, and despair; overcome by stress. Perhaps the cessation of this entire mass of suffering can be known!’

“What if I were to think the same thoughts of sensual pleasures, of ill-will, of harmfulness that I abandoned? Beings are many in the world. There are contemplatives, brahmans, and devas who claim psychic powers. They can see near and far. Even so, they don’t exist. *(They have no useful understanding in teaching the Dhamma as they continue to be distracted by sensuality, ill-will, and the distraction of their magical beliefs.)*

“Even so, they would see the unskillful; disciple this way: ‘Here is one who has taken to the Buddha’s Dhamma but they remain overcome by hurtful and unskillful mental qualities.

“The skillful disciple reflects in this manner: ‘I will maintain persistence, my mindfulness refined and not confused, my body calm and not aroused, My mind well-concentrated and united with my body.’

“The skillful disciple, having established the world as a governing principle, abandons what is unskillful and develops what is skillful. The skillful disciple remains well-focused and pure. This is how a skillful disciple establishes the world as a governing principle in ending ignorance of Four Noble Truths.

“How is my Dhamma a governing principle for the cessation of ignorance? A skillful disciple having established seclusion and quiet reflects on this: ‘It is not for the sake of robes, alms, lodging, or future becoming that I am practicing the Dhamma. I am afflicted by birth, sickness, aging, and death; by sorrows, regret, pain, distress, and despair; overcome by stress. Perhaps the cessation of this entire mass of suffering can be known!’

“My Dhamma is well-taught by me to be developed here and now. My Dhamma is timeless, encourages verification, entirely relevant, to be directly experienced by the observant disciple for themselves.

“Skillful Disciples are true companions in the well-integrated life who dwell in the well-taught Dhamma. Well-disciplined, they

know that laziness and mindlessness will cause them to lose their way.

“The skillful disciple reflects in this manner: ‘I will maintain persistence, my mindfulness refined and not confused, my body calm and not aroused, My mind well-concentrated and united with my body.’

“The skillful disciple, having established my Dhamma as a governing principle, abandons what is unskillful and develops what is skillful. The skillful disciple remains well-focused and pure. This is how a skillful disciple establishes my Dhamma as a governing principle in ending ignorance of Four Noble Truths.

“These are the three governing principles of my Dhamma.

“There is no secret place in the world for those doing evil.

“The Skillful Disciple knows whether they are well-focused or confused.

“The Skillful Disciple clearly observes themselves that hurtful behavior hides.

“The wise see the fool unrestrained in the world.

“So, govern yourself with mindfulness.

“Govern the world with wise restraint.

“Established in Jhana, governed by my Dhamma, in thought word, and deed, follow my Dhamma.

“The sage who is engaged in Right Effort in developing their understanding Four Noble Truths will not lose their way.

“The Skillful Disciple conquers Mara. There is no further becoming.

“The Skillful Disciple understands the world, a sage, free of ignorance of themselves and the world.

End Of Sutta

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SESSION 4

THE LESSER DISCOURSE ON DUKKHA CŪḶA-DUKKHAKKHANDHA SUTTA

On one occasion the Buddha was staying with the Sakyans in the Banyan Grove at Kapilavatthu. Mahanama, Siddartha Gotama's cousin, approached the Buddha, bowed, and sat to one side. Mahanama had a question for his cousin and teacher: "I understand your Dhamma teaches three defilements of the mind:

1. Greed is a defilement of the mind.
2. Aversion is a defilement of the mind.
3. Deluded thinking is a defilement of the mind.

"Even though I understand your Dhamma in this manner, greed, aversion, and deluded

thinking invade my mind and remain. When I realize this, the thought follows ‘What quality do I continue to cling to when greed, aversion, and deluded thinking invade my mind and remain?’”

The Buddha responds: “Mahanama, it is the very qualities of greed, aversion, and deluded thinking that you continue to cling to. When any of these qualities arise in you it is due to continued clinging to these qualities.

“It is only when these qualities are not abandoned within you that you continue to be entangled in worldly affairs and you continue to cling to sensuality.

“It is only when these qualities are abandoned within you that you remain disentangled in worldly affairs and you no longer cling to sensuality.

“Even though a skillful disciple understands the stress, the despair, the drawback of sensual indulgence, if they have not developed concentration and pleasure apart from sensual indulgence and unskillful mindfulness, or an even deeper level of Jhana and peacefulness, they can still be distracted by sensuality.

“But, when a skillful disciple understands the stress, the despair, the drawback of sensual indulgence if they have developed concentration and pleasure apart from sensual indulgence and unskillful mindfulness, or an even deeper level of Jhana and peacefulness, they cannot be distracted by sensuality.

“Friend, before my own self-awakening, when I was still an un-awakened bodhisattva, I came to understand with

Right View that sensual indulgence is stressful, brings despair, and has drawbacks, but as long as I had not developed concentration and pleasure apart from sensual indulgence and unskillful mindfulness, or an even deeper level of Jhana and peacefulness, I did not claim that I was not distracted by sensuality.

“But, when I came to understand the stress, the despair, the drawback of sensual indulgence, and I had developed concentration and pleasure apart from sensual indulgence and unskillful mindfulness, or an even deeper level of Jhana and peacefulness, then I did claim to not be distracted by sensuality.

**UNDERSTANDING THE ALLURE, THE
DRAWBACK, AND THE RELEASE OF
CLINGING TO SENSUALITY**

“Now, what is the allure of sensuality?

There are five clinging-fabrications of sensuality:

- Forms interpreted by the eyes as agreeable, pleasing, endearing, and enticing.
- Sounds interpreted by the ears as agreeable, pleasing, endearing, and enticing.
- Aromas interpreted by the nose as agreeable, pleasing, endearing, and enticing.
- Flavors interpreted by the tongue as agreeable, pleasing, endearing, and enticing.
- Tactile sensations interpreted by the body as agreeable, pleasing, endearing, and enticing.

“Friend, whatever pleasure or happiness that one establishes in dependence on any of these five senses is the (*distracting*) allure of sensuality.

“Now, what is the drawback of sensuality?

Here is an example: When one’s occupation, whether accounting or plowing, whether trading goods or attending to cattle, whether archer or attending a King, whatever one’s occupation, they are subject to changing weather, to harassment by insects, to dying from thirst and hunger, and the whole mass of stress and suffering.

“This drawback of sensuality, this mass of stress and suffering that is visible here and now has sensuality as its source and its establishment. Simply put, the drawback is sensuality.

“Now, if a person gains little while striving and making effort they will be sorrowful and regretful. They will grieve and become distraught: *(All emotions rooted in self-referential ignorant views:)* ‘All of my efforts have been useless and fruitless!’

“This (reaction) is also a drawback of sensuality, this mass of stress and suffering that is visible here and now has sensuality as its source and its establishment. Simply put, the drawback is sensuality.

“If a person gains wealth while striving and making effort they will experience distress protecting their wealth: ‘How can I keep my wealth from kings and thieves? How will I protect my wealth from fire or floods? How will I protect my wealth from greedy heirs?’

“Even as they protect their wealth, kings and thieves make off with it, fire and floods

destroy it, and greedy heirs make off with it. They then will be sorrowful and regretful. They will grieve and become distraught: ‘What was once mine is gone!’

“This drawback of sensuality, this mass of stress and suffering that is visible here and now has sensuality as its source and its establishment. Simply put, the drawback is sensuality.

“It is (*preoccupation*) with sensuality as the reason, the source, the cause, that kings quarrel with kings, nobles quarrel with nobles, brahmans with brahmans, householders with householders, parents with children, children with parents, children with siblings, and friends with friends. When conflicted they will attack each other with fists, or sticks, or clubs, or knives, and they incur extreme pain or death.

“Here again is the drawback of sensuality, this mass of stress and suffering that is visible here and now has sensuality as its source and its establishment. Simply put, the drawback is sensuality.

“It is (*preoccupation*) with sensuality as the reason, the source, the cause, that human beings wear armor and use swords, spears, and arrows while charging in formation into battle with other human beings. With spears and arrows flying, with swords flashing, they are wounded, their heads cut off, insuring extreme pain and death.

“Here again is the drawback of sensuality, this mass of stress and suffering that is visible here and now has sensuality as its source and its establishment. Simply put, the drawback is sensuality.

“Friend, it is (*preoccupation*) with sensuality as the reason, the source, the cause, that human beings take what is not theirs, ambush others, commit adultery, and when caught, kings have them tortured for their misdeeds. They are flogged and beaten with clubs, their hands and feet cut off, their ears and noses, too. They are subjected to many indignities and deprivations.

“Here again, this is the drawback of sensuality, this mass of stress and suffering that is visible here and now has sensuality as its source and its establishment. Simply put, the drawback is sensuality.

“Friend, it is (*preoccupation*) with sensuality as the reason, the source, the cause, that human beings engage in bodily, verbal, and mental misconduct. Having lived their lives as such, upon death and the

break-up of the body there is only continued deprivation.

“Here again, this is the drawback of sensuality, this mass of stress and suffering that is now only continued deprivation has sensuality as its source and its establishment. Simply put, the drawback is sensuality.

THE CONDITIONING AND INHERENT DISTRACTIONS OF FALSE DHARMAS

“Friend Mahanama, once I was near Rajagaha on Vulture Peak Mountain. There was a group of Niganthas at Black Rock on the slopes of Isigili.

“The Niganthas were practicing continuous standing in order to experience severe sharp and racking pain. As I emerged from my seclusion I went to the Niganthas and asked them ‘Why are you practicing

continuous standing that develops severe sharp and racking pain?

“One of the Niganthas responded ‘Nigantha Natiputta knows and sees all. He claims to have knowledge and wisdom continually established within him. Nigantha has taught us that our past evil actions will be exhausted with these painful ascetic practices. He further taught us that if we are restrained in body, speech, and thoughts in the present there will be no evil actions in the future.

So, with the destruction of past evil deeds through these painful ascetic practices and with no evil actions in the present there will be no flow (*of the results of evil*) into the future. With no flow of evil actions into the future, there is the ending of evil actions. With the ending of evil actions there is the

ending of stress. With the ending of stress there is the ending of feelings and with the ending of feelings, stress and suffering will be exhausted. We, the Niganthas, approve of this teaching, we prefer this teaching and are gratified by this teaching.

The Buddha responds “Do you know that you existed in the past or that you did not exist in the past?”

“No, friend.”

“Well, do you know that you did evil deeds in the past?”

“No, friend.”

“And do you know that the stress resulting from these evil deeds has been exhausted or that the stress resulting from these evil deeds remains to be exhausted or even that the exhaustion of the stress resulting from these evil deeds can be exhausted?”

“No, friend.”

“Well then, do you know the abandoning of these evil and unskillful qualities and the development of skillful qualities right here and now?”

“No, friend.”

“Friend, it seems as if you do not know if you did or did not exist in the past. It seems as if you do not know if you did or did not do evil acts in the past. You do not know that you did any evil acts in the past or if you even experienced any stress arising from evil actions or that there is stress remaining to be exhausted. You do not know that with the exhaustion of current stress that all stress will be exhausted.

“Furthermore, you do not know the abandonment of evil and unskillful qualities and you do not know the development of

evil and unskillful qualities right here and now.

“This being the case, there are those who are cruel and murderous evildoers. Seeking change (*salvation*) they join with the Niganthas.

“But friend, Gotama, it is not true that pleasure is attained through pleasure. Pleasure is to be attained through pain. If pleasure is attained through pleasure, then King Bimbisara would attain great pleasure as he lives in greater pleasure than even you.”

“Surely you have said this rashly and without reflecting on your words. The skillful question (*in the context of my Dhamma*) is ‘Who lives in greater pleasure, King Bimbisara or master Gotama?’”

“Yes, friend Gotama, we did speak rashly and without reflection. Who does live in greater pleasure, King Bimbisara or master Gotama?”

“I will counter-question you. Answer as you see fit. Can King Bimbisara, without moving his body or uttering a word dwell sensitive to pure pleasure for seven days and nights, or even six, or five, or four, or three, or two, or even for one day and night?”

“No, friend.”

“Now, without moving my body or uttering a word I do dwell sensitive to pure pleasure for a day and a night, for two days and nights, for three, for four, for five, for six, for even seven nights and days.

“What do you think? Who dwells in the greater pleasure, King Bimbisara or myself?”

“It is clear that master Gotama dwells in the greater pleasure than King Bimbisara!”

This is what was said by the Great Teacher. Mahanama was delighted in the Buddha’s words.

End Of Sutta

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SESSION 5

CULAVEDALLA SUTTA – A NUN TEACHES HER EX-HUSBAND

Visakha is seeking clarity on Self-Referential views – Anatta and how self-identification with impermanent phenomena continually seeks to establish itself through clinging to all – thoughts, words, objects, events, and ideas. (Anatta, is the word used to describe what is commonly believed to be a “self” that the Buddha teaches is not a self.) [1]

“Dhammadinna, what is self-identification as described by the Buddha?”

“Visakha, the Buddha teaches that self-identification is established by clinging to form, by clinging to feeling, by clinging to perception, by clinging to fabrications, and by clinging to consciousness. These five clinging-aggregates are the self-identification taught by the Buddha.”

Visakha continues: “Your answer is very helpful. What then is the origination of self-identification to form, feeling, perceptions, fabrications, indeed in every thought?”

“It is clinging, Visakha, that brings continual establishment of Anatta, clinging born of craving accompanied by passion and by delight. Craving for sensual pleasure, craving for the continued establishment in this world and other realms. This is the

origination of self-identification as taught by the Buddha.”

Visakha: “What then is the cessation of self-identification?”

“The renunciation and remainder-less fading away of the very clinging, born of craving, that originates the continual establishment of Anatta. This is the cessation of self-identification as taught by the Buddha.”

“What then, dear lady, is the path, or the practice, leading to the cessation of self-identification that is taught by the Buddha?”

“Friend Visakha, it is precisely the Noble Eightfold Path of Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Meditation that the Buddha teaches to develop the virtue, the

concentration, and the wisdom required to abandon self-identification, to abandon clinging.” [8]

“Is clinging the same as the five clinging-aggregates?”

“Clinging is not the same as the five clinging-aggregates, Visakha, nor is it separate. It is the nature of the five clinging-aggregates to cling. It is the function of the five clinging-aggregates to cling. It is the nature of Anatta to cling. It is the function of Anatta to cling.”

Visakha: “How does self-identification develop?”

“Those uninstructed in regard to the Dhamma, run-of-the-mill people, with no regard for noble ones or those of integrity are deluded. They believe that form to be the self, or that the self possesses the form.

They are further deluded to believe that their (self-referential) feelings are the self, that their perceptions (of self) defines the self, that their fabrications that further establish the self, to be the self. They assume that their self-referential thoughts establish a self. Each of these Five Clinging-Aggregates are impermanent and arise from ignorance. They are anatta, they are not a self.”

“How does self-identification not develop?”

“That well-instructed in regard to the Dhamma, with regard for the noble ones and those with integrity, well-disciplined in their practice, do not believe form to be the self. They do not believe that feelings establish or define a self, or that perception defines a self. They are free of mental fabrications, having no foundation for

fabrications. They do not assume that thoughts establish a self or that the self possesses thoughts. They do not assume that consciousness is the self or that the self possesses consciousness. There is no “self” attached to any of these five clinging-aggregates.”

“Visakha, the Eightfold Path is inspired by the qualities of virtue, concentration, and wisdom. Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood inspire the development of heightened virtue. Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Meditation inspire the development of heightened concentration, and Right View and Right Intention inspire and develop heightened Wisdom.”

Visakha: “What is concentration and what is the framework for Right Concentration,

what are the requisites and how is it developed?”

“Samadhi, non-distraction is concentration. The framework for Right Concentration is the Four Foundations of Mindfulness: being mindful of the breath in the body, being mindful of feelings arising and fading away, being mindful of thoughts occurring and fading away, and being mindful of the present quality of mind. Right Effort provides the requisites for Right Concentration. You should always endeavor with skillful desire and persistence for the non-arising of unskillful qualities and to abandon unskillful qualities that have yet arisen. And Visakha, always endeavor, with great desire and persistence, to generate skillful qualities

that have yet arisen and to maintain skillful qualities that have arisen.” [13]

“What are fabrications, dear lady?”

Dhammadinna: “There are three: Bodily fabrications, verbal fabrications, and mental fabrications. In-&-out breaths are bodily fabrications as breaths are generated from the clinging-aggregate of form. Feelings and perceptions are mental fabrications as they are generated by the clinging-aggregates of feelings and perceptions. Conditioned and discursive thought and evaluation are verbal fabrications as they are generated from the clinging-aggregate of consciousness.”

“How then does the attainment of cessation of feelings and perceptions develop?”

“A well-informed person who has developed understanding through the Eightfold Path

does not have a thought of attainment. Rather, their refined mind leads to the cessation of feelings and perceptions. Verbal fabrications cease, then bodily fabrications, and finally mental fabrications.” Dhammadinna continues: “When a well-informed person emerges from the cessation of feelings and perceptions they are empty of clinging, free of self-identification and conditioned mind. The well-informed person’s mind inclines to seclusion and away from delight and entanglement (with the world).”

Visakha asks: “How many kinds of feelings are there?”

“There are only three types of feelings, Visakha. There is pleasant feeling, painful feeling, and neutral feeling. Pleasant feeling that changes becomes painful. Painful

feelings that change become pleasant. Neutral feelings may change as well, to either pleasure or pain. All feelings are subject to anicca (impermanence).

“Pleasant feelings can give rise to passion-obsession. Painful feelings can give rise to resistance-obsession. Neutral feelings can give rise to ignorance-obsession. When a well-informed person is withdrawn from the obsession of sensual fulfillment and withdrawn from unskillful qualities, through meditative absorption, they abandon passion and passion-obsession. Yearning for final liberation, resistance obsession is abandoned. Deepening meditative absorption, ignorance obsession is abandoned.”

“Dear lady, what then lies on the other side of ignorance?”

“Clear knowing (true insight) lies on the other side of ignorance. And, Visakha, with clear knowing comes release (from clinging). From release from clinging comes complete unbinding.”

“Dhammadinna, what then lies on the other side of unbinding?”

“Visakha, you have gone too far. Your clinging-mind has demanded too many answers and your question will lead to only more confusion and suffering. The Buddha’s path, the Eightfold Path culminates in Unbinding. Is this not enough? If you wish, go to the Buddha and ask him. Let his answer be enough.”

Visakha was delighted in Dhammadinna’s teachings. He bowed to her and left for the Buddha. Finding the Buddha nearby, he sat to one side of the Buddha and recounted

what Dhammadinna told him. The Buddha replied, “Dhammadinna is very wise and of great discernment. I would have answered your questions exactly as she has. This is how you should remember these teachings.”

Visakha was pleased by the Buddha’s confirmation.

End Of Sutta

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SESSION 6

THE ANATTA LAKKHANA SUTTA

THE NOT-SELF CHARACTERISTIC

On one occasion the Buddha was staying at Benares, in the Deer Park at Isipatana.

There he addressed the group of five (now)

Bhikkhus:

“Bhikkhus, form is not-self. Were form self, then this form would not lead to suffering,

and one could have it be any form desired, and stress free. Since form is not-self it leads to suffering and none can have it be any form desired and stress free.

“Bhikkhus, feeling is not-self, as perceptions are not-self. Fabrications are not-self. Consciousness is not-self. If these aggregates were self they would not lead to suffering and one could direct these aggregates as one wished. Since these are not-self they can only lead to suffering and no one can have these (aggregates) be as they wish.

“Bhikkhus, how do you perceive this: is form permanent or impermanent?” The five replied “Impermanent, venerable Sir.”

“Now is what is impermanent painful or pleasant?”

“Painful, venerable Sir.”

“Now is what is impermanent, what is painful since subject to change, is this fit to be regarded as: ‘This is mine, this is I, this is my self?’

“No, venerable sir.”

“Is feeling permanent or impermanent? Is perception permanent or impermanent? Are fabrications permanent or impermanent? Is consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“All are impermanent, venerable sir.”

“Now is what is impermanent, what is painful since subject to change, is this fit to be regarded as: ‘This is mine, this is I, this is my self’”?

“No, venerable sir.”

“So, bhikkhus any kind of form whatever, whether past, future or presently arisen, whether gross or subtle,

whether in oneself or external,
whether inferior or superior,
whether far or near,
must, with right understanding how it
actually is, be regarded as: 'This is not
mine, this is not I, this is not myself.'
“And so it follows that any kind of feeling
whatever,
any kind of perception, any kind of
determination,
any kind of consciousness whatever,
whether past, future or presently arisen,
whether gross or subtle,
whether in oneself or external,
whether inferior or superior,
whether far or near
must, with right understanding how it
actually is, be regarded as: 'This is not
mine, this is not I, this is not myself.'

“Bhikkhus, when a noble follower who has heard the truth sees in this way, they find estrangement in form, they find estrangement in feeling, they find estrangement in perception, they find estrangement in determinations, they find estrangement in consciousness.

“When they find estrangement, passion fades out. With the fading of passion, they are liberated. When liberated, there is knowledge that they are liberated. They understand: ‘Birth is exhausted, the integrated life has been lived out, what can be done is done, of this there is no more beyond.’”

Now during this discourse the hearts and minds of the bhikkhus were liberated from craving, aversion, and deluded thinking.

In most translations the phrase ‘integrated life’ is referred to as ‘holy life.’ The Buddha did not intend to start a new religion. He taught an Eightfold Path to be integrated in one’s life in order to Become Buddha.

End of Sutta

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SESSION 7

SARIPUTTA SUTTA – CESSATION OF IGNORANCE

On one occasion Venerable Ananda visited Venerable Sariputta. They exchanged courteous greetings and Ananda took a seat next to his friend.

Ananda asked a question: “Dear friend, could one develop concentration to the point that they would not be sensitive to (perception of) the earth or the elements of

the earth? Could one develop concentration to the point that they would not be sensitive to the infinitude of space or of consciousness? Could one develop concentration to the point that they would not be sensitive to nothingness or of neither perception nor non-perception? Could one develop concentration to the point that they would not be sensitive to this world or the next world? Would this one still be sensitive to what is occurring?”

“Yes, dear friend Ananda. Even with great concentration, this one could be sensitive to what is occurring.”

“Please explain how one could develop concentration so that they would not be sensitive to earth or to this world or the next world and still be sensitive to what is occurring?”

“Let me explain: On one occasion I was here in Savatthi at the Blind Man’s Grove. I developed concentration to the point that I was neither sensitive to the earth or to this world or the next world and, yet, I continued to be sensitive to what is occurring.”

“Please tell me, dear friend, Sariputta, what were you sensitive of at that time?”

“Ananda, I was sensitive to the cessation of becoming (further ignorant of Four Noble Truths.) I was sensitive to unbinding (from views ignorant of Four Noble Truths.) I was sensitive of the arising and passing away of all phenomena. Just as a wood fire’s flames arise and pass away, I was sensitive of unbinding from wrong views.

End Of Sutta

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SUPPLEMENTAL SUTTAS

BECOMING EXPLAINED – THREE SUTTAS

THE LOKA SUTTA

The newly-awakened Siddhartha, now Buddha, was enjoying the peace of release. Established in concentration he observed the world around him. He noticed human beings aflame with the fires born of the defilements of passion, aversion, and deluded consciousness.

Realizing the significance of what he was seeing he thought:

“The world is aflame. Rooted in ignorance the world is afflicted by sensory contact and perceives suffering as ‘self.’ Rooted in ignorance, it misunderstands ‘self’ and becomes anything other than ‘self.’

“Becoming anything other than self, the world clings to becoming, is afflicted by

becoming, and yet delights in that very becoming. Where there is delight there is fear. Where there is fear there is stress.

“The life integrated with the Eightfold Path is lived for the abandoning of becoming.

Those that say that escape from becoming is by non-becoming are never released from becoming, I declare.

“Stress (Dukkha) arises in dependence on becoming ‘self.’ With the ending of clinging to ‘self’ and maintaining ‘self,’ no stress will arise.

“Look at the world: Human beings afflicted with ignorance crave for and cling to becoming. All forms of becoming, anywhere, in any way, are impermanent, stressful, always subject to change.

“Knowing this – the arising and the passing away – from Right View craving for becoming and non-becoming is abandoned. “From the abandonment of craving for becoming and non-becoming comes unbinding. For those unbound from lack of clinging and maintaining there is no further becoming. They have conquered ignorance, completed the task, and have gone beyond becoming. (a self rooted in ignorance)

End Of Sutta

THE BHAVA SUTTA

Even during the Buddha’s time, there was confusion regarding the meaning of becoming. Here, Ananda, the Buddha’s cousin and chief attendant asks for clarity: On one occasion Ananda went to the Buddha, bowed, and sat to one side. He

was unsure of the meaning of becoming and so asked the Buddha, “Becoming, becoming, to what extent is there becoming?”

“Ananda, if there were no karma ripening within the feeling-property, would the feeling-property be noticed?”

“No, wise teacher.”

“In this way karma is the field, consciousness the seed, and craving the moisture. The consciousness of human beings rooted in ignorance and bound by craving is established in wrong view. Established in wrong view, renewed becoming is produced.

“If there is no karma ripening in the form-property, would the form-property be noticed?”

“No, wise teacher.”

“In this way karma is the field,
consciousness the seed, and craving the
moisture. The consciousness of human
beings rooted in ignorance and bound by
craving is established in wrong view.
Established in wrong view, renewed
becoming is produced.

“If there is no karma ripening in the
formless-property, would the formless-
property be noticed?”

“No, wise teacher.”

“In this way karma is the field,
consciousness the seed, and craving the
moisture. The consciousness of human
beings rooted in ignorance and bound by
craving is established in wrong view.
Established in wrong view, (ignorance)
renewed becoming is produced.”

End Of Sutta

THE MULA SUTTA

In this sutta the Buddha asks the assembled monks a rhetorical question: “Monks, if those of other sects ask you ‘In what are all phenomena rooted, how do they come into play, what is their origination, how are they established, what is their foundation, what is their governing principle, what is their defining state, what is their heartwood, where do they gain footing, and what is their cessation?’ On being asked this you should reply:

“All phenomena are rooted in desire.

“All phenomena come into play through attention.

“All phenomena have contact as their origination.

“All phenomena have feeling as their establishment.

“All phenomena have concentration for their foundation.

“All phenomena have mindfulness as their governing principle.

“All phenomena have discernment as their defining state.

“All phenomena have release as their heartwood.

“All phenomena gain footing in impermanence.

“All phenomena have unbinding as their cessation.

End Of Sutta

BAHIYA SUTTA

Bahiya was revered in his community as a person of great understanding. One day in seclusion Bahiya entertained the idea of whether he was an Arahant, an enlightened

being, or was he lacking in some key understanding.

In meditation, a female deva told him that he was not yet an Arahant. In fact, his current practice did not have the qualities that could give rise to enlightenment. (the deva is metaphor for Bahiya's own heightened awareness) He asked the deva (insight arose within him) if there was one in the world who knew the way to enlightenment.

The deva told Bahiya of the Arahant, a rightly self-awakened one who teaches his Dhamma. The Buddha was in Savatthi at the time. Bahiya immediately left to find the Buddha and learn the Dhamma.

He came upon a group of monks and asked if they knew where to find the Buddha. The monks told Bahiya that the Buddha was on

his alms round. Bahiya went into town and came upon the Buddha. Bahiya feared impermanence and uncertainty and was concerned that he or the Buddha may die before he, Bahiya, received the Dhamma. The Buddha was serene, at peace. Bahiya placed himself at the Buddha's feet and asked: "Teach me the Dhamma Awakened one. Teach me the Dhamma for my long-term welfare and lasting happiness."

The Buddha replied, "This is not the time, Bahiya, I am on my alms round."

Bahiya pleaded "Awakened one, no one can know for sure the dangers there may be for you or for me. Teach me the Dhamma for my long-term welfare and lasting happiness."

A second time the Buddha responded, “This is not the time, Bahiya, I am on my alms round.”

Again Bahiya pleaded “Awakened one, no one can know for sure the dangers there may be for you or for me. Teach me the Dhamma for my long-term welfare and lasting happiness.”

Finally, the Buddha relented: “I will teach you the Dhamma, Bahiya. Listen carefully to my words. Train your self in this manner: In what is seen, there is only the seen. In what is heard, there is only the heard. In what is sensed, there is only the sensed. In what is cognized, only the cognized.

This is how you should train yourself. When for you there is in what is seen only the seen, in what is heard only the heard, in what is sensed only the sensed and in what

is cognized only the cognized, then Bahiya there is no you in connection with what is seen, heard, sensed or cognized, there is no you there. When there is no you there, you are neither here nor there nor anywhere in-between. This and only this is the end of stress and unhappiness.”

Upon hearing the words of the Buddha Bahiya’s mind cleared. Clinging and grasping, greed and aversion ended, and all self-referential views were extinguished. Bahiya awakened gaining full human maturity.

Shortly after Bahiya’s encounter with the Buddha and his enlightenment, he was attacked and killed by a cow. The Buddha, upon hearing of Bahiya’s death instructed some monks to retrieve the body, to

cremate it properly and to prepare a memorial to Bahiya.

When completed the monks, knowing Bahiya's awakening, asked the Buddha what Bahiya's future state would be. The Buddha replied:

“Monks, Bāhiya was wise. He practiced the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma and did not pester me with issues not related to the Dhamma. Bāhiya, monks, is totally unbound.”

“Where water, earth, fire, & wind have no footing there the stars don't shine, the sun isn't visible. There the moon doesn't appear. There darkness is not found. And when a sage, a brahman through great wisdom and discernment, has realized [this] for himself, then from form & formless, from bliss & pain, he is freed.”

End of Sutta

ARAHANT SUTTA

AWAKENING IN A SINGLE PARAGRAPH

“And when one has seen the five clinging-aggregates as they really are, the arising and the passing away, understanding the attraction and the distraction, seeing the arising of desire and the continued delusion, and being delivered from the five clinging-aggregates, this one is released from clinging, all defilements are destroyed, what must be done has been done, perfection is attained, the burden has been put down, the highest goal attained. This one is liberated by perfect insight”

End of Sutta

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Peace