

Vipassanā

An inquiry (2006-07-16)

Vipassana - could be translated as '*seeing things as they have become*'. It is a meditative method to unfold *Compassion* by direct experience - and at the same time - *Wisdom* through investigation. By the practice of Vipassana my personal life has changed strikingly to the better.

The more I was unsettled when I learned, that contrary to my personal life - the *Vipassana-organization of S.N. Goenka* seemed to become worse. Finally, after 10 years, it came to a honest exchange with a high-ranking western senior teacher of S.N. Goenka. Where I tried to explain my opinion in which ways we - as an organization - are heading in the wrong direction.

As a result of this honest exchange with this fully authorized teacher, he prohibited me from visiting any further *10-day course* and also insisted that I not be allowed to participate in any future *old disciples group-sittings*. Unless, I agree to contact him and confess complete faith in all the theoretical explanations given in the evening discourses by Goenkaji (and so: my surrender to the actual practice itself was not in dispute).

My aim was to discuss these deteriorations in our organization out of serious concern - and not at all for the sake of argument, or to express disrespect. I do not believe to be in everything absolutely right or could not have misunderstood some. Nevertheless, this teacher only replied that my prohibition would be to my own good. And to a Dhamma-friend who tried to intervene he reasoned: 'Because I would put my own Cardamom seeds in my rice pudding.' (a simile of Goenka, signifying: 'If you don't like the theory, then leave it out - as the Cardamom seeds of a rice pudding - and just do the practice, which alone will help.')

After waiting in vain already for 11 months on an answer to my 'kick out' from Goenkaji himself, I started a worldwide discussion between *Goenka-disciples* on the Internet. Because if Goenkaji is not available to serious requests by long-time disciples of him and if he is not willing to explain such decisions - then our organization is already becoming a sect, and probably will disintegrate as soon as its teacher is gone. And if there are no

other unifying factors in place. Which apparently only an open discussion about these pressing issues can try to address - with the benefit of Goenkaji still able to participate in such a discussion !

I am asking for contribution by anyone willing to give - for example -

- to inquire into the adverse implications of some theoretical assumptions
- in which areas of our organization we have to be prepared to encounter fencing off of members and splitting of our community
- or to relate any personal experiences - which were more confusing than they could clarify.

With the later - please try to write just:

- what and how it happened (without guild-imputations)
- how you felt (without making others responsible for your feelings)
- what were your needs not met
- and what concrete behavior you could please the involved person of, to meet your needs (just ask - don't expect)

This, at first, awkward scheme of talking is called '[compassionate communication](#)', and has been very effective in very hopeless conflicts. As I want to avoid any escalation - and only to increase wholesomeness. I will try to respond to all requesting mails, but it may take time, also because I am not directly connected to the net.

This page is intended to improve mutual understanding, to be prepared to reveal sectarian tendencies in its beginnings - so no one has to fear anymore to be kicked out by telling his opinions. And of course for me to be able to come to courses without having to distrust and deny my own experiences (or if proved wrong - to be helped to adjust them).

'May all my deeds and non-deeds ripen at its time to full maturity - for the highest good of all beings.

May all beings be at ease and free !'

Areas of Inquiry

No Blind Beliefs:

By the publications of the *V.R.I. (Vipassana Research Institute, Igatpuri* - the research center of our tradition) and the taped discourses of Goenkaji himself it is repeatedly emphasized, that *Dhamma* (the teachings of *the Buddha*) has nothing to do with blind faith. And that one has to accept only those things, which one has found to be wholesome for oneself and others.

But I was told by an teacher, if I finally do not believe in certain theoretical aspects of Goenka's teaching which, for some reason, I have found to increase unwholesomeness through my own experience - than I am no more allowed to participate in group-meditations and have to leave Goenka's organization ?

To which Goenkaji apparently gives his silent consent since 11 months.

Ancient Tradition:

According to the *Pali Suttas*, the written down teachings of the Buddha, the Buddha himself taught *Kasina-visualizations* (1) for *Samatha* (concentration) -*practice*. Also the personal teacher of Goenkaji himself, *Sayagyi U Ba Khin* wrote in a pamphlet of the *IMC* (2) (*International Meditation Center, Yangon*) in 1961, how he instructed verbalizations for concentration-practice.

Goenka still claims that his teaching descended in its pristine purity - through an unbroken chain of teachers - to his teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin and then on to himself. Through this statement: Goenka tries to give authority to his prohibition of any verbalization, or visualization - and as not belonging to the original meditation-instructions of the Buddha !

Although I have always continued to practice Goenka's way without verbalization or visualizations. Nevertheless I have to believe Goenka's unsubstantiated claims - otherwise I find that I am no longer welcome to meditate in Goenka's meditation centers ?

Giving Donations:

Goenkaji insists that Dhamma should always be given without expecting anything in return - even if it meant for Goenka to separate from others that are authorized by Sayagyi U Ba Khin to teach (*Mother Sayama* or *Ruth Denison*).

Despite this ideal, I was told by an teacher that, after a total of *1 year practice* in Goenka's meditation centers, I am expected by this teacher to give at least *1 year of work* to Goenka's organization (beside the monetary donations already given) ?

Again without being declared invalid by Goenkaji since 11 months.

Surrendering Morality:

According to the understanding of an teacher: An experienced disciple of Goenka - with the extent of my practice - is not allowed to take the Suttas and *Vinaya* (rules of conduct for monks and nuns) as 'the Teacher' ? As the Buddha advised just before his *Parinibbana* (the final liberation at the time of death) concerning his successor. (3) Also, I am not allowed to follow the Buddha's advice - and therefore should not observe the teacher for a conscientious observation period - if his behavior is still being influenced by craving, aversion or delusion ? (4) In my case, on the contrary, I have to put Sutta and Vinaya below S. N. Goenka - and surrender to him completely (over and above my surrender to practice exactly according to the meditation instructions) - even if he holds different views to the Sutta or Vinaya of the Buddha ?

Goenkaji seems to agree with this understanding through his silent consent since 11 months.

Other Vipassana Traditions:

In making the distinction between his Vipassana and that of *Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw*, Goenkaji says the method - in which one labels ones breath: 'Rising' and 'falling' during

Anapana (awareness of breath meditation), or ones steps: 'Left' and 'right' during *walking-meditation* - is missing the direct experience which is the only thing that can liberate.

In the *Sayagyi U Ba Khin Journal* Goenkaji writes that he were personally acquainted with Venerable Mahasi. But Goenka appears not to know that Venerable Mahasi - contrary to his opinion - instructed his beginners to put only 5 percent of their awareness on labeling and the remaining 95 percent of awareness into the direct experience of it. And as meditators eventually progress in Mahasi's meditation, they are instructed to stop labeling altogether ! (5)

Although I cannot be sure, I suspect that Goenka must have known about this, and maybe this is the very reason Goenka's teachers advise disciples not to speak with teachers of other Vipassana traditions ? Would this not be slander ?

Imbalanced Meditators:

During my first year of practice I became acquainted with *3 cases of new 10-day course disciples* who were seriously harmed by their very first courses. Two of them tried to commit suicide the day after Metta-day (one of the suicide attempts resulted in a broken spine on the 1st of January 1997 in *Bodhgaya*; the other, 10 years before after a course with Goenka - as the teacher in Bodhgaya too - with ruptured lung and skull). The third had to stay in a mental hospital for 2 years because of a revived episode of childhood abuse - which had come up in his first course in Australia.

I have got the information that V.R.I. of Igatpuri researched cases concerning 10 such persons who were harmed. All, except one who couldn't be found, allegedly had either mixed Vipassana with other methods of meditation, healing techniques or were using drugs. As a result - the researchers gave the responsibility of experiencing such serious mental disturbances to these persons for mixing various meditation methods, healing techniques or drugs.

I am surprised that Goenka's researchers did not understand that mentally suffering people will almost always try any method to alleviate their pain - even if it means using drugs for self-medication. Therefore, in reality the use of these alternative palliatives in combination with Goenka's method are, essentially, attempts to alleviate the pain of the mental suffering. Rather than, as some researchers of Goenka would insist, the actual cause of the suffering.

Further, this seems to occur when they are placed under the strict regulations of a first 10-day course - at which time some respond with symptoms of mental imbalance. I think it is possible that these episodes of mental breakdown occur because, in the interviews with

the teacher, a disciple is only asked if he conforms to the technique. In depth personal psychological histories are only provided by the disciples - and not by independent evaluation. This, unfortunately, can be a perfect way for a person with, for example, depression or schizophrenia, to pass unrecognized.

In this regard, I have found that teachers generally are not sensitive to inner experiences at all (except some with a psychological background) - which would be the only truly effective to recognize *and to help* such disciples !

The Monks Path:

Once, when the Buddha was harshly criticized for declaring a deceased monk a *Sotapanna* (first of 4 irreversible stages towards full awakening), because this monk had often changed between the life of a monk and a householder - at which times he always reverted to alcoholism. But the Buddha remained very firm in justifying this monk a *Sotapanna* ! (6)

Another example: If a *Bhikkhu* (monk) happens to have self-sex, he has to confess and regret it immediately. If he hides it, he has to leave the monastery for the length of days that he denied this. (7)

And so, a *Bhikkhu* confessing a fault means progress on the path - and, because of this, he is not prohibited to continue with meditation. But, on the contrary, a serious disciple of Goenka has to wait for 2 years to continue with serious meditation in long courses after a transgression with alcohol, self sex - or if he practiced another method of Vipassana.

Repeatedly, I was discouraged to enter the living *Sangha* (community of monks) for more serious Vipassana practice by our teachers. Because, allegedly, monks no longer meditate or keep the *127 rules for monks*. It is a common and subtly expressed belief of Goenka's teachers that *Dana* (donations) is the sign of real progress on the path - but the *Nekkhamma* (renunciation) of a meditator or monk as something inferior. (8)

By practicing, in some respects, even more severe rules than the *Bhikkhus* that were guided by the Buddha, and valuing *Dana* higher than *Nekkhamma* - do Goenka disciples and teachers not appear that they think themselves to be superior to the *Bhikkhus* ?

Despite Goenkaji repeatedly paying his highest respects to the *Sangha* ?

Way of Propagation:

Goenkaji says: All the circumstances during a 10-day course are there to help the meditators to progress, and that this has been proved by the experiences of thousands of Vipassana meditators. But in statistics from 1997 by V.R.I. in Igatpuri, it was shown that of about 200.000 participants who visited a first, 10-day course since Goenka started to teach - only about 20.000 came back to a second.

If one considers how few disciples actually come back for a second course. Or how many more fail to continue with their meditation for years - and then, adding to this (from my experience) how confused many of the teachers still are about the Dhamma - I guess it comes down to about 1 percent who really reach security on this path (become Sotapanna).

Isn't it Goenka's true motive behind this advertisement that he is only trying to give confidence in his particular method to disciples ?

Why is he not willing to disprove, as he claims he would do, with empirical research how the statistics would change (especially with respect to first time disciples who get harmed) if the teachers had to undergo basic *Sutta study*, give *Dhamma talks*, get training in *basic psychological/counseling skills* - and adjust to specific situations if, or when, they should arise ?

Lay Followers:

It is Goenka's conviction that, at the time of the Buddha, *many thousands of lay people* practiced Vipassana (an interpretation from the commentaries (9)). But, at the same time, of the more than 80 places in the Suttas, where *Satipatthana-practice* (Vipassana) is mentioned, only in 4 Suttas are laymen present - with two of them at other places identified as *Anagamin*. (10)

Furthermore: Even *Anathapindika* - whom Goenka claims has donated so much because of the benefits of his practice in Satipatthana - asked *Venerable Sariputta* at his deathbed, with tears on his cheeks: 'Why do laymen never get such meditation instructions ?' Because - even at that time, he had only received - for the first time - instructions in *Sense-restraint* ! (a preliminary practice to Satipatthana) (11)

In the Suttas, the Buddha recommends that lay people gradually practice Dana, Sila (ethical behavior) and the 6 Recollections during *Upasatha-day* (recollection of Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha, Sila, Devata [Heaven] and Caga [giving up]) (12) - until they are ready to renounce the laymen life and start to practice as monks.

But somehow, it appears to me, that Goenka seems not concerned about having misled 90

percent of all first-time disciples - who never come back - that his Vipassana-meditation would be the only way to practice Dhamma. While in the Sutta the Buddha taught them other things more according to their abilities.

In doing so, does Goenka not effectively close them off from all other avenues of approach to Dhamma ? He would not only prohibit them to give Dana before attending a 10-day course (which is just the opposite of what the Buddha did) but, on top of this, it would mean to waste incredible amounts of Dana (?)

Could this not, somehow, only indicate that *big numbers of first-time meditators and meditation-centers* - and not *the most effective way of giving Dhamma* - are of utmost importance to Goenkaji ?

Sectarianism:

Goenka uses the concept '*Purity of Vibrations*' for signifying the vibrations of one who is practicing his Vipassana-method only. Then it is used for the vibrations of a place where only his Vipassana is practiced. Further, it is also used for the vibrations of *Devas* (~Angels) which are attracted to such a place.

A big part of Goenka's discourses is devoted to make this point clear. More precisely: If one is practicing *Vedanupassana* (awareness of sensations) only, one does not mix it with any verbalization or visualization (not considering that for the longer part of ones practice recognition of Impermanence is a *Sañña* [recognition] too) - one only tries to keep the universal teachings of the Buddha pure - and maintains this 'purity of vibrations'.

This very Buddha taught *Venerable Meghiya* to meditate at once on the '*recollection of ugliness*' when he feels desire. (13) To practice *Metta* (loving-kindness) when muddled with hate (in another Sutta it is claimed, that hate can not be overcome with *Sati* [awareness] alone - but only with additional *Metta* (14)). Anapana he should practice if he is plagued by restless thinking - and the perception of impermanence to overcome the conceit of 'I am'.

Only in the long courses - where most of Goenka's disciples never reach - does Goenka instruct how to practice these other well known essential recognitions (surprisingly the 6 Recollections for lay people too) - and then, only to the necessary extend to suppress overwhelming defilements.

Devaluating recollection of ugliness as being only for those meditators with lesser capabilities not able to do Vedanupassana. Apparently not knowing that this very *Asubha-meditation* is still practiced by very old and experienced *Mahatheras* (monks, since - at least - 20 years).

I had the luck to talk personally to *Venerable Rewata Dhamma* before his death. In addition to Goenka's appointment, Venerable Rewata Dhamma was also appointed as teacher by Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw and *Venerable Mogok Sayadaw's* tradition. Accordingly, at times he was teaching a mixture of these 3 Vipassana methods. Also *Munindraji*, who was kindly allowed to stay in Igatpuri at old age, taught a differing Vipassana method.

But an ordinary practitioner of those other traditions would never be allowed to come to Goenka's meditation centers - without denying his or her past practice for the sake of Goenka's 'purity of vibrations'.

Goenkaji however, teaches only his methods and does not adapt these methods to different personalities or individual situations (as the Buddha did: by teaching the beginners-practice of the 6 recollections to beginners). On the contrary, he defines such modifications as heretical to his concept of 'purity of vibration'.

In simplifying the most profound teachings of the Buddha and suspecting others who aspire to grasp the profundity of it (his personal friends excluded) - does Goenka by this act not purge his organization of its most auspicious members ?

Compassion:

The Buddha asked his monks to radiate *Loving Kindness* even during intense pain by having their limbs cut off. (15) Metta in this case, is first of all volition. But Goenka teaches that one is not able to radiate Metta - if there is not at least a bit of pleasantness in ones body. So Metta in Goenka's teaching would mean, foremost, a *Sukha Vedana* (pleasant sensation).

Also, the following would become more understandable - if one takes Metta more as a sensation - and not as ones own volition: Goenka says: '*Receive Metta-dhatu* (vibrations of loving-kindness) *on the top of your head*'. An teacher also told me that Goenka has started to say: '*Receive Nibbana-dhatu* (element of liberation, see *Itivuttaka 2.44*) *on the top of your head*' - during evening- Metta for Dhamma-workers.

What could be Goenka's understanding of these two concepts - with respect to experience ? And to which Pali words or teachings of the Buddha does Goenkaji relate them ?

- My guess is this: These two concepts are used to initiate the gradual development of *Kusala-sañña* (wholesome recognition), *Pamojja* (gladness), *Piti* (joy), *Passaddhi* (calming), and *Sukha*; - just as the Buddha intended likewise with the 6 recollections for layman on Upasatha-day. But in Goenka's theory, he seems to have put the cart before the horse (?) (16)

If the explanation of some teachers is true - that negative energies would come out of the feet soles and hinder the teacher's Metta and that is why one should never point ones feet towards a teacher - wouldn't that teacher's Metta be thought something different from Buddha's Metta, who said Metta is the only thing that can overcome hate - even while being tortured ?

And wouldn't that teacher's Metta also be different from my Metta, which oozes out with feet soles pointed at me, or me sitting below ?

It so happened, that one A.T. (assistant teacher) was telling me that the kind of Metta I experience would be called Nibbana-dhatu in our tradition (whereas true Metta would feel more subtle and not as momentary). Because I saw dangers in naming, what I considered *Awakening-factors* (17) - tradeable 'Nibbana-dhatu' - therefore I asked five different teachers.

Only one of them (the one who finally kicked me out) explicitly denied any relation of Nibbana-dhatu to my experience of Metta and agreed with my concerns (this teacher allegedly mailed the A.T. about it - and the A.T. denied ever having said so. But that s a different story - one which would show how many fears even an A.T. can have from being excluded and, defensively, preferring to respond with a white lie).

In this respect, can this not only mean that many of Goenka's teachers have different experiences, interpretations - and that they have been insufficiently guided by Goenkaji ? On the contrary, Goenka is making the confusion complete by first saying 'Metta is something completely different from Vipassana', allegedly because it's only an imagination - while, on the other side, he defines Metta as Sukha Vedana (?)

Goenkaji repeatedly says '*Vedanasamosarana sabbe dhamma*'. Still, he seems not to see how one always can do Vipassana by directing it to body sensations - whether one is meditating, writing a letter - or imagining all beings to be happy.

It also seems not having occurred to Goenkaji that what he devalues as imagination (because allegedly it can't be experienced directly) the Buddha called *Cetana*, volition, *Samma-sankappo* (wholesome thought; the 2nd limb of *the noble eightfold Path*). And to say that imagination has no place in Vipassana is like saying Vipassana has nothing to do with Samma-sankappo - and further - Pamojja, Piti, Passaddhi, Sukha, Samadhi, *Ñānadassana* (seeing things as they are), *Nibbida* (disenchantment), ... up to *Nibbana* (?) (16.a)

Wisdom:

Goenkaji says *Dependent Origination of Suffering* can only be stopped at Vedana (feeling pleasant, unpleasant and neutral sensations) - by being aware and equanimous with sensations in the knowledge of their *Anicca* (impermanence). Sayagyi U Ba Khin says this '*Aniccasañña*' can develop further through observation at any of the '*six sense-door contacts*' (*Salayatana-phassa*). (18)

What Goenkaji calls Vedana, Sayagyi U Ba Khin also calls 'contact at the body sense-door'. Which suggests, that Dependent Origination can also be stopped at Phassa ?

Further Sayagyi U Ba Khin says: After one has enough experience with perceiving *Aniccasañña* at the body sense-door (sense of touch), one would be free to experiment with perceiving *Anicca* also at the other sense-doors: tasting, smelling, hearing, seeing or thinking (either as verbalization in whatever language - or as imagination in its spatial equivalent)

But, contrary to Sayagyi U Ba Khin, Goenkaji prohibits the observation of *Anicca* in mental activity even after many years of Vipassana practice - because he says mental activity is too difficult to be observed directly.

Goenkaji says that even when it comes to *Cittanupassana* (observation of mind), one should observe mental activity through its bodily symptoms only - and so, by observing the bodily symptoms (for example of defilements), one would observe objectively and it could be overcome. In my experience this was mostly true.

But in some cases: To be aware only of sensations simply would suppress the defilement - although Goenkaji says it wouldn't. But only by additionally being aware of the ongoing mental activity, which can be observed directly with some exercise (as Goenka's teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin said), was the observation - without suppression - possible.

Regarding all of this, did it never come to Goenka's mind that the crucial ingredient for redirecting Dependent Origination could be its first link: *Vijja*, wisdom, *Pañña* as he would say, or '*Aniccasañña*' - with respect to anything directly experienced - which could be *Salayatana-phassa*, *Vedana*, *Tanha*, *Upadana*, *Dukkha*... even *Aniccasañña* itself (?) (19)

Although Goenkaji lightens up his prohibition to directly observe mental activity at a minimal level in the serious courses - and there he suddenly also does teach, that '*Vijja*' is the crucial ingredient to stop Dependent Origination of Suffering - most of his disciples just never get there. So are they not misled for years ?

Healings:

Goenkaji talks exclusively about meditators becoming healed by the practice of Vipassana in his taped discourses. However, my own experience was: Right after my first course I started to suffer for the first time in my life *psoriasis* - a skin disease where both and all of my feet soles became openly infected - which healed by itself only after 8 more months.

Interestingly: With Anapana it improved, but Vedanupassana (especially with *Bhanga* - which Goenka understands as the experience of subtle vibrating sensations (20)) made the pus dribble down like a leaky tap.

Likewise, western medicine would only suppress the pus. But after completing the treatment with antibiotics - the pus continued dripping. *Homeopathic-, Ayurvedic-, Tibetan-medicine, Acupuncture, Shiatsu- and Reiki-treatments* - like Vedanupassana - supported the pus coming out and along with it did no harm to my auto-immune system.

Additionally, the following 3 years I suffered 2 recurring *malarias* - completed by a seriously *herniated disc*. But never in my life had I suffered such serious diseases, in such a frequency and duration, making me *immovable half of my first 3 years of practicing Vipassana!*

Goenkaji started to prohibit the practice of alternative healing techniques to his disciples just around the same time I experienced their benefits. According to Goenkaji: energetic-healing techniques would make use of external energies - leading to dependency and become conflictive to liberation.

Just the opposite is my experience. Never had I felt any other energy - receiving treatments by energy methods - than the nurturance by the practitioners themselves. So opposite to my disappointing experiences with western physicians before in my live - depending mainly on drugged down symptoms only.

Converse and solely - starting in my very first 10-day course on Metta-day at the chanting of '*phala hooo*' by Goenkaji - I experienced a spontaneous shower of quivering energy permeating my whole body, which felt extremely pleasant. Strangely, for the next first year of my practice it occurred always at the first incantation of chanting at the beginning and at the end - at the hypnotic '*phala hooo*' - of a 10-day course. (21)

Then it started to happen also during ordinary live: Whenever the sincere wish for wellbeing for all beings arose - which followed from the influence of the knowledge of my own suffering and insubstantiality - and that, somehow, in this true nature I really feel one with all beings.

But this strange, most pleasant, momentary and spontaneous shower of loving-kindness energy I still do not understand to happen on account of my own accomplishments. I - by myself - cannot reproduce it. Nevertheless, it not only permeated me - it started to ooze

out, as I could observe in situations with aggressive or mad people. Taking the simple conceptual framework of my christian upbringing for a simile - for me this was like the proof of a merciful god in all of us.

According to one Assistant Teacher, this energy would allegedly be called 'Nibbana-dhatu' by our tradition. But till today the teachers could tell me nothing more about the experience of this external energy *through the Vipassana - instructions and incantations of Goenkaji !* ('external' in the fragmenting way Goenkaji uses this word. I hope that we all try to understand how we live in an exclusively interdependent world - with no abiding self or anything coming about on its own or any other. (22))

During my 10 years of my Vipassana practice, I talked with maybe a 100 other Goenka-disciples more personally. Of whom about 10 had become seriously mentally disturbed - but only by their very first course. In the long courses, I have met about 10 practitioners who secretly mixed their long courses with: *Zen, Advaita Vedanta, Tibetan visualizations, Hare Krishna Mantras, Energy-healing techniques or Bhang* (cannabis).

But during all this time I have got to know only one *old-disciple* who finally committed suicide successfully - a real loss to all who knew him well. Although he practiced only Goenka's method for many years - none of Goenka's teacher could give him ease with the kind of painful *Kundalini-rising* he experienced and was caused by intensive Goenka-Vipassana practice - *merely by 10-day courses !*

During all this time: Why did I hear only of practitioners becoming harmed by the lack of real guidance by the teachers in combination with this '*powerful* method' - coming together with the unwholesome *Kamma* (acts and their results) of the disciple - and never by the mixing of methods ?

One teacher honestly admitted helplessness to such questions by saying: 'She could not know, *'who of the teachers is going to become crazy during the next long course.'* Already the second teacher send me into exile after asking such questions - allegedly this is none of the disciples business ? What do such comments and ways of handling this problem could become to mean to the disciples ?

Why Goenkaji is so speechless - when a serious disciple is requesting him to take a stand ?

Teachers, Teachings & Disciples:

Although comparing my practice of Vipassana with the Dhamma of the Buddha does give me essential guidance and confidence. Nevertheless I have to admit, that in my case Goenkaji's method worked so well right from the beginning - I pragmatically choose Goenka's parameters - as there are: '*no intentional verbalization, no visualization, no suppression of defilements - and always with body sensations*'.

But the reader should stay well aware that the Buddha himself taught even suppression in certain cases. (23) If Goenkaji gives, in 10-day courses, the impression that suppression is not part of Buddha's teaching - I would never dare to agree with Goenka's far-reaching claims.

Most of this page would be superfluous and I guess only in our tradition one has to struggle with such points, because we have never been allowed to distinguish between specialized meditation instructions for a certain type of personality/situation and the much wider Dhamma of the Buddha, who adapted it to all possible personalities and situations. (24)

Therefore, some points of questions, I raise - might appear to some reader as irrelevant, simplified, contradictorily or not enough consequentially reasoned. But with the goodwill and help of the same reader this can easily become improved.

- Goenkaji gives the simile of someone digging for water, but not being patient enough, he digs here and there, never reaching depth anywhere to reach the underground water level. This image is very good to make the point: 'Stay with a particular method - if you find it appropriate - till you get some water !'

But taking this simile further: By digging a well one usually has to deal first with earth, then maybe with rock or sand. A spade may be good enough to handle the earth, with sand it could become troublesome and impossible to get through solid rock. Similarly with dynamite and no shovel at hand.

Goenkaji says it repeatedly - the aim and recognizable sign of one practicing Vipassana without mistake is: *Craving and aversion becoming diminished*.

In Buddha's road map to liberation there are four intermediary paths:

1. From *a Worldling* to *Sotapanna*: becoming utterly convinced that everything arising will pass,
2. From *Sotapanna* to *Sakadagamin*: *diminishing craving and aversion*,
3. From *Sakadagamin* to *Anagamin*: becoming free of every sensual desire,
4. From *Anagamin* to *Arahat*: becoming free of any residue conceit. (25)

So, taking the loop back to my teacher, who - in the opinion of some - most probably kicked me out, because I still became emotionally agitated by the deteriorations in our organization - and by his alleged fear that my truth-inquiring attitude could also have spread to other disciples (as if that could ever happen, if it was not already boiling underneath):

If one does not behave like a Sakadagamin after 10 years of practice in Goenka's tradition - one is no longer welcome to continue practice in this tradition ? So don't let the time

ripen ?

Please think it through yourself what else all of this could imply - in relation:

- to the reality that most disciples don't progress ? (to say: '*seeds of Dhamma have been planted*' can be true - at the same time it can be a convenient way of avoiding all responsibility and to prevent any adaptations by the teachers (26))
- that a few even get harmed by a first 10-day course ? (in my opinion unnecessarily)
- to some working hard making themselves appear to have progressed ? (out of good intentions - maybe becoming implicitly unable to admit any mistakes anymore)
- to others who get guidance by such hard working A.T.s ?

In all of this it is difficult for me to understand:

On one side Goenkaji's actual method is effective like dynamite - doing a good job for Sotapanna and leaving aside any preparatory beginners practice. However, such is a practice that only can do well to what one could call a minority 'elite'. The disciples not even being allowed to discuss the Dhamma of the Buddha with the teachers - which the Buddha explained a precondition to the practice of Sila, Samadhi and Pañña ! (27)

On the other side - with the kind of Goenka's meditation-instructions and organization of courses - I increasingly get the impression that they are suitable in the long run for simple faith-type persons only.

Because Goenkaji gives so much importance to:

- talk about miracles
- giving validity to this method on account of its alleged exclusive ancient tradition
- the authority and indispensability of the teachers by their power to 'give' miraculous Metta-dhatu - or worse - 'Nibbana-dhatu' - and not by their living example in compassion and wisdom
- reach the unthinking masses (only to superfluously mess with their self-confidence by a too demanding first-course ?)

Further, by lightening the meditation instructions of many differentiating and further-reaching subtleties - in this attempt not to confuse any faith-type persons:

- like the denial that other Vipassana-traditions - as a matter of course - work with direct experience too
- by giving so much emphasis on something quite self-evident: Direct experience - narrowing it down to the specific Pali term 'Vedana' - mistakenly understood mainly

as the felt qualities of the 4 great Elements = 'Kaya'. On the other hand as body sense-door contacts = 'Phassa' (while Phassa would include Sense-object, -organ and -consciousness). Finally widening such 'Phassa' to appear not to be distinct to Sañña or Pañña (*'Awareness of Impermanence on the level of body sensations !'*) ...

Bringing Goenkaji - as a natural course of such simplifications - in the strange position to have to warn with emphasis of Bhanga ! Which in the Buddha's teaching is a natural stage of Insight, a Nana and knowledge of dissolution (28) - it is a growing sincerity that there can be nothing of an enduring entity - and has nothing to do with felt ecstasy or bliss.

Right the opposite: First of all it gives rise to sheer threat to anyone not liberated of the want to identify. And this threat would be *directly experienced* if it deserved to be called real Bhanga-Nana. Goenkaji would not have to put so much effort to convince at all !

I do not understand why Goenkaji makes it so complicated by simplifying it. Why does he teach advanced practice to beginners - why is he teaching beginners practice to the advanced ? Could anyone help me understand this paradoxical guidance ? Is Goenkaji secretly fond of Koans ?

*Interested, bored, annoyed, or downright angry - want to say, correct or ask something ?
Think it better to stay equanimous with all of it - and don't want to make it more difficult
by giving attention to the improvement of this Sasana ?*

Write to: Wolfgang Lindner - pamojjaATyahoo.de or pamojjaATgmx.at or [blog it](#)

I start to feel much like the fool in the tale: 'The emperor's new cloth'. Nevertheless, behold: 'If anyone feels affected through my inquiry or - what I never intended hurt: Please try to distinguish wholesome Hiri-ottappa (shame and conscience) in it. Kamma is such - that the next time (or the last ?) - I might be the naked emperor and ultimately glad to have planted the seed of such a fool (or was it you ?).'

I take refuge in the Buddha

I take refuge in the Dhamma

I take refuge in the Sangha

PS: If I wrote about the benefits of Vipassana practice - in its relation to the Dhamma - it would have become much a larger page. However, I see no need to - as this is not suppressed in the same imbalanced way. The same applies to my gratefulness and respect to anyone teaching the Dhamma as good as he can !

In particular I want to say thanks to my dear teacher. Who, deep down, I do not think so silly as not to be aware - that anyone could ever start such a vital open discussion as a member still belonging to Goenkaji's organization.

Responses (Mar-Jul): [general](#) / [psychosis](#) / [first-timer](#) / [critiques](#)

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Notes & Suttas

(1) Description in Nyanatiloka's Buddhist Dictionary:

Kasina (perhaps related to Skr. Krtsna) entire, whole, is the name for a purely external device to produce and develop concentration of mind and attain the 4 Absorptions (Jhana). It consists in concentrating one's full and undivided attention on one visible object a Preparatory Image (Parikamma-nimitta), e.g., a colored spot or disc, or a piece of earth, or a pond at some distance etc., until at last one perceives, even with the eyes closed, a mental reflex, the Acquired Image (Uppaha-nimitta).

Now, while continuing to direct one's attention to this image, there may arise the spotless and immovable Counter-Image (Patibhaga-nimitta), and together with it the Neighborhood-Concentration (Upacara-samadhi) will have been reached.

While still persevering in the concentration on the object, one finally will reach a state of mind where all sense-activity is suspended, where there is no more seeing and hearing, no

more perception of bodily impression and feeling, i.e. The state of the 1st mental Absorption (Jhana).

Cross-references in Rhys Davids Pali dictionary:

... they are fully described at A V.46 sq., 60; usually enumerated as ten:

Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Blue, Yellow, Red, White, Space & Consciousness.

M II.14; D III.268, 290; Nett 89, 112; Dhs 202; ps 1.6, 95; cp. Manual 49-52; Bdhd 4, 90 sq., 95 sq.; Vism 110; cp. Dhs trsl. 43 n. 4, 57 n. 2; Cpd. 54, 202.; ps 1.49, 143, 149.; J I.313; III.519; DhsA 186 sq.; Vism 374; cp. Bdhd 5, 101 sq., 104, 152.; M II.15; J V.314; J III.519. D III.268; M II.14; ps 1.28.; Vism 427; J I.141; IV.306; V.162, 193.; DhsA 413.; Vism 117, 123; J I.8, 245; III.13, 526; DhsA 187; J III.369; DhA IV.208.; Nd2 4668.

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(2) Sayagyi U Ba Khin, Pamphlet No 1, Reprint 1961 (3000 Copies), Page 23:

To develop the power of concentration to onepointedness. This is developed by focusing one's attention to a spot on the upper lip just beneath the nose synchronizing the inward and outward motion of respiration with

- (a) the silent sound of 'Amen' in the case of Christians,
- (b) 'Aum' in the case of Hindus,
- (c) 'Allah' in the case of Mohammedans and
- (d) 'Sat-Nam' in the case of Sikhs.

This is done till the wavelength of respiration becomes finer and finer and the Mind gets settled down to a point and the candidate secures what may be called the onepointedness of the mind.

Read the whole pamphlet: '[*Introduction to the International Meditation Center*](#)'

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(3) Parinibbana Sutta, Digha Nikaya 16:

Then the Blessed One said to Venerable Ananda, 'Now, if it occurs to any of you - 'The

teaching has lost its authority, we are without a Teacher'

- do not view it in that way. Whatever Dhamma & Vinaya I have pointed out & formulated for you, that will be your Teacher when I am gone.'

Gopaka Moggallana Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya 108:

'No, Brahman. There isn't any one monk authorized by the Sangha and appointed by a large body of elder monks [with the words] 'He will be our arbitrator after the Blessed One is gone,' to whom we now turn.'

- 'Being thus without an arbitrator, Master Ananda, what is the reason for your concord?'

- 'It's not the case, Brahman, that we're without an arbitrator. We have an arbitrator. The Dhamma is our arbitrator.'

Madhura Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya 84:

'Magnificent, Master Kaccana! Master Kaccana has made the Dhamma clear in many ways, a though he were turning upright what had been overthrown, revealing what was hidden, showing the way to one who is lost, or holding up a lamp in the dark for those with eyesight to see forms. I go to Master Kaccana for refuge and to the Dhamma and to the Sangha of Bhikkhus. From today let Master Kaccana remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge for life.'

'Do not go to me for refuge, great king. Go for refuge to that same Blessed One to whom I have gone for refuge.'

- 'Where is he living now, that Blessed One, accomplished and full enlightened, Master Kaccana?'

- 'That Blessed One, accomplished and fully enlightened, has attained to final Nibbana, great king.'

'If we heard that that Blessed One was within ten leagues, we would go ten leagues in order to see that Blessed One, accomplished and fully enlightened. If we heard that that Blessed One was within twenty leagues ... thirty leagues ... forty leagues ... fifty leagues ... a hundred leagues, we would go a hundred leagues in order to see that Blessed One, accomplished and fully enlightened.'

But since that Blessed One has attained to final Nibbana, we go to that Blessed One for refuge and to the Dhamma and to the Sangha of Bhikkhus. From today let Master Kaccana remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge for life.'

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(4) Chanki Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya 95:

'There is the case, Bharadvaja, where a monk lives in dependence on a certain village or town. Then a householder or householder's son goes to him and observes him with regard to three mental qualities - qualities based on greed, qualities based on aversion, qualities based on delusion:

'Are there in this venerable one any such qualities based on greed ... on aversion ... on delusion that, with his mind overcome by these qualities, he might say, 'I know,' while not knowing, or say, 'I see,' while not seeing; or that he might urge another to act in a way that was for his/her long-term harm & pain?'

As he observes him, he comes to know, 'There are in this venerable one no such qualities based on greed... on aversion... on delusion. His bodily behavior & verbal behavior are those of one not greedy... not aversive... not deluded. And the Dhamma he teaches is deep, hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise. This Dhamma can't easily be taught by a person who's greedy ... who's aversive... who's deluded.'

Great Authorities Sutta, Anguttara Nikaya IV, 180:

'And what, monks, are the four great authorities?

In this case, monks, a monk might say: 'Face to face with the Exalted One, your reverence, did I hear it...

/ 'In such and such a dwelling place resides an Order (of monks) together with an elder monk, a leader...

/ 'In such and such a dwelling-place resides a great number of elder monks, widely learned, versed in the doctrines, who know Dhamma by heart, who know Vinaya by heart who know the Summaries by heart...

/ 'In such and such a dwelling-place resides a single elder monk, of wide learning, versed in the doctrines, one who knows Dhamma by heart, who knows Vinaya by heart, who knows the Summaries by heart

... face to face with him did I receive it. This is Dhamma, this is Vinaya, this is the Master's teaching.

'Now, monks, the words of that monk... are neither to be welcomed nor scorned, but without welcoming, without scorning, the words and syllables thereof are to be closely scrutinized, laid beside Sutta and compared with Vinaya.

If, when thus laid beside Sutta and compared with Vinaya, they lie not along with Sutta and agree not with Vinaya, to this conclusion must ye come: Surely this is not the word of that Exalted One, Arahata, the Fully Enlightened One, and it was wrongly taken by that monk.

So reject it, monks.

'Face to face with the Exalted One, your reference, did I hear it. Face to face with him did I receive it. ...it was rightly taken by that monk. Then bear this in mind as the first /

second / third / forth great authority. So these, monks, are the four great authorities.'

The Peg Sutta, Samyutta Nikaya XX. 7:

Staying at Savatthi. 'Monks, there once was a time when the Dasarahas had a large drum called 'Summoner.' Whenever Summoner was split, the Dasarahas inserted another peg in it, until the time came when Summoner's original wooden body had disappeared and only a conglomeration of pegs remained.'

'In the same way, in the course of the future there will be monks who won't listen when discourses that are words of the Tathagata - deep, deep in their meaning, transcendent, connected with emptiness - are being recited. They won't lend ear, won't set their hearts on knowing them, won't regard these teachings as worth grasping or mastering.

But they will listen when discourses that are literary works - the works of poets, elegant in sound, elegant in rhetoric, the work of outsiders, words of disciples - are recited. They will lend ear and set their hearts on knowing them. They will regard these teachings as worth grasping & mastering.'

'In this way the disappearance of the discourses that are words of the Tathagata - deep, deep in their meaning, transcendent, connected with emptiness - will come about.'

- 'Thus you should train yourselves: 'We will listen when discourses that are words of the Tathagata - deep, deep in their meaning, transcendent, connected with emptiness - are being recited. We will lend ear, will set our hearts on knowing them, will regard these teachings as worth grasping & mastering.'

That's how you should train yourselves.'

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(5) That Mahasi instructed in this way_-

was told to me by a disrobed German Monk, who went already in the fifties to Myanmar and was authorized to teach Vipassana by Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw himself (who allegedly authorized only Pali speakers).

Jack Kornfield also describes it in Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw's Chapter in the book: 'Living Dharma', Teachings of Twelve Buddhist Masters, page 52.

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(6) Sarakani Sutta, Samyutta Nikaya 55.3.4:

... Sarakani the Sakyan had died, and the Blessed One had declared him to be a stream-enterer, no longer bound to the nether world, fixed in destiny, with enlightenment as his destination.

There upon a number of Sakyans, having met and assembled, deplored this, grumbled, and complained about it, saying: 'It is wonderful indeed, sir! It is amazing indeed, sir! Now who here won't be a stream-enterer when the Blessed One has declared Sarakani the Sakyan after he died to be a stream-enterer... with enlightenment as his destination? Sarakani the Sakyan was too weak for the training; he drank intoxicating drink!'

- Then Mahanama the Sakyan approached the Blessed One, paid homage to him, sat down to one side, and reported this matter to him.

...'Here, Mahanama, some person does not possess confirmed confidence in the Buddha ... nor in the Dhamma ... nor in the Sangha. He is not one of joyous wisdom, nor of swift wisdom, and he has not attained liberation. However, he has these five things: the faculty of faith ... the faculty of wisdom. And he has sufficient faith in the Tathagata, sufficient devotion to him.

This person too, Mahanama, is one who does not go to hell, nor to the animal realm, nor to the sphere of ghosts, who does not go to the plane of misery, the bad destinations, the nether world.'

...'Even if these great sala trees, Mahanama, could understand what is well spoken and what is badly spoken, then I would declare these great sala trees to be stream-enterers, no longer bound to the nether world, fixed in destiny, with enlightenment as their destination.

How much more, then, Sarakani the Sakyan? Sarakani the Sakyan, Mahanama, undertook the training at the time of his death.'

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(7) Vinaya, Sanghadisesa, 1. Sikkavissatthi sikkhapada:

1. Intentional discharge of semen, except while dreaming, entails initial and subsequent meetings of the Community

13. A Bhikkhu who has committed any one of these offenses should undertake Parivasa, even though he may not wish to do so, for just as long a time as he has knowingly concealed that offense.

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(8) To share my personal opinions and experiences with the teacher

- who then kicked me out - was initially caused by his accusation:

That to practice 1 year in Goenka's courses during the time of 10 years - and not giving the same amount of time to Dhamma-work - would be the sign of me making a big mistake in my practice.

Although Dana has prime importance for one's material welfare in the future and usually is the first step in the practice of Dhamma - compared with the renunciation to come to retreats and meditate - Nekkhamma has immeasurable more value, than to give and work (see for example Anguttara Nikaya IX, 20). To which this teacher could agree.

But contradictorily, he then disagreed that I would be allowed - as a Goenka disciple with the extent of my experience - to take the Suttas as authority for life, beside my surrender to the actual meditation instruction of Goenkaji.

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(9) Visakha Sutta, Udana 8.8:

... Now at that time a dear and beloved grandson of Visakha, Migara's mother, had died. So Visakha, Migara's mother - her clothes wet, her hair wet - went to the Blessed One in the middle of the day and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side.

As she was sitting there the Blessed One said to her: 'Why have you come here, Visakha - your clothes wet, your hair wet - in the middle of the day?'

- When this was said, she said to the Blessed One, 'My dear and beloved grandson has died. This is why I have come here - my clothes wet, my hair wet - in the middle of the day.'

- 'Visakha, would you like to have as many children and grandchildren as there are people in Savatthi?'

- 'Yes, lord, I would like to have as many children and grandchildren as there are people in Savatthi.'

- 'But how many people in Savatthi die in the course of a day?'

- 'Sometimes ten people die in Savatthi in the course of a day, sometimes nine... eight... seven... six... five... four... three... two... Sometimes one person dies in Savatthi in the course of a day. Savatthi is never free from people dying.'

- 'So what do you think, Visakha: Would you ever be free from wet clothes and wet hair?'

- 'No, lord. Enough of my having as many children and grandchildren as there are people in Savatthi.'

- Taking a daily dying rate of 1 - 10 Persons and an average lifespan into account, Savatthi could have had 150.000 inhabitants, at the most. The commentaries give unbelievable numbers: 30 Millions.

In Anguttara Nikaya V.3.26, five ways a monk can attain Sotapanna are enumerated: listening to the Dhamma, teaching the Dhamma, repeating the Dhamma, reflecting on the Dhamma, or, as a 5th way, formal meditation.

A very impressive example of a layperson reaching Sotapanna merely by listening to the Dhamma is Suppabuddha in Udana V.3, who - with many former lives in hell - would not even had the opportunity to collect Paramis (but certainly he knew Dukkha very intimate).

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(10) In total there are more than 360 Suttas_-

which were explicitly spoken to laymen. Of these, only in 2 Suttas (Samyutta Nikaya 47. 25 and Majjhima Nikaya 51) the Buddha mentions the practice of Satipatthana - but he does not explicitly recommends to practice it to them - as the Buddha had done with other practices, like the 6 Anusatis (see Note 12).

Nor did he respond with: 'Sadhu, sadhu, sadhu.' (as in Anguttara Nikaya XI, 12 - 14), after the layman Pesu had said: 'We white-clothed laymen sometimes (kalena kalam) practice Satipatthana too'.

In 2 further Suttas (Samyutta Nikaya 47, 29 - 30) Ananda talks with a layman who practice Satipatthana, but at each end of these 2 Suttas he confirms the Layman to be a Non-returner (see Note 25).

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(11) Anathapindika Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya 143:

... Sariputta said to the householder Anathapindika: 'I hope you are getting well, householder. I hope your painful feelings are subsiding and not increasing.'

- 'Venerable Sariputta, I am not getting well ... My painful feelings are increasing, not subsiding; their increase and not their subsiding is apparent.'

- ... 'Then, householder, you should train thus, 'I will not cling to what is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, encountered, sought after, and examined by the mind, and my consciousness will not be dependent on that.' Thus you should train.'

- When this was said, the householder Anathapindika wept and shed tears.

Then the venerable Ananda asked him: 'Are you foundering, householder, are you sinking?'

- 'I am not foundering, venerable Ananda, I am not sinking. But although I have long waited upon the Teacher and Bhikkhus worthy of esteem, never before have I heard such a talk on the Dhamma.'

- 'Such talk on the Dhamma, householder, is not given to lay people clothed in white. Such talk on the Dhamma is given to those who have gone forth.'

... Then, after giving the householder Anathapindika this advice, the venerable Sariputta and the venerable Ananda departed. Soon after they had left, the householder Anathapindika died and reappeared in the Tushita heaven.

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(12) Uposatha is on every 8th day according to the moon-cycle. Muluposatha Sutta, Anguttara Nikaya III, 70:

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in Savatthi at the Eastern Monastery, the palace of Migara's mother. Now at that time - it being the Uposatha day - Visakha, Migara's mother, went to the Blessed One in the middle of the day and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side.

As she was sitting there the Blessed One said to her, 'Well now, Visakha, why are you coming in the middle of the day?'

- 'Today I am observing the Uposatha, lord.'

- 'Visakha, there are these three Uposathas. Which three? The Uposatha of a cowherd, the Uposatha of the Jains, and the Uposatha of the Noble Ones.

'And what is the Uposatha of a cowherd? Just as when a cowherd returns the cattle to their owners in the evening, he reflects: 'Today the cattle wandered to that spot and this, drank at this spot and that; tomorrow they will wander to that spot and this, will drink at this spot and that'; in the same way, there is the case where a certain person observing the Uposatha reflects, 'Today I ate this sort of non-staple food and that sort of staple food. Tomorrow I will eat that sort of non-staple food and this sort of staple food.' He spends the day with an awareness imbued with that covetousness, with that greed. Such is the Uposatha of a cowherd, Visakha. When this Uposatha of a cowherd is undertaken, it is not of great fruit or great benefit, not of great glory or great radiance.

'And what is the Uposatha of the Jains? There are the contemplatives called the Niganthas (Jains). They get their disciple to undertake the following practice: 'Here, my good man. Lay down the rod with regard to beings who live more than 100 leagues to the east... more than 100 leagues to the west... more than 100 leagues to the north... more than 100 leagues to the south.' Thus they get the disciple to undertake kindness & sympathy to some beings, but not to others.

'On the Uposatha day, they get their disciple to undertake the following practice: 'Here, my good man. Having stripped off all your clothing, say this: 'I am nothing by anything or of anything. Thus there is nothing by anything or of anything that is mine.' 'Yet in spite of

that, his parents know of him that 'This is our child.' And he knows of them that 'These are my parents.' His wives & children know of him that 'This is our husband & father.' And he knows of them that 'These are my wives & children.' His workers & slaves know of him that 'This is our master.' And he knows of them that 'These are my workers & slaves.' Thus at a time when he should be persuaded to undertake truthfulness, he is persuaded to undertake falsehood. At the end of the night, he resumes the consumption of his belongings, even though they aren't given back to him. This counts as stealing, I tell you. Such is the Uposatha of the Jains, Visakha. When this Uposatha of the Jains is undertaken, it is not of great fruit or great benefit, not of great glory or great radiance.

'And what is the Uposatha of the Noble Ones? It is the cleansing of the defiled mind through the proper technique. And how is the defiled mind cleansed through the proper technique?

'There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects the Tathagata, thus: 'Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy and rightly self-awakened, consummate in knowledge & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the world, unexcelled as a trainer for those people fit to be tamed, the Teacher of divine & human beings, awakened, blessed.' As he is recollecting the Tathagata, his mind is calmed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned, just as when the head is cleansed through the proper technique.

And how is the head cleansed through the proper technique? Through the use of cosmetic paste & clay & the appropriate human effort. This is how the head is cleansed through the proper technique. In the same way, the defiled mind is cleansed through the proper technique. And how is the defiled mind cleansed through the proper technique?

There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects the Tathagata... As he is recollecting the Tathagata, his mind is cleansed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned.

He is thus called a disciple of the noble ones undertaking the Brahma-Uposatha. He lives with Brahma [= the Buddha]. It is owing to Brahma that his mind is calmed, that joy arises, and that whatever defilements there are in his mind are abandoned. This is how the mind is cleansed through the proper technique.

'[Again, the Uposatha of the Noble Ones] is the cleansing of the mind through the proper technique. And how is the defiled mind cleansed through the proper technique?

'There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects the Dhamma, thus: 'The Dhamma is well-expounded by the Blessed One, to be seen here & now, timeless, inviting verification, pertinent, to be realized by the wise for themselves.' As he is recollecting the Dhamma, his mind is calmed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned, just as when the body is cleansed through the proper technique.

And how is the body cleansed through the proper technique? Through the use of scouring balls & bath powder & the appropriate human effort. This is how the body is cleansed through the proper technique. In the same way, the defiled mind is cleansed through the proper technique.

And how is the defiled mind cleansed through the proper technique? There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects the Dhamma... As he is recollecting the Dhamma, his mind is cleansed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned.

He is thus called a disciple of the noble ones undertaking the Dhamma-Uposatha. He lives with Dhamma. It is owing to Dhamma that his mind is calmed, that joy arises, and that whatever defilements there are in his mind are abandoned. This is how the mind is cleansed through the proper technique.

'[Again, the Uposatha of the Noble Ones] is the cleansing of the mind through the proper technique. And how is the defiled mind cleansed through the proper technique?

'There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects the Sangha, thus: 'The Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced well... who have practiced straight-forwardly... who have practiced methodically... who have practiced masterfully - in other words, the four types [of noble disciples] when taken as pairs, the eight when taken as individual types - they are the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples: worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect, the incomparable field of merit for the world.' As he is recollecting the Sangha, his mind is calmed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned, just as when clothing is cleansed through the proper technique.

And how is clothing cleansed through the proper technique? Through the use of salt earth & lye & cow dung & the appropriate human effort. This is how clothing is cleansed through the proper technique. In the same way, the defiled mind is cleansed through the proper technique.

And how is the defiled mind cleansed through the proper technique? There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects the Sangha... As he is recollecting the Sangha, his mind is cleansed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned. He is thus called a disciple of the noble ones undertaking the Sangha-Uposatha. He lives with the Sangha. It is owing to the Sangha that his mind is calmed, that joy arises, and that whatever defilements there are in his mind are abandoned. This is how the mind is cleansed through the proper technique.

'[Again, the Uposatha of the Noble Ones] is the cleansing of the mind through the proper technique. And how is the defiled mind cleansed through the proper technique?

'There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects his own virtues, thus: '[They are] untorn, unbroken, unspotted, unsplattered, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished, conducive to concentration.' As he is recollecting virtue, his mind is calmed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned, just as when a mirror is cleansed through the proper technique.

And how is a mirror cleansed through the proper technique? Through the use of oil & ashes & chamois & the appropriate human effort. This is how a mirror is cleansed through the proper technique. In the same way, the defiled mind is cleansed through the proper technique.

And how is the defiled mind cleansed through the proper technique? There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects his own virtues... As he is recollecting virtue, his mind is cleansed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned. He is thus called a disciple of the noble ones undertaking the virtue-Uposatha. He lives with virtue. It is owing to virtue that his mind is calmed, that joy arises, and that whatever defilements there are in his mind are abandoned. This is how the mind is

cleansed through the proper technique.

'[Again, the Uposatha of the Noble Ones] is the cleansing of the mind through the proper technique. And how is the defiled mind cleansed through the proper technique?

'There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects the Devas, thus: 'There are the Devas of the Four Great Kings, the Devas of the Thirty-three, the Yama Devas, the Contented Devas, the Devas who delight in creation, the Devas who have power over the creations of others, the Devas of Brahma's retinue, the Devas beyond them. Whatever conviction they were endowed with that - when falling away from this life - they re-arose there, the same sort of conviction is present in me as well.

Whatever virtue they were endowed with that - when falling away from this life - they re-arose there, the same sort of virtue is present in me as well.

Whatever learning they were endowed with that - when falling away from this life - they re-arose there, the same sort of learning is present in me as well.

Whatever generosity they were endowed with that - when falling away from this life - they re-arose there, the same sort of generosity is present in me as well.

Whatever discernment they were endowed with that - when falling away from this life - they re-arose there, the same sort of discernment is present in me as well.'

As he is recollecting the Devas, his mind is calmed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned, just as when a gold is cleansed through the proper technique.

And how is gold cleansed through the proper technique? Through the use of a furnace, salt earth, red chalk, a blow-pipe, tongs, & the appropriate human effort. This is how gold is cleansed through the proper technique. In the same way, the defiled mind is cleansed through the proper technique.

And how is the defiled mind cleansed through the proper technique? There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects the Devas... As he is recollecting the Devas, his mind is cleansed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned.

He is thus called a disciple of the noble ones undertaking the Deva-Uposatha. He lives with the Devas. It is owing to the Devas that his mind is calmed, that joy arises, and that whatever defilements there are in his mind are abandoned.

This is how the mind is cleansed through the proper technique.

'Furthermore, the disciple of the noble ones reflects thus: 'As long as they live, the Arahats - abandoning the taking of life - abstain from the taking of life. They dwell with their rod laid down, their knife laid down, scrupulous, merciful, compassionate for the welfare of all living beings. Today I too, for this day & night - abandoning the taking of life - abstain from the taking of life. I dwell with my rod laid down, my knife laid down, scrupulous, merciful, compassionate for the welfare of all living beings. By means of this factor I emulate the Arahats, and my Uposatha will be observed.

'As long as they live, the Arahats - abandoning the taking of what is not given - abstain from taking what is not given. They take only what is given, accept only what is given, live not by stealing but by means of a self that has become pure. Today I too, for this day & night - abandoning the taking of what is not given - abstain from taking what is not given. I

take only what is given, accept only what is given, live not by stealing but by means of a self that has become pure. By means of this factor I emulate the Arahats, and my Uposatha will be observed.

'As long as they live, the Arahats - abandoning uncelibacy - live a celibate life, aloof, refraining from the sexual act that is the villager's way. Today I too, for this day & night - abandoning uncelibacy - live a celibate life, aloof, refraining from the sexual act that is the villager's way. By means of this factor I emulate the Arahats, and my Uposatha will be observed.

'As long as they live, the Arahats - abandoning false speech - abstain from false speech. They speak the truth, hold to the truth, are firm, reliable, no deceivers of the world. Today I too, for this day & night - abandoning false speech - abstain from false speech. I speak the truth, hold to the truth, am firm, reliable, no deceiver of the world. By means of this factor I emulate the Arahats, and my Uposatha will be observed.

'As long as they live, the Arahats - abandoning fermented & distilled liquors that cause heedlessness - abstain from fermented & distilled liquors that cause heedlessness. Today I too, for this day & night - abandoning fermented & distilled liquors that cause heedlessness - abstain from fermented & distilled liquors that cause heedlessness. By means of this factor I emulate the Arahats, and my Uposatha will be observed.

'As long as they live, the Arahats live on one meal a day, abstaining from food at night, refraining from food at the wrong time of day [from noon until dawn]. Today I too, for this day & night, live on one meal, abstaining from food at night, refraining from food at the wrong time of day. By means of this factor I emulate the Arahats, and my Uposatha will be observed.

'As long as they live, the Arahats abstain from dancing, singing, music, watching shows, wearing garlands, beautifying themselves with perfumes & cosmetics. Today I too, for this day & night, abstain from dancing, singing, music, watching shows, wearing garlands, beautifying myself with perfumes & cosmetics. By means of this factor I emulate the Arahats, and my Uposatha will be observed.

'As long as they live, the Arahats - abandoning high & imposing seats & beds - abstain from high & imposing seats & beds. They make low beds, on a pallet or a spread of straw. Today I too, for this day & night - abandoning high & imposing seats & beds - abstain from high & imposing seats & beds. I make a low bed, on a pallet or a spread of straw.'

'Such is the Uposatha of the Noble Ones, Visakha. When this Uposatha of the Noble Ones is undertaken, it is of great fruit & great benefit, of great glory & great radiance. And how is it of great fruit & great benefit, of great glory & great radiance?

'Suppose that one were to exercise kingship, rule, & sovereignty over these sixteen great lands replete with the seven treasures, i.e., over the Angas, Maghadans, Kasis, Kosalans, Vajjians, Mallas, Cetis, Vansans, Kurus, Pañcalas, Macchas, Surasenas, Assakas, Avantis, Gandharans, & Kambojans: It would not be worth one-sixteenth of this Uposatha endowed with eight factors. Why is that? Kingship over human beings is a meager thing when

compared with heavenly bliss.

'Fifty human years are equal to one day & night among the Devas of the Four Great Kings. Thirty such days & nights make a month. Twelve such months make a year. Five hundred such heavenly years constitute the life-span among the Devas of the Four Great Kings. Now, it is possible that a certain man or woman - from having observed this Uposatha endowed with eight factors - on the break-up of the body, after death, might be reborn among the Devas of the Four Great Kings. It was in reference to this that it was said, 'Kingship over human beings is a meager thing when compared with heavenly bliss.'

'A human century is equal to one day & night among the Devas of the Thirty-Three. Thirty such days & nights make a month... One thousand such heavenly years constitute the life-span among the Devas of the Thirty-three. Now, it is possible that a certain man or woman - from having observed this Uposatha endowed with eight factors - on the break-up of the body, after death, might be reborn among the Devas of the Thirty-three. It was in reference to this that it was said, 'Kingship over human beings is a meager thing when compared with heavenly bliss.'

'Two human centuries are equal to one day & night among the Yama Devas... Two thousand such heavenly years constitute the life-span among the Yama Devas...

'Four human centuries are equal to one day & night among the Contented Devas... Four thousand such heavenly years constitute the life-span among the Contented Devas...

'Eight human centuries is equal to one day & night among the Devas who delight in creation... Eight thousand such heavenly years constitute the life-span among the Devas who delight in creation...

'Sixteen human centuries are equal to one day & night among the Devas who have power over the creations of others. Thirty such days & nights make a month. Twelve such months make a year. Sixteen thousand such heavenly years constitute the life-span among the Devas who have power over the creations of others. Now, it is possible that a certain man or woman - from having observed this Uposatha endowed with eight factors - on the break-up of the body, after death, might be reborn among the Devas who have power over the creations of others. It was in reference to this that it was said, 'Kingship over human beings is a meager thing when compared with heavenly bliss.'

One should not kill a being or take what is not given; should not tell a lie or be a drinker of strong drink; should abstain from uncelibacy, the sexual act; should not eat at night, the wrong time of day; should not wear a garland or use ascent; should sleep on a pallet, a mat spread on the ground - for this eight-factored Uposatha has been proclaimed by the Awakened One to lead to the end of suffering & stress.

The moon & sun, both fair to see, shedding radiance wherever they go, & scattering darkness as they move through space, brighten the sky, illumining the quarters.

Within their range is found wealth: pearl, crystal, beryl, lucky-gem, platinum, nugget-gold, & the refined gold called 'Hataka.' Yet they - like the light of all stars when compared

with the moon - aren't worth one sixteenth of the eight-factored Uposatha.

So whoever - man or woman - is endowed with the virtues of the eight-factored Uposatha, having done meritorious deeds, productive of bliss, beyond reproach, goes to the heavenly state.'

(see also: *Anguttara Nikaya XI, 12 -13; Anguttara Nikaya VIII, 43; Anguttara Nikaya X, 46*)

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(13) Meghiya Sutta, Anguttara Nikaya IX, 8_ and Udana IV, 1:

... exclaimed: 'Truly it is strange, it is amazing! I have gone forth from Home into the homeless life out of faith, and yet I am harassed by those three kinds of evil, unwholesome thoughts.' - 'If, Meghiya, the mind still lacks maturity for liberation, there are five conditions conducive to making it mature. What five? ...

When, Meghiya, a monk has a noble friend, a noble companion and associate, it can be expected that he will be virtuous ... that he will engage in talk befitting the austere life and helpful to mental clarity ... that his energy will be set upon the abandoning of everything unwholesome and acquiring of everything wholesome ... that he will be equipped with the wisdom that leads to the complete destruction of suffering.

Then, Meghiya, when the monk is firmly grounded in these five things, should also cultivate four additional things:

he should cultivate the meditation on the foulness (of the body) for overcoming lust;

he should cultivate loving-kindness for overcoming malevolence;

he should cultivate mindfulness of breathing for cutting off (discursive) thinking;

he should cultivate the perception of impermanence for the removal of the conceit 'I am.'

For when one perceives impermanence, Meghiya, the perception of not-self is established.

When one perceives not-self one reaches the removal of the conceit 'I am, ' which is called Nibbana here and now.'

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(14) Manibhadda Sutta, Samyutta Nikaya X, 4:

On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling among the Magadhans at the Manimalaka Shrine, the haunt of the yakkha Manibhadda. Then the yakkha Manibhadda approached the

Blessed One and in the Blessed One's presence recited this verse:

'It is always good for the mindful one, the mindful one thrives in happiness.

It is better each day for the mindful one, and he is freed from enmity.'

[The Blessed One:] 'It is always good for the mindful one, the mindful one thrives in happiness.

It is better each day for the mindful one, but he is not freed from enmity.'

'One whose mind all day and night, takes delight in harmlessness,
Who has loving-kindness for all beings - For him there is enmity with none.'

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(15) The Simile of the Saw Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya 21:

'Monks, even if bandits were to carve you up savagely, limb by limb, with a two-handled saw, he among you who let his heart get angered even at that would not be doing my bidding.

- Even then you should train yourselves: 'Our minds will be unaffected and we will say no evil words. We will remain sympathetic, with a mind of good will, and with no inner hate. We will keep pervading these people with an awareness imbued with good will and, beginning with them, we will keep pervading the all-encompassing world with an awareness imbued with good will - abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will.' That's how you should train yourselves.

- 'Monks, if you attend constantly to this admonition on the simile of the saw, do you see any aspects of speech, slight or gross, that you could not endure?' - 'No, lord.'

- 'Then attend constantly to this admonition on the simile of the saw. That will be for your long-term welfare & happiness.' - That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words.

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(16) Lawfulness of Progress, Anguttara Nikaya X, 1-2:

For one who is virtuous and endowed with virtue (Sila), there is no need for an act of will: 'May non-remorse arise in me!' It is a natural law, monks, that non-remorse (Kusala-sañña) will arise in one who is virtuous.

- For one free of remorse, there is no need for an act of will: 'May gladness arise in me!' It is a natural law that gladness (Pamojja) will arise in one who is free from remorse.

- For one who is glad at heart, there is no need for an act of will: 'May joy arise in me!' It

is a natural law that joy (Piti) will arise in one who is glad at heart.

- For one who is joyful, there is no need for an act of will: 'May my body be serene!' It is a natural law that the body will be serene (Passaddhi) for one who is joyful.

- For one of serene body, there is no need for an act of will: 'May I feel happiness!' It is a natural law that one who is serene will feel happiness (Sukha).

- For one who is happy, there is no need for an act of will: 'May my mind be concentrated!' It is a natural law for one who is happy that the mind will be concentrated (Samma-ditthi).

- For one who is concentrated, there is no need for an act of will: 'May I know and see things as they really are!' It is a natural law for one a concentrated mind to know and see things as they really are (Ñānadassana).

- For one who knows and sees things as they really are, there is no need for an act of will: 'May I experience revulsion and dispassion!' It is a natural law for one who knows and sees things as they really are to experience revulsion and dispassion (Nibbida).

- For one who experiences revulsion and dispassion, there is no need for an act of will: 'May I realize the knowledge and vision of liberation!' It is a natural law for one who experiences revulsion and dispassion to realize the knowledge and vision of liberation (Nibbana).

...Thus, monks, the preceding qualities flow into the succeeding qualities; the succeeding qualities bring the preceding qualities to perfection, for going from the near to the far shore.

An interesting variation of this - in the long courses and the Suttas very often mentioned - lawful process: Upanisa Sutta, Samyutta Nikaya XII, 23:

While staying at Savatthi the Exalted One said: 'The destruction of the cankers, monks, is for one who knows and sees, I say, not for one who does not know and does not see.

Knowing what, seeing what does the destruction of the cankers occur?

'Such is material form, such is the arising of material form, such is the passing away of material form. Such is feeling... perception... mental formations... consciousness; such is the arising of consciousness, such is the passing away of consciousness' - for one who knows and sees this, monks, the destruction of the canker occurs.

'The knowledge of destruction with respect to destruction has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for the knowledge of destruction? 'Emancipation' should be the reply.

- 'Emancipation, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for emancipation? 'Dispassion' should be the reply.

- 'Dispassion, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for dispassion? 'Disenchantment' should be the reply.

- 'Disenchantment, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for disenchantment? 'The knowledge and vision of things as they really are' should be the reply.

- 'The knowledge and vision of things as they really are, monks, also has a supporting

condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for the knowledge and vision of things as they really are? 'Concentration' should be the reply.

- 'Concentration, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for concentration? 'Happiness' should be the reply.

- 'Happiness, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for happiness? 'Tranquility' should be the reply.

- 'Tranquility, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for tranquility? 'Rapture' should be the reply.

- 'Rapture, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for rapture? 'Joy' should be the reply.

- 'Joy, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for joy? 'Faith' should be the reply.

- 'Faith, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for faith? 'Suffering' should be the reply.

- 'Suffering, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for suffering? 'Birth' should be the reply.

- 'And what is the supporting condition for birth?. 'Existence' should be the reply.

- 'What is the supporting condition for existence? 'Clinging' should be the reply.

- 'What is the supporting condition for clinging? 'Craving' should be the reply.

- 'What is the supporting condition for craving? 'Feeling' should be the reply.

- 'What is the supporting condition for feeling? 'Contact' should be the reply.

- 'What is the supporting condition for contact? 'The sixfold sense base' should be the reply.

- 'What is the supporting condition for the sixfold sense base? 'Mentality- materiality' should be the reply.

- 'What is the supporting condition for mentality-materiality? 'Consciousness' should be the reply.

- 'What is the supporting condition for consciousness? 'Kamma formations' should be the reply.

- 'Kamma formations, monks, also have a supporting condition, I say, they do not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for kamma formations? 'Ignorance' should be the reply.

'Thus, monks, ignorance is the supporting condition for kamma formations, kamma formations are the supporting condition for consciousness, consciousness is the supporting condition for mentality-materiality, mentality-materiality is the supporting condition for the sixfold sense base, the sixfold sense base is the supporting condition for contact, contact is the supporting condition for feeling, feeling is the supporting condition for craving, craving is the supporting condition for clinging, clinging is the supporting condition for existence, existence is the supporting condition for birth, birth is the supporting condition for suffering,

- suffering is the supporting condition for faith, faith is the supporting condition for joy, joy is the supporting condition for rapture, rapture is the supporting condition for tranquility, tranquility is the supporting condition for happiness, happiness is the supporting condition for concentration, concentration is the supporting condition for the knowledge and vision of things as they really are, the knowledge and vision of things as they really are is the supporting condition for disenchantment, disenchantment is the supporting condition for dispassion, dispassion is the supporting condition for emancipation, and emancipation is the supporting condition for the knowledge of the destruction (of the cankers).

'Just as, monks, when rain descends heavily upon some mountaintop, the water flows down along with the slope, and fills the clefts, gullies, and creeks; these being filled fill up the pools; these being filled fill up the ponds; these being filled fill up the streams; these being filled fill up the rivers; and the rivers being filled fill up the great ocean

- in the same way, monks, ignorance is the supporting condition for kamma formations, kamma formations are the supporting condition for consciousness, consciousness is the supporting condition for mentality-materiality, mentality- materiality is the supporting condition for the sixfold sense base, the sixfold sense base is the supporting condition for contact, contact is the supporting condition for feeling, feeling is the supporting condition for craving, craving is the supporting condition for clinging, clinging is the supporting condition for existence, existence is the supporting condition for birth, birth is the supporting condition for suffering,

- suffering is the supporting condition for faith, faith is the supporting condition for joy, joy is the supporting condition for rapture, rapture is the supporting condition for tranquility, tranquility is the supporting condition for happiness, happiness is the supporting condition for concentration, concentration is the supporting condition for the knowledge and vision of things as they really are, the knowledge and vision of things as they really are is the supporting condition for disenchantment, disenchantment is the supporting condition for dispassion, dispassion is the supporting condition for emancipation, and emancipation is the supporting condition for the knowledge of the destruction (of the cankers).'

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(17) Description in Nyanatiloka's Buddhist Dictionary:

'The 7 Factors of Enlightenment' (Sambojjhanga) are: Mindfulness (sati-sambojjhanga), Investigation of phenomena (dhamma-vicaya°), Energy (viriya°), Rapture (piti°), Tranquility (passaddhi°), Concentration (Samma-ditthi°), Equanimity (upekkha°).

On whatever occasion the monk remains focused on the body in & of itself - ardent, alert, & mindful - putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world, on that occasion his mindfulness is steady & without lapse. When his mindfulness is steady & without lapse, then mindfulness as a factor for Awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

- 'Remaining mindful in this way, he examines, analyzes, & comes to a comprehension of that quality with discernment. When he remains mindful in this way, examining, analyzing, & coming to a comprehension of that quality with discernment, then analysis of qualities as a factor for Awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

- 'In one who examines, analyzes, & comes to a comprehension of that quality with discernment, unflagging persistence is aroused. When unflagging persistence is aroused in one who examines, analyzes, & comes to a comprehension of that quality with discernment, then persistence as a factor for Awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

- 'In one whose persistence is aroused, a rapture not-of-the-flesh arises. When a rapture not-of-the-flesh arises in one whose persistence is aroused, then rapture as a factor for Awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

- 'For one who is enraptured, the body grows calm and the mind grows calm. When the body & mind of an enraptured monk grow calm, then serenity as a factor for Awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

- 'For one who is at ease - his body calmed - the mind becomes concentrated. When the mind of one who is at ease - his body calmed - becomes concentrated, then concentration as a factor for Awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

- 'He oversees the mind thus concentrated with equanimity. When he oversees the mind thus concentrated with equanimity, equanimity as a factor for Awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.'

Please compare to Vipassanupakkilesa in Nyanatiloka's Buddhist Dictionary:

... during Insight practice may arise the 10 imperfections (or Defilements) of Insight: effulgence of light (obhasa), knowledge (nana), rapture (piti), tranquility (passaddhi), happiness (sukha), determination (adhimokkha), energy (paggaha), awareness (upatthana), equanimity (upekkha), delight (nikanti) - See Vis. XX, 105f.- (pp.)

- Excepting the last one, 'delight', they are not imperfections or defilements in

themselves, but may become a basis for them through the arising of pride or delight or by a wrong conclusion that one of the holy Paths has been attained.

He, however, who is watchful and experienced in Insight practice, will know that these states of mind do not indicate attainment of the true Path, but are only symptoms or concomitants of Insight meditation.

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(18) U Ba Khin Journal (Second Edition, Dec.1994), page 33:

Before entering upon the practice of Vipassana meditation (that is after Samadhi has been developed to a proper level), a disciple should acquaint himself with the theoretical knowledge of material and mental properties, i.e., of Rupa and Nama.

For in Vipassana meditation one contemplates not only the changing nature of matter, but also the changing nature of mentality, of the thought-elements of attention directed towards the process of change going on within matter. At times the attention will be focused on the impermanence of the material side of existence, i.e., upon Anicca in regard to Rupa; and at other times on the impermanence of the thought-elements or mental side, i.e., upon Anicca in regard to Nama.

When one is contemplating the impermanence of matter, one realizes also that the thought-elements simultaneous with that awareness are also in a state of transition or change. In this case one will be knowing Anicca in regard to both Rupa and Nama together.

You should know that Anicca can also be understood through other types of feeling as well. Anicca can be contemplated through feeling:

- (1) by contact of visible form with the sense organ of the eye,
- (2) by contact of sound with the sense organ of the ear,
- (3) by contact of smell with the sense organ of the nose,
- (4) by contact of taste with the sense organ of the tongue,
- (5) by contact of touch with the sense organ of the body,
- (6) and by contact of mental objects with the sense organ of the mind.

One can thus develop the understanding of Anicca through any of the six sense organs. In practice, however we have found that of all types of feeling, the feeling by contact of touch with the component parts of the body in a process of change, covers the widest area for introspective meditation. Not only that, the feeling by contact of touch (by way of friction, radiation and vibration of the Kalapas within) with the component parts of the body is more evident than other types of feeling. Therefore a beginner in Vipassana meditation can come to the understanding of Anicca more easily through bodily feeling of the change of Rupa, of matter.

This is the main reason why we have chosen bodily feeling as a medium for quick understanding of Anicca. It is open to anyone to try other means, but my suggestion is

that one should be well-established in the understanding of Anicca through bodily feeling before any attempt is made through other types of feeling.

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(19) I do not say that Vedayita (direct experience) -

of Vedana is not as essential as the Vedayita of all other links of Dependent Origination! But in our tradition, in the beginning, one is instructed to experience sensations without recognizing them (pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral). These are, above all, as Sayagyi U Ba Khin called them more precisely - body sense-door contacts. And at other times more Vedana - if they do become recognized as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral.

As fundamental Kaya- (observation of body) and Vedanupassana are, they can never be called Citta- or Dhammanupassana as described in the Satipatthana Sutta - because by these two Anupassanas one only observes Kaya (i.e. characteristics of 4 Elements) or Vedana.

If Citta could not directly be known, one would not know if, for example, aversion is present or not (it could be taken as a sole bodily quality, like heat, and thereby its mental component suppressed) - nor would one know of the presence or absence of hindrances or awakening factors.

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(20) In the understanding of the Sutta -

'subtle vibrating sensations' belong to of the 4 great Elements, namely the Air or Wind Element - and therefore: Kayanupassana. And only with the knowledge of dissolution it becomes Bhanga-nana (even if one would feel only gross sensations, or all of the 4 great Elements at once (see also Note 28).

Within the context of continued insight-practice, subtle vibrating sensations may also be considered as an expression of a combination of the two awakening factors: energy and rapture (see Note 17).

It is worth the recognition that in energy - methods, like: Chinese- or Tibetan-medicine, Prana-healing, etc. - Wind is synonymous with: Chi, Lung, Prana... and therefore with Goenkaji's 'ecstasy-bhanga' (without the essential Ñana !).

Through this it becomes very easy to induce, why 'energy-methods' are considered so

deviating for a practitioner of Vipassana with Goenkaji's - and not the originals Sutta's understanding.

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(21) While I consider the way he chants terrible - nevertheless -

[download](#) and listen yourself to a sample of Goenkaji's Metta - it might as well have been similar at Milarepa's time.

Moreover, as long as Goenkaji owes me an answer to my exclusion - I take these words as an expression of his original intentions.

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(22) Not oneself - not another Sutta, Udana 6.6:

... 'Monks, the wanderers of other sects are blind and eyeless. They don't know what is beneficial and what is harmful. They don't know what is the Dhamma and what is non-Dhamma. Not knowing what is beneficial and what is harmful, not knowing what is Dhamma and what is non-Dhamma, they live arguing, quarreling, and disputing, wounding one another with weapons of the mouth, saying, 'The Dhamma is like this, it's not like that. The Dhamma is not like that, it's like this.'

- Then, on realizing the significance of that, the Blessed One on that occasion exclaimed: People are intent on the idea of 'made by me' and attached to the idea of 'made by another.'

- Some do not realize this, nor do they see it as a thorn. But to one who sees, having extracted this thorn, [the thought] 'I am doing,' doesn't occur; 'Another is doing,' doesn't occur.

This human race is possessed by conceit, bound by conceit, tied down by conceit. Speaking hurtfully because of their views they don't go beyond transmigration - they wander on.'

The Clothless Ascetic Sutta, Samyutta Nikaya 12, 17:

'The one who acts is the one who experiences' [the result of the act] amounts to the eternalist statement, 'Existing from the very beginning, stress is self-made.'

- 'The one who acts is someone other than the one who experiences' amounts to the annihilationist statement, 'For one existing harassed by feeling, stress is other-made.'

Avoiding these two extremes, the Tathagata teaches the Dhamma via the middle:

- From ignorance as a requisite condition come fabrications.
- From fabrications as a requisite condition comes consciousness.
- From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name& form.
- From name& form as a requisite condition come the six sense media.
- From the six sense media 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/sustenance.
- From clinging/sustenance as a requisite condition comes becoming.
- From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth.
- From birth as a requisite condition, then aging & death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair come into play.

Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress & suffering.'

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(23) For example in Majjhima Nikaya 20_as a last mean to overcome distracting thoughts:

'If evil, unskillful thoughts - connected with desire, aversion or delusion - still arise in the monk while he is attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts, then - with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth - he should beat down, constrain, and crush his mind with his awareness.

As - with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth - he is beating down, constraining, and crushing his mind with his awareness, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside.

With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

- Just as a strong man, seizing a weaker man by the head or the throat or the shoulders, would beat him down, constrain, and crush him;

in the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts - connected with desire, aversion or delusion - still arise in the monk while he is attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts, then - with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth - he should beat down, constrain, and crush his mind with his awareness.

As - with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth - he is beating down, constraining, and crushing his mind with his awareness, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.'

Or in Anguttara Nikaya III. 100, 1 -10:

... a monk devoted to the training in the higher mind: there are in him gross impurities, namely, bad conduct of body, speech and mind. Such conduct an earnest, capable monk abandons, dispels, eliminates and abolishes. ...

... When he has abandoned these, there still remain thoughts about higher mental states experienced in meditation.

That concentration is not yet peaceful and sublime; it has not attained to full tranquility, nor has it achieved mental unification;

it is maintained by strenuous suppression of the defilements.

But there comes a time when his mind becomes inwardly steadied, composed, unified and concentrated.

That concentration is then calm and refined; it has attained to full tranquility and achieved mental unification;

it is not maintained by strenuous suppression of the defilements.

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(24) The Riddle Tree Sutta, Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, 204:

A certain monk went to another monk and, on arrival, said to him, 'To what extent, my friend, is a monk's vision said to be well-purified?' - 'When a monk discerns, as it actually is, the origination & passing away of the six media of sensory contact, my friend, it is to that extent that his vision is said to be well-purified.'

- The first monk, dissatisfied with the other monk's answer to his question, went to still another monk and, on arrival, said to him, 'To what extent, my friend, is a monk's vision said to be well-purified?' - 'When a monk discerns, as it actually is, the origination & passing away of the five clinging-aggregates, my friend, it is to that extent that his vision is said to be well-purified.'

- The first monk, dissatisfied with this monk's answer to his question, went to still another monk and, on arrival, said to him, 'To what extent, my friend, is a monk's vision said to be well-purified?' - 'When a monk discerns, as it actually is, the origination & passing away of the four great elements [earth, water, wind, & fire], my friend, it is to that extent that his vision is said to be well-purified.'

- The first monk, dissatisfied with this monk's answer to his question, went to still another monk and, on arrival, said to him, 'To what extent, my friend, is a monk's vision said to be well-purified?' - 'When a monk discerns, as it actually is, that whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation, my friend, it is to that extent that his vision is said to be well-purified.'

- The first monk, dissatisfied with this monk's answer to his question, then went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he [reported to the Blessed One his conversations with the other monks.

[The Blessed One then said:] - 'Monk, it's as if there were a man who had never seen a riddle tree. (*Literally, a 'what's it' tree - apparently Butea frondosa, the flame of the forest. It is often the subject of riddles in lands where it grows because its seasonal changes - e.g. losing all its leaves just before its striking red flowers bloom - are so vivid and unusual*) He would go to another man who had seen one and, on arrival, would say to him, 'What, my good man, is a riddle tree like?' - The other would say, 'A riddle tree is black, my good man, like a burnt stump.' For at the time he saw it, that's what the riddle tree was like.

- Then the first man, dissatisfied with the other man's answer, went to still another man who had seen a riddle tree and, on arrival, said to him, 'What, my good man, is a riddle tree like?' - The other would say, 'A riddle tree is red, my good man, like a lump of meat.' For at the time he saw it, that's what the riddle tree was like.

- Then the first man, dissatisfied with this man's answer, went to still another man who had seen a riddle tree and, on arrival, said to him, 'What, my good man, is a riddle tree like?' - The other would say, 'A riddle tree is stripped of its bark, my good man, and has burst pods, like an acacia tree.' For at the time he saw it, that's what the riddle tree was like.

- Then the first man, dissatisfied with this man's answer, went to still another man who had seen a riddle tree and, on arrival, said to him, 'What, my good man, is a riddle tree like?' - The other would say, 'A riddle tree has thick foliage, my good man, and gives a dense shade, like a banyan.' For at the time he saw it, that's what the riddle tree was like.

- 'In the same way, monk, however those intelligent men of integrity were focused when their vision became well purified is the way in which they answered.'

The Tandem Sutta, Anguttara Nikaya 4, 170:

On one occasion Venerable Ananda was staying in Kosambi, at Ghosita's monastery. There he addressed the monks, 'Friends!' - 'Yes, friend', the monks responded. - Venerable Ananda said: 'Friends, whoever - monk or nun - declares the attainment of Arahantship in my presence, they all do it by means of one or another of four paths. Which four?

- 'There is the case where a monk has developed insight preceded by tranquility. As he develops insight preceded by tranquility, the path is born. He follows that path, develops it, pursues it. As he follows the path, developing it & pursuing it - his fetters are abandoned, his obsessions destroyed.

- 'Then there is the case where a monk has developed tranquility preceded by insight. As he develops tranquility preceded by insight, the path is born. He follows that path,

develops it, pursues it. As he follows the path, developing it & pursuing it - his fetters are abandoned, his obsessions destroyed.

- 'Then there is the case where a monk has developed tranquility in tandem with insight. As he develops tranquility in tandem with insight, the path is born. He follows that path, develops it, pursues it. As he follows the path, developing it & pursuing it - his fetters are abandoned, his obsessions destroyed.

- 'Then there is the case where a monk's mind has its restlessness concerning the Dhamma [Comm: the corruptions of insight] well under control. There comes a time when his mind grows steady inwardly, settles down, and becomes unified & concentrated. In him the path is born. He follows that path, develops it, pursues it. As he follows the path, developing it & pursuing it - his fetters are abandoned, his obsessions destroyed.

'Whoever - monk or nun - declares the attainment of Arahantship in my presence, they all do it by means of one or another of these four paths.'

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(25) Description in Nyanatiloka's Buddhist Dictionary:

...the stereotype Sutta text runs as follows:

(1) Sotapatti-magga: 'After the disappearance of the three fetters (Personality-belief, Skeptical Doubt, Attachment to mere Rules and Rituals), the monk has won the Stream (to Nibbana) and is no more subject to rebirth in lower worlds, is firmly established, destined for full enlightenment.

(2) Sakadagami-magga: 'After the disappearance of the three fetters and reduction of greed and hatred, he will return only once more; and having once more returned to this world, he will put an end to suffering.

(3) Anagami-magga: 'After the disappearance of the five lower fetters he appears in a higher world, and there he reaches Nibbana without ever returning from that world (to the sensuous sphere).

(4) Arahatta-magga: 'Through the Extinction of all Cankers (5 remaining fetters: Craving for Fine-material existence, Craving for Immaterial existence, Conceit, Restlessness, Ignorance) he reaches already in this very life the deliverance of mind, the deliverance through wisdom, which is free from cankers, and which he himself has understood and realized' .

(see also: Majjhima Nikaya 70, Anguttara Nikaya IX, 44; Samyutta Nikaya XII, 70; Pts. II. p. 33, PTS; Vis. XXI,73)

(26) Take the example of a Vacchagotta in Samyutta Nikaya XLIV.10, with whom the Buddha might not have preferred to plant the seed of Dhamma, lest he would become more bewildered:

Then the wanderer Vacchagotta went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side.

As he was sitting there he asked the Blessed One: 'Now then, Venerable Gotama, is there a self?'

- When this was said, the Blessed One was silent.
- 'Then is there no self?'
- A second time, the Blessed One was silent.
- Then Vacchagotta the wanderer got up from his seat and left.

Then, not long after Vacchagotta the wanderer had left, Venerable Ananda said to the Blessed One, 'Why, lord, did the Blessed One not answer when asked a question by Vacchagotta the wanderer?'

- 'Ananda, if I - being asked by Vacchagotta the wanderer if there is a self - were to answer that there is a self, that would be conforming with those priests & contemplatives who are exponents of eternalism [the view that there is an eternal, unchanging soul]. If I - being asked by Vacchagotta the wanderer if there is no self - were to answer that there is no self, that would be conforming with those priests & contemplatives who are exponents of annihilationism [the view that death is the annihilation of consciousness]. If I - being asked by Vacchagotta the wanderer if there is a self - were to answer that there is a self, would that be in keeping with the arising of knowledge that all phenomena are not-self?'
- 'No, lord.'
- 'And if I - being asked by Vacchagotta the wanderer if there is no self - were to answer that there is no self, the bewildered Vacchagotta would become even more bewildered: 'Does the self I used to have now not exist?'

(27) In Majjhima Nikaya 43 it is explained that the study and discussion of the Dhamma are prerequisites to the practice of Samadhi and Pañña:

'Friend, how many conditions are there for the arising of right view? - 'Friend, there are two conditions for the arising of right view: the voice of another and wise attention. These are the two conditions for the arising of right view.

- 'Friend, by how many factors is right view assisted when it has deliverance of mind for its fruit, deliverance of mind for its fruit and benefit, when it has deliverance by wisdom for its fruit, deliverance by wisdom for its fruit and benefit?

- 'Friend, right view is assisted by five factors when it has deliverance of mind for its fruit, deliverance of mind for its fruit and benefit, when it has deliverance by wisdom for its fruit, deliverance by wisdom for its fruit and benefit.

Here, friend, right view is assisted by virtue, learning, discussion, serenity, and insight. Right view assisted by these five factors has deliverance of mind for its fruit, deliverance of mind for its fruit and benefit; it has deliverance by wisdom for its fruit, deliverance by wisdom for its fruit and benefit.'

(also in: Anguttara Nikaya V, 25)

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(28) Description by Nyanatiloka's Buddhist Dictionary:

Bhanganupassana-nana, Knowledge consisting in contemplation of Dissolution (of all forms of existence), is one kind of Insight;

... by the 8 kinds of knowledge are here meant the following, which are freed from defilements, follow the right process, and are considered as Insight, namely:

- (1) Knowledge consisting in Contemplation of Rise and Fall (udayabbayanupassana-nana),
 - (2) in Contemplation of Dissolution (bhanganupassana°),
 - (3) in Awareness of Terror (or the Fearful) (bhayatupatthana°),
 - (4) in Contemplation of Misery (adinavanupassana°),
 - (5) in Contemplation of Aversion (nibbidanupassana°),
 - (6) in the Desire for Deliverance (muccitu-kamyata°),
 - (7) in Reflecting Contemplation (patisankhanupassana°),
 - (8) in Equanimity regarding all formations of existence (sankharupekkha°),
- which is followed by (9) in Adaptation to Truth (saccanulomika-nana).

... (2) When through such repeated practice, knowledge and mindfulness have grown keen and the bodily and mental formations become apparent quickly, at that stage the phase of dissolution of these formations will become prominent.

'Consciousness with (e.g.) materiality as its object arises and dissolves.

Having reflected on that object, he contemplates the dissolution of (reflecting) consciousness.

He contemplates by way of the 7 contemplations (Pts. I,57, quoted in Vis. XXI, 11).

... of the 9 kinds of Insight-Knowledge constituting the patipadanadassana-visuddhi (s. Vis. XXI), the following 6 are, as such, enumerated and explained for the first time in Pts. Namely: udayabbayanupassana°, bhanganupassana°, bhayatupatthana°, muccitu-kamyata°, patisankhanupassana°, sankharupekkha°.

The terms udayabhaya and bhanga, in connection with the 5 groups of existence, however, are often met with in the old Sutta-texts.

Of the remaining 3 kinds of knowledge, adinavanupassana, nibbidanupassana and anulomana, the first 2 occur often in the old Sutta-texts, while anulomana, though only briefly mentioned in the Abh. Canon (Patth), plays a prominent part in the exegetical literature.

Bhanga in the Rhys Davids Pali dictionary:

- Bhanga 1 (nt.) [cp. Sk. bhanga, which occurs already Atharva-veda XI. 6. 15 (see Zimmer. Altind. Leben 68), also Av. Baha, Polish pienka hemp. On its possible etym. connection with Vedic aa (Ath. Veda II. 4. 5) =P. saa & sa hemp (=Gr. kannabis, Ger. hanf, E. hemp) see Walde, Lat. Wtb. s. v. cannabis] hemp; coarse hempen cloth Vin I.58 (where combd with sa).

- Bhanga 2 (nt.) [cp. Class. Sk. bhanga, fr. bhanj: see bhanjati] 1. (lit.) breaking, breaking off, in skh° a layer of broken-off branches J III.407. - - 2. (fig.) breaking up, dissolution, disruption (see on form Cpd. 25, 66) Ps I.57 sq. (°anupassana insight into disruption), quoted & expld. at Vism. 640 sq.; VbhA 27 (°khaa); Sdhp 48, 78 (s°). Cp. Vi°.

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Many thanks to www.accesstoinsight.org for making many Pali Sutta - translations freely available. Moreover to all others not mentioned here, but to whom I feel very much indebted. All answering mails might become - in parts or as a whole - published anonymously, unless explicitly not wanted. Of any mistakes, made in my inquiry for more clarity, the responsibility remains my own - all the merit I would like to offer to all beings.

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