

Notes on awakening

Contents

1	Core teachings	2
1.1	The three marks of existence	2
1.2	The four noble truths	3
1.3	The noble eightfold path	6
1.4	The five aggregates	9
1.5	The five hindrances and five jhanic mental factors	17
2	Practices	18
2.1	Concentration and tranquility	18
2.2	Insight and ways of seeing	22
2.3	Integration and contemplation	23
2.4	Misc meta-skills	26
3	Meditation objects	34
3.1	40 subjects of meditation	34
3.2	Physiological meditation objects	36
3.3	Cognitive meditation objects	38
4	Maps	42
4.1	Four stages of awakening	42
4.2	Seven Factors of Awakening	47
4.3	Map of Saṅkhitta Dhamma Sutta (MN 111)	48
4.4	Moksha in Tantra and Shaktism	48
4.5	Satori in Zen	49
4.6	Personal map	49

1 Core teachings

1.1 The three marks of existence

The Three Marks of Existence are fundamental characteristics that describe conditioned phenomena and the natural law of reality and human experience.

1. **sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā** – all saṅkhāras (conditioned things) are impermanent

Definition 1.1. Anicca (Pali), anitya (Skt.) [Noun, Adjective]

Common translations: Impermanence, impermanent

Etymology: “a” meaning non- and “nicca” meaning constant, continuous, permanent.

Intuitions: Our inability to maintain things as we like. Inverse of nicca, which can be interpreted as a mental event relating to something being maintained to our satisfaction.

Quotes:

“All conditioned things are impermanent — when one sees this with wisdom, one turns away from suffering.”

(Dhammapada, verse 277)

2. **sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā** – all saṅkhāras are unsatisfactory, imperfect, unstable

Definition 1.2. Dukkha (Pali), duḥkha (Skt.) dukkha (transl.) [Noun]

Common translations: Unease, suffering, standing unstable, difficult emptiness

Etymology: “du” meaning bad or difficult and “kha” meaning empty, hole, commonly interpreted as the unsteady motion of a chariot caused by badly fitting axle-hole. Alternatively, duḥ-stha, with “stha” meaning stand, i.e., standing badly, unsteady. Opposite of “sukha”, meaning happiness, comfort or ease. Chinese derive dukkha translation from “bitter”.

Quotes:

“Birth is dukkha, aging is dukkha, death is dukkha; sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are dukkha; association with the unloved is dukkha; separation from the loved is dukkha; not getting what is wanted is dukkha. In short, the five clinging-aggregates are dukkha.”

(Samyutta Nikaya, verse 56.11)

3. **sabbe dhammā anattā** – all dharmas (conditioned or unconditioned things) have no unchanging self or essence

Definition 1.3. Anattā (Pali), anātman (Skt.), annata (transl.) [Noun, Verb]

Common translations: Non-self, no-self, not-self

Etymology: “an” meaning not, and “attā” meaning self-existent essence. Synonymous with anātman, meaning no soul, i.e. “is not ātman” instead of “does not have ātman.”

Intuitions: Release from having any particular view of the self. Impersonal. Inverse of specific mental event - atta, meaning “essence”, “to take control of”, “have control of”, “have ownership of”.

Quotes:

“Any kind of form whatever, whether past, future or presently arisen, whether gross or subtle, whether in oneself or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must with right understanding how it is, be regarded thus: *This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.*”

(Samyutta Nikaya, verse 22.59)

1.2 The four noble truths**1. idam dukkham** - this is pain

The truth of dukkhā or inherent “dissatisfaction” in human existence. Characteristic of the perpetual cycle or samsara of grasping at things, ideas and habits.

Note 1.4.

Dukkah uses metaphors of imbalance, asymmetry, or broken symmetry to describe suffering – yet much of the core practices and teachings of the Buddha aim to disrupt habitual, reflexive, and instinctive behaviours and ways of perceiving that were necessary to make us adaptive. The processes that make us adaptive also make us prone to self-deception. Instead we seek a devotion (bhakti) to self-correction, where the target is not to reach a final destination, nor crystallize a perfect symmetry, nor distill an idealized structure but is instead a continuous development and motion, a fluidity of self and the skillful application of various insight ways of seeing and strategies. Fluidity over crystallization is aligned with the other marks of existence; impermanence and no-self.

An un-ending motion that requires continuous effort to take a responsive action may seem to counter the goal of cessation in reaching nibbāna, but the mental motions and physiological control that are purified of past and future karma can become as automatic as our original maladaptive ones. The ease of finding and applying adaptive strategies is similar to the sense of being carried by the current upon stream-entry (sotāpanna). The event of enlightenment is then more akin to the mastery of a craft and skill set, though the medium is perception and the tool set is the convoluted substrate of body, mind, and environment. An awakened being is comparable to an artist or technician that has attained mastery and applies the appropriate action of the appropriate instrument from their tool set with little to no hesitation, regardless if it is bold or unprecedented. The un-ending nature of nibanna mirrors that of samsara, Nagarjuna takes the Buddha’s insight to its furthest extent - “Nothing of Samsara is different from Nirvana, nothing of Nirvana is different from Samsara.”.

2. ayam dukkha-samudayo - this is the origin of pain

The truth of Samudaya or the “origin” of suffering, points to attachment, desire, and ignorance as the root causes of suffering. Duḥkha arises simultaneously with taṇhā.

Definition 1.5. Taṇhā (Pali), trʹsna (Skt), tanha (transl.) [Noun, Verb]

Common translations: Craving, thirst, grasping, fused to, welded to.

Etymology: Inherited from Sanskrit and from Proto-Indo-Iranian; thirst, desire;

which derived from Proto-Indo-European dry.

Intuitions: A fast “clenching” mechanism fundamental to cognitive and kinesthetic perception that immediately follows a moment of salience or relevance realization. A tension of the mind does not quite unclench from an object or its aspect, similar to having something you aren’t finished with pulled out of your hand and the tensing of your fingers to resist. Tanha, objectification, and the ‘having’ mode of existence all go hand-in-hand.

Quotes:

“The more desires one has, the more they will suffer. Our mere existence is suffering. In our life we distinguish pleasure from suffering and tend to cling to pleasure. This is our inherent nature. But suffering is inseparable from pleasure, for one is never found without the other. Therefore, the more we seek pleasure and avoid suffering, the more entangled we become in the duality of pleasure and suffering. Be content with our state of being. If we are not satisfied with our state of being we will be slaves to the five desires which stem from the five senses.”

(Gautama Buddha’s Last Sermon)

3. **ayam dukkha-nirodha** - this is the cessation of pain.

The truth of Nirodha or the “cessation” of suffering highlights the possibility of overcoming suffering by confinement of or letting go of taṇhā.

Note 1.6.

Taṇhā is closely linked to upādāna, and the subtle transition between them is important to deconstruct and understand the the formation of dukkah. Mental formations tend to chain into one another very easily, and we seek clarity around exactly how that cause and effect evolves. What are the textures of the mental images or mental talk? Observing how they are associative and the subtle ways the body reacts to them, which in turn fuels new mental formations.

Definition 1.7. Upādāna (Pali, Skt.), upadana (transl.) [Noun, Verb]

Common translations: Clinging, attachment, grasping, pulling towards self.

Etymology: Literal translation is fuel, material cause, substance and substrate that is the source and means for keeping an active process energized.

Intuitions: Upadana is a mental event that immediately follows taṇhā and can be thought of as the opposite of equanimity. In the Sutta Pitaka, the Buddha states that there are four types of clinging (ordered in terms of decreasing grossness):

- (a) kamupadana - sense-pleasure clinging, repeated craving of worldly things
- (b) ditthupadana - all views clinging, such as eternalism (e.g., “The world and self are eternal”) or annihilationism/nihilism.
- (c) silabbatupadana - rites-and-rituals clinging, believing that rites alone could directly lead to liberation.
- (d) attavadupadana self-doctrine clinging, self-identification with self-less entities.

The forms of clinging are causally interconnected in a hierarchy:

- (a) self-doctrine clinging: first, one assumes that one has a permanent "self."
- (b) wrong-view clinging: then, one assumes that one is either somehow eternal or to be annihilated after this life.
- (c) rites-and-rituals clinging: if one assumes that one is eternal, then one clings to rituals to achieve self-purification.
- (d) sense-pleasure clinging: if one assumes that one will completely disappear after this life, then one disregards the next world and clings to sense desires.

Quotes:

"These four kinds of clinging have craving as their source, craving as their origin, they are born and produced from craving. [...] Craving has feeling as its source. [...] Feeling has contact as its source. [...] Contact has the sixfold base as its source. [...] The sixfold base has mentality-materiality as its source. [...] Mentality-materiality has consciousness as its source. [...] Consciousness has formations as its source. [...] Formations have ignorance as their source, ignorance as their origin; they are born and produced from ignorance."

(Majjhima Nikaya, 11.16)

Note 1.8.

The forms of clinging appear to stem from our tendency to unconsciously repeat behaviour: in our cognitive and biological processes (canalization), in our actions (rituals and habits), and in our society and environment (normativity and stigmergy). We can think of these ranges of repetition which stem from the conception of self as the process of crystallization. A crystal is periodic and repeats a pattern along an axis within the medium, which can be described as an invariant to some action, i.e. rotation or translation. Likewise, clinging and the reinforcement of the self appear to seek or maintain a sense of permanence through repeating periodicity in time.

Emptiness is also described as an invariant in the dimension of time, in which phenomena arise dependent on their parts thus they possess no singular essence. Interestingly, the self and this description of emptiness share the same invariant, yet emptiness is viewed as the antidote to an attachment to self and is recognized as the middle way between the views of eternalism (having an essence) and annihilationism (not having an essence). The process of awakening can be thought of as having a funnel or cone structure which moves from the self towards emptiness through dropping forms of clinging and refining an understanding of the three marks. The paradox of antidoting clinging to the self with emptiness despite them sharing the same invariant is analogous to antidoting objectification and the 'having' mode of existence through objectification and deconstruction of the senses and the self in the meditation process to reach a transjective state or the 'being' mode of existence.

4. **ayam dukkha-nirodha-gamini patipada** - this is the path to the cessation of pain

The truth of Marga or the "path" to the cessation of suffering known as the Noble

Eightfold Path.

Note 1.9.

A direct realization of Atman being equal to Brahmin is not a realistic path for most people. An indirect path is more tenable. The most practical advice is to allow an engagement with the world instead of trying to directly perceive it as Maya and empty. One's engagement with the world can be useful for self-cultivation so long as one is careful to not become attached to it.

Attachment can more generally be understood as a discipline of attention and somatic response to afford greater risk taking. Attachment theory is based in evolutionary psychology and goes beyond an analysis of co-dependence in relationships into low-level information processing in our cognition. In attachment theory, our intake of external information and our response to it can be described with two main variables of our attention: a sequential variable and an intensity variable. An anxious attachment style tends to over-emphasize attention on internal intensity and not the external sequence and its impermanence over time. An avoidant attachment style tends to over-emphasize attention on external objects and the details of their causal interactions and neglects internal sensations and their intensity. A secure attachment style involves flexibility of strategies and adaptability in attending to either variables of attention appropriately depending on a given situation. Similarly, one's renouncement and engagement with the external world is balanced by their internal sense of attachment.

1.3 The noble eightfold path

Set of ethical and mental practices that guide individuals towards liberation from suffering

1. (a) **Right View:** Developing an accurate understanding of reality.

Note 1.10.

There are two levels of right view: Mundane (Skt. laukika) and supramundane (Skt. lokottara). Mundane right views are mindsets that allow the mind to feel free of suffering and uplifted in the daily world of unenlightened beings:

- i. There is an exchange of karma based on intention
- ii. There is meaning and value in generosity, giving, offering
- iii. There is reason to feel gratitude toward our parents for bringing us into world
- iv. There is this mundane world and the other supramundane world. This can be interpreted various ways: in a platonic sense, as a comparison between sensual phenomena and jhanas, as spontaneous rebirth, or as simply the arising and passing away of all entities
- v. There are teachers that can guide you in the path toward awakening

In contrast, supramundane right views happen at the level of stream-entry where

you understand the four noble truths, i.e. you understand suffering, abandon causes and conditions, experience and realize the cessation of suffering, cultivate the path leading to cessation.

(b) **Right Intention:** Cultivating intentions of goodwill and non-harm.

Definition 1.11. Prajñā (Pali), pañña (Skr.), prajna (transl.) [Noun]

Common translations: Wisdom, discernment, insight.

Etymology: “Pra” is an intensifier which can be translated as higher, greater, supreme or being born or springing up, referring to a spontaneous type of knowing. “jñā” meaning consciousness, knowledge, or understanding.

Intuitions: Intuitive apprehension, non-discriminating knowledge, participatory knowing (as opposed to propositional knowing). To see old things with new eyes.

Quotes:

“Wisdom is purified by morality, and morality is purified by wisdom: where one is, the other is, the moral man has wisdom and the wise man has morality, and the combination of morality and wisdom is called the highest thing in the world.”

(Sonadanda Sutta, 22.131)

2. (a) **Right Speech:** Practicing truthful and compassionate communication.

Note 1.12.

Noble silence is often a good fallback when unsure of what to say. A simple mnemonic to contemplate the compassionate quality of your speech is to, “*Think* before you speak”:

- **Timeliness:** Consider the appropriate timing for your words, ensuring that they are expressed at a moment that is conducive to understanding and empathy.
- **Honesty:** Emphasize the importance of truthfulness in your communication, promoting sincerity and transparency to build trust and connection.
- **Intention:** Reflect on the motives behind your words, aiming for positive and constructive communication that aligns with your values and promotes understanding.
- **Necessity:** Evaluate whether your words are necessary and contribute meaningfully to the conversation, avoiding unnecessary or potentially harmful remarks
- **Kindness:** Prioritize the use of gentle and compassionate language, fostering a caring and supportive environment in your interactions with others.

(b) **Right Action:** Engaging in ethical and harm-free actions.

(c) **Right Livelihood:** Choosing a livelihood that doesn’t harm others.

Definition 1.13. Śīla (Pali, Skr.), sila (transl.) [Noun]

Common translations: Ethical conduct, morality, moral character

Intuitions: Can be understood as the actions and lifestyles that are the result of a strong cultivation of wisdom (prajñā). Ethics in Buddhism differs from much of western ethics in their output approach which focuses on what one does or what actions they take (with some exceptions from stoicism, Hume and Buddhist sentimentalist like Adam Smith). Buddhist ethics are more focused on how we see and experience ourselves and the world, i.e. perception itself.

Definition 1.14. Pañcasīla (Pali), pañcaśīla (Skt.) [Noun]

Common translations: Five Precepts or five rules of training

- (a) Prohibition of killing, both humans and all animals.
- (b) Prohibition of theft and related activities such as fraud and forgery.
- (c) Prohibition of sexual misconduct.
- (d) Prohibition of falsehood spoken or committed to by action, as well as malicious speech, harsh speech and gossip.
- (e) Prohibition of intoxication through alcohol, drugs, or other means.

3. (a) **Right Effort:** Cultivating wholesome states of mind and letting go of unwholesome ones.

Definition 1.15. Upacāra-samādhi (Pali, Skt.)

Common translation: Access concentration, threshold concentration

Intuition: This stage of samadhi follows the stage of preliminary concentration (parikamma-samādhi); it arises when the five hindrances are no longer present, and is signified by the appearance of the counterpart sign (paṭibhāga nimitta). Note, nimitta is interpreted slightly differently in the Visuddhimagga and Mahayana tradition; the Buddha originally simply uses nimitta to describe any object or theme of meditation used as a sign that samadhi is deepening, i.e. through the jhana stages.

Access concentration involves a gentle efforting. Similar to application of pressure to shuffle a pack of cards. Enough control that the cards don't fly everywhere, enough effort to bend and snap the cards, but enough relaxation and lack of rigidity to give the cards the room and ability to freely flow out of your hands, and enough sensitivity to feel the sensations and adjust the energy of this shuffling. Imagine you are gently shuffling an endless deck of cards - now apply this sustained mental motion to your meditation object, i.e. to awareness of the texture and sensation of breathing.

- (b) **Right Mindfulness:** Developing awareness of one's thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- (c) **Right Concentration:** Cultivating focused and meditative awareness.

Definition 1.16. Samādhi (Pali, Skr.), samadhi (transl.) [Noun]

Common translations: Meditative concentration, absorption, profound or abstract meditation, intense contemplation of any particular object.

Etymology: “sam” meaning to bring together, Alternatively, “sama” meaning the same, equalized, the convergence of two distinct things. adhi meaning “the obscure and hidden become clear objects of cognition” or “the skillful unification of mind and object”. sam-ā-dhā, with dhā meaning “to collect”, “to bring together”, “to hold together”, “to concentrate upon”.

Intuitions: State of deep tranquility and concentration. State of harmonious well-being of and agreement within the mind and body. Non-dualistic state of consciousness, broad field of awareness. Samādhi is more about open-heartedness than focus, more about increasing refinement and subtlety than concentration and holding attention. Elements of being (energy, mind, and desire) are in agreement or harmony, and have integrity or collected-ness. Simile: Improvising in responsive creative arts, finding the appropriate gear on a bike. Any state of samādhi is to some degree a state of letting go, of reduced craving, and less craving results in less fabricating.

Stages of samādhi:

- (a) Preliminary concentration (parikamma-samādhi) - is cultivated at the beginning of a meditation session, and is directed towards being mindful of the object, noticing when a distraction or other hindrance has arisen, and applying the antidote
- (b) Access concentration (upacāra-samādhi) - arises when the five hindrances are no longer present, and is marked by the appearance of the counterpart sign (paṭibhāga nimitta).
- (c) Absorption concentration (appanā-samādhi) - arises when the meditator enters the first jhāna, and is marked by full, stable development of the five absorption factors (dhyānāṅga).

1.4 The five aggregates

The five aggregates, also known as the five skandhas, are the components that make up the human experience and are essential to understanding our sense of self and our perception of reality.

These aggregates are interdependent and constantly changing, illustrating the impermanent and empty nature of perceptual phenomena.

1. **Definition 1.17.** Rūpa (Pali, Skt.), rupa (transl.) [Noun]
Common translations: Form, figure, material form
Intuitions: Any outward appearance or phenomenon or colour, form, shape, figure perceived by one of the six external sense bases (āyatana). rūpa-khandha – material forms, rūpa-āyatana – visible objects, āma-rūpa – name and form or mind and body, which in context of dependent origination arises from consciousness and leads to the sense bases.

2.

Definition 1.18. Vedanā (Pali, Skt.), vedana (transl.) [Noun]

Common translations: Feeling, sensation

Intuitions: The distinct valence or hedonic tone of an emotion, which can be pleasant (sukhā), unpleasant (dukkhā), or neither. There are six classes of vedanā, corresponding to sensations arising from contact (Skt: sparśa; Pali: phassa) between an internal sense organ (āyatana), i.e. the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body or mind, with an external sense object and the associated consciousness (Skt.: vijñana; Pali: viññāna).

3. **Definition 1.19.** Saṃjñā (Pali, Skt.), samjna (transl.) [Noun]

Common translations: Conceptualization, recognition, cognition, perception

Intuitions: The function of saṃjñā is to generate a sign or label to perceive objects as members of the same category, or recognizing continuity in what has been previously perceived. Saṃjñā and recognition is both seeing and remembering. Saṃjñā is akin to inference, pattern matching, representation learning.

4. **Definition 1.20.** Saṅkhāra (Pali), saṃskāra (Skt.), sankhara (transl.) [Noun, verb]

Common translations: Mental formations,

Etymology: Saṃskāra is not a Vedic Sanskrit term, but found extensively in classical and epic era Sanskrit.

Intuitions: Conditioned things. “that which has been put together” or “that which puts together.” Fuses “object and subject” as interdependent parts of each human’s consciousness and epistemological process. If Upadana is a seed, then Sankharas are the warped houses we build out of the twisted lumber that grows. A collection of mental events put into a story or belief about how the world is. Those with especially bad maladaptive strategies misinterpret signs explaining how to escape suffering as tricks, attacks, etc.

An intense interpersonal encounter that you don’t fully experience and express (resolve), will become part of your sense of self and or world view instead of something that happened to you

Note 1.21.

In alchemical psychology, trauma is considered prima materia or raw material which may be used in transmutation to develop the philosopher’s stone. In this sense it is considered valuable and essential to have prima materia to initiate the alchemical process:

- (a) Nigredo, the blackening or melanosis
- (b) Albedo, the whitening or leucosis
- (c) Citrinitas, the yellowing or xanthosis
- (d) Rubedo, the reddening, purpling, or iosis

5.

Definition 1.22. Vijñāna (Pali, Skt.), vijnana (transl.) [Noun]
Common translations: Consciousness, life force, mind, discernment
Etymology: Vijñāna is mentioned in many early Upanishads, where it has been translated by terms such as understanding, knowledge, and intelligence.
Intuitions: Mental force that animates the otherwise inert material body. Discussed in different contexts: as a derivative of the sense bases (āyatana), as one of the five aggregates (skhandha) of clinging (upadana) at the root of suffering (dukkha), as one of the twelve causes (nidānas) of “Dependent Origination” (paticca-samuppāda)

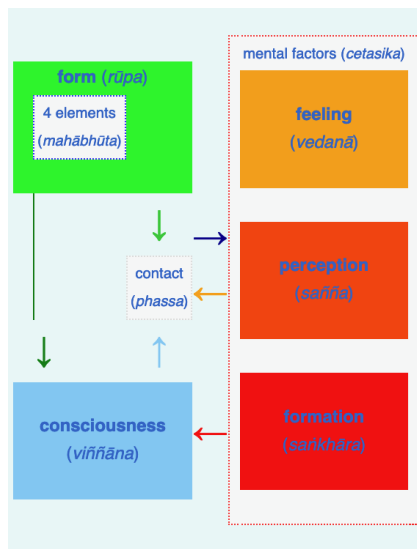


Figure 1: The five aggregates (Skandhas)

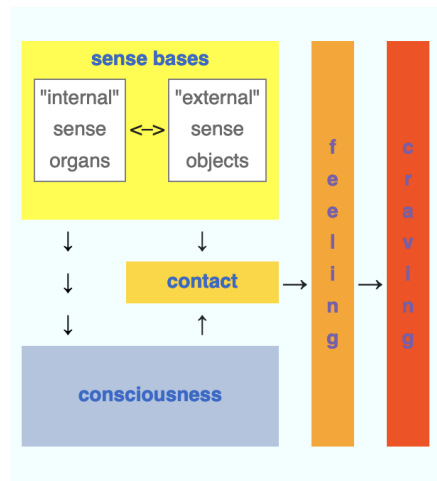


Figure 2: The six internal-external pairs of sense bases (Āyatana)

The 12 Nidānas:



Figure 3: The 12 Nidānas

Definition 1.23. Papañca (Pali), prapañca (Skt.) papanca (transl.) [Noun]
Common translations: Mental proliferation, Conceptual proliferation, conceptual elaboration
Etymology: pra+pañc to spread out; meaning “expansion”, “diffuseness”, “manifoldedness”
Intuitions: The tendency for attention to get dragged into associations, reactivity, and stories from a simple stimulus (any sight, sound, smell, taste, body sensation thought, or emotion, for instance). This movement, the escalation of such complicating mental activity, and the entanglement of the attention therein, are all ingredients of a grosser level of manifestation of papañca. The word papañca might also be translated as ‘amplification’. In contrast, when we practise mindfulness, we are usually trying to ‘stay at contact’ – that is, to hold or return the attention to the ‘initial’ or ‘basic’ experiences that arise at

the contact of the sense doors with the sense objects. If we seriously want to learn how our thoughts become impure and how to keep our mental purification unadulterated from defilements, we should figure out how mental purification can be tainted through papañca.

Quotes:

“People delight in proliferation, the Tathagata in nonproliferation”
(Dhammapada verse 254)

Note 1.24.

The most fundamental meaning of avijjā is ignorance of emptiness. Avijjā also implies a way of looking at your situation that is ignorant of and ignores this process of the arising and the possible ceasing of dukkha.

1. With delusion (avijjā) as condition, there are concoctions (saṅkhārā);
2. With concoctions as condition, consciousness;
3. With consciousness as condition, mentality-materiality (nāmarūpa);
4. With mentality-materiality as condition, the six sense spheres;
5. With the six sense spheres as condition, contact;
6. With contact as condition, vedanā;
7. With vedanā as condition, craving;
8. With craving as condition, clinging;
9. With clinging as condition, becoming (bhava);
10. With becoming as condition, birth;
11. With birth as condition, aging and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and tribulation.
12. Such is the origin of the whole mass of suffering (dukkha).

Our cognitive functions developed to increase survival rate as our species evolved through various environments and stages of complexity. It has been immensely successful in our species survival but results in reflexive suffering in many people as they go about daily life. Through careful deconstruction of subtle sensory and cognition mechanisms, we find entry points to intercept, contain, or diffuse the generation of reflexive dukkha. First an external sensory stimuli (rupa) makes contact (sparśa) with one of our sense doors (āyatana). On first impression, the form is encoded in terms of immediate physiological valence or hedonic tone by our sense door (vedana); pleasant, unpleasant or neither. It is then encoded into a generalized representation which is non-specific to the sense door and does not possess extrinsic context (samjña). To embed this representation into an appropriate context in our world model of previously experienced representations in order to predict/infer an appropriate reaction, the representation is enriched with reactions from various systems in our body. The fast-clenching mechanism of tanha is a learned, bodily or physiological computation, likely occurring in the shared and evolutionary early circulatory or vascular system. Upadana strengthens this initial clinging mechanism through relevance or

salience realization, and likely involves multiple systems (muscular, respiratory, digestive, endocrine, immune, reproductive, integumentary, etc.) depending on the content of the sensory representation and past experiences. As more signals are sent back from various systems through the central nervous system into the brain (the central processing unit), the original pure representation eventually converges into an enriched representation that can be embedded into a world model made of previous experiences (sankhara). From this final embedding, a reaction occurs, often causing dukkha in the form of further proliferation at the level of mental abstractions (papanca) or feedback loops with our external interactions.

Note 1.25.

The process of objectifying mental formations can be described as reification. Reification is involved in the process of our fabrication of reality which naturally leads to our suffering. Conversely, mindful objectification of body sensations, feeling-tones, mind states, thoughts, and the self can lead to insights into the three marks of existence within the phenomena. Finding gaps in reification and fabrication allows us to deconstruct the phenomenon into its empty nature.

A deep understanding of the emptiness of a phenomenon liberates us from the suffering it causes. From here, we may engage in skillful fabrication and personal myth making, i.e. a healing process of developing a revised story of our experience and self. Beyond serving a simple pragmatic purpose, these imaginal fabrications can provide scaffolding to discover “true” forms beyond limits of normative and consensus reality described in our culture. The individual has responsibility for exploring and mapping this uncharted territory on their own terms.

Definition 1.26. Paṭiccasamuppāda (Pali), pratītyasamutpāda (Skt.) paticcasamupada (trasl.) [Noun]

Common translations: Dependent origination, dependent arising

Etymology: Pratītya meaning “having depended”, and samutpāda meaning “arising”, “rise”, “production”, “origin”.

Intuitions: Variable phenomena - dependently arisen processes. There are only ways of looking, there are no privileged entities that exist independent of a way of looking. An invariant principle of nature, dependent origination is at play in all conditioned phenomena independent of our discovery, similar to the laws of physics which are also described with invariants (Lorentz, Noether). An application of the insight of the middle way to reality in general, from atomic interactions, to sensual perception, to cosmology.

The notion of existence being eternalism as it maintains that the physical world exists forever and the notion of nonexistence is annihilationism as it maintains that the entire world does not exist forever but will deplete. The Tathāgata teaches the Dhamma by way of the middle path without veering to either of these extremes, this is emptiness.

Dependent origination is the machinery through which the storehouse of old karma flows into new karma through asavas.

Quotes:

“The instructed disciple of the noble ones, however, attends carefully & appro-

privately right there at the dependent co-arising. When this is, that is. From the arising of this comes the arising of that. When this isn't, that isn't. From the cessation of this comes the cessation of that. In other words: 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.

Now from the remainderless fading & cessation of that very ignorance comes the cessation of fabrications. From the cessation of fabrications comes the cessation of consciousness. From the cessation of consciousness comes the cessation of name-&-form. From the cessation of name-&-form comes the cessation of the six sense media. From the cessation of the six sense media comes the cessation of contact. From the cessation of contact comes the cessation of feeling. From the cessation of feeling comes the cessation of craving. From the cessation of craving comes the cessation of clinging/sustenance. From the cessation of clinging/sustenance comes the cessation of becoming. From the cessation of becoming comes the cessation of birth. From the cessation of birth, then aging & death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair all cease. Such is the cessation of this entire mass of stress & suffering.

Seeing thus, the instructed disciple of the noble ones grows disenchanted with form, disenchanted with feeling, disenchanted with perception, disenchanted with fabrications, disenchanted with consciousness. Disenchanted, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion, he is fully released. With full release, there is the knowledge, 'Fully released.' He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

(Samyutta Nikaya 12.61)

Note 1.27.

Three varieties of existential dependence are distinguished

1. Causal dependence, when an object depends for its existence on its causes and conditions. Causes can be broken down further into antecedent causes, simultaneous causes, etc.
2. Mereological dependence, when an object depends on its parts.
3. Conceptual dependence, postulating the dependence of an object on a basis of designation, a designating mind, and a term used to designate the object.

Definition 1.28. Suññatā (Pali), śūnyatā (Skt.), sunyata (transl.) [Noun]

Common translations: Emptiness, voidness

Etymology: The noun form of the adjective śūnya. śūnya primarily means “empty”, or “void,” but also means “zero,” and “nothing,” and derives from the root śvi, meaning “hollow”. -tā is a suffix denoting a quality or state of being, equivalent to English “-ness”.

Intuitions: All things are empty of intrinsic existence and nature (svabhava). The non-self (Pāli: anattā, Sanskrit: anātman) nature of the five aggregates of experience and the six sense spheres.

Note 1.29.

Emptiness has played a central role in the speciation of various schools of eastern philosophy. A helpful takeaway when interpreting the distinctions is to interpret them as methods being used to relieve suffering, in which many of the interpretations ultimately lead to similar conclusions.

We can trace the evolution of the progressive stages of meditation on emptiness (śūnyatā) as follows:

1. Theravada Buddhism contemplates emptiness through an experiential deconstruction of the five aggregates using the three marks of existence
2. The Yogachara tradition in Mahayana Buddhism similarly contemplates emptiness through yogic practices, namely through an experiential and empirical understanding of emptiness through non-dual states of awareness rather than a system of ontology. Its teachings can be interpreted as similar to subjective idealism in the west, i.e. that only minds and mental contents exist. The yogic path is also pursued in Hinduism through study of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.
3. The Madhyamaka tradition in Mahayana Buddhism contemplates emptiness through the teachings of Nāgārjuna and Chandrakirti and the conceptual examination of dependent dependent arising. Emptiness refers to the tenet that “all things are empty of intrinsic existence and nature (svabhava)”.
4. Madhyamaka is further delimited by the Svatantrika–Prasaṅgika distinction based on conclusions drawn from syllogistic reasoning (svātantra) or logic consequence (prasaṅga) of dependent arising phenomena. Syllogistic reasoning is a deductive method used to draw conclusion based on two propositions that are asserted or assumed to be true.
 - (a) Svatantrika uses syllogistic reasoning to argue that there is a conventional essence of objects (i.e. the syllogisms). Similarly to how the two truths doctrine states there is a conventional truth that can scaffold into the ultimate truth, this conventional essence can be used to argue how things are ultimately empty of inherent existence.
 - (b) Prāsaṅgika argues for the sole reliance on prasaṅga or “logic consequence”, a method of reductio ad absurdum, using syllogisms to point out the absurd and impossible logical consequences of holding any essentialist views.
5. The Jonang tradition in Tibetan Buddhism contemplates shentong (“empty of other”).

While all relative phenomena are empty of inherent existence (svabhava), ultimate reality (paramartha-satya) is not empty of its own inherent existence. Ultimate reality, the buddha-wisdom (buddha-jñāna) or buddha-nature (buddhadhātu), is only empty of relative and defiled phenomena, but it is not empty of its countless awakened qualities.

6. This is also similar to concepts of the Buddha-nature teachings and primordial or empty awareness in Tibetan Dzogchen; i.e. the ultimate ground of existence which contains qualities of purity (i.e. emptiness), spontaneity (lhun grub, associated with luminous clarity) and compassion (thugs rje). This knowledge of the ground of existence is called rigpa.
7. This perspective of emptiness is similar to the concept of Purnam or “perfect fullness” in Advaita Vedanta Hinduism, though it did not follow the same lineage of Tibetan Buddhism.

Definition 1.30. Nibbida (Skt.), Nibbidā (Pali) [Noun]

Common translations: Disenchantment; aversion; disgust; weariness

Intuitions: The skillful turning away of the mind from the conditioned samsaric world towards the unconditioned, the transcendent. Metaphor: enjoying a slice of cake vs. being disgusted and sickened by having eaten too much from greed or politeness. Being thoroughly tired of the world leads to being dispassionate, then the destruction of egoism, then perfect wisdom and Nibbāna. Although the initial intellectual understanding of the emptiness of a phenomena may feel nihilistic, the experiential understanding of its emptiness, often by seeing the three marks within it, brings about a joyful sense of rapture and liberation (sometimes called transcendental dependent arising). The chachakkasutta can be understood as a guided meditation for awakening to non-self through contemplation of disenchantment with the sense bases.

Quotes:

“The six internal bases should be understood. The six external bases should be understood. The six classes of consciousness should be understood. The six classes of contact should be understood. The six classes of feeling should be understood. The six classes of craving should be understood. [...]

Seeing thus, bhikkhus, a well-taught noble disciple becomes disenchanted with the eye, disenchanted with forms, disenchanted with eye-consciousness, disenchanted with eye-contact, disenchanted with feeling, disenchanted with craving. He becomes disenchanted with the ear...He becomes disenchanted with the nose...He becomes disenchanted with the tongue...He becomes disenchanted with the body...He becomes disenchanted with the mind, disenchanted with mind-objects, disenchanted with mind-consciousness, disenchanted with mind-contact, disenchanted with feeling, disenchanted with craving

Being disenchanted, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion, his mind is liberated. When it is liberated, there comes the knowledge: ‘It is liberated.’ He understands: ‘Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming to any state of being.

That is what the Blessed One said. The bhikkhus were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words. Now while this discourse was being spoken, through

not clinging the minds of sixty bhikkhus were liberated from the taints.”
(MN 148: Chachakkasutta)

Note 1.31.

Although it may seem disheartening to become dispassionate and disenchanted toward a treasured phenomena after deconstructing the ignorance that lead to its original appeal (despite it also causing suffering), there is an opportunity for re-enchantment without ignorance. A re-enchantment of phenomena that is purified of the ignorance of emptiness is unlike the enchantment of reality found in pre-rational systems since it is free of supernaturalism and is grounded in nature and reality. Instead, after nirodha and the cessation of suffering, we seek a skillful fabrication that allows us to abide in wholesome states. There is even increased potential to go beyond the pragmatic benefit of relieving suffering and into a deepening of insight, love, appreciation, and creative collaboration with phenomena. The way of looking benefits from alternating between a view of emptiness and a skillful reification, until the emptiness way of looking matures and there is a clear sense that it opens the heart rather than shutting it down.

1.5 The five hindrances and five jhanic mental factors

Definition 1.32. Nīvaraṇāni (Pali), nīvaraṇa (Skt., Sinhala) [Noun]

Common translations: Hindrance

Etymology: the Pali term nīvaraṇa means covering, i.e. hindrances cover over the clarity of our mind, and our ability to be mindful, wise, concentrated, and stay on purpose. Also may refer to an obstacle or hindrance only in the ethical sense.

Intuitions: The five hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇāni) are:

1. Kāmacchanda (sensory desire): seeking for pleasure through the five senses of sight, sound, smell, taste and physical feeling.
2. Vyāpāda; also spelled byāpāda (ill-will): feelings of hostility, resentment, hatred and bitterness.
3. Thīna-middha (sloth-and-torpor): half-hearted action with little or no effort or concentration.
4. Uddhacca-kukkucca (restlessness-and-worry): the inability to calm the mind and focus one’s energy.
5. Vicikiccha (doubt): lack of conviction or trust in one’s abilities.

Definition 1.33. Cetasika (Pali), caitasika (Skt.), [Noun]

Common translations: Mental factor, absorption factors, jhāna factors

Intuitions: Also known as Dhyānāṅga or the constituents of meditative absorption. The relationship between the mind (Skt. citta) and the mental factors can be described with the following metaphor: the main mind is like screen in a cinema, and the mental factors are like the images projected on the screen.

The five mental or jhāna factors are:

1. Pīti. Rapture, joy.
2. Sukha. Non-sensual pleasure.
3. Ekaggata. One-pointedness, one prominent focus, not a singular spatial point but akin to a mountain that elevates towards a peak that is not necessarily a singular point.
4. Vitakka. Applied thought, directed thought.
5. Vicāra. Sustained thought, evaluated thought, investigation.

Note 1.34.

Five mental factors can be interpreted as antidotes to five hindrances:

- Pīti (“rapture”) counteracts ill-will (vyapada) and also sensory desire
- Sukha (“non-sensual pleasure”) counteracts counteracts restlessness-worry (uddhacca-kukkucca) and also ill-will
- Ekaggata (“one-pointedness”) counteracts sensory desire (kāmacchanda) and also sloth-and-torpor
- Vicāra (“sustained thought”) counteracts doubt
- Vitakka (“applied thought”) counteracts sloth-torpor (thina-middha) and also restlessness-and-worry

Note 1.35.

There is a connection between hindrances and emotions. Subtle hindrance lead to gross hindrance which lead to emotions. A hindrance is not necessarily an emotion, rather an emotion is a fabrication, i.e. an emotion is neither real or unreal. After reaching jhana, there can often be a backlash of negative emotions, this may be part of the cathartic effect of the jhanas in karmic purification, it may also be an aspect of broadening the range of accessible emotions through jhana meditation. Over time with practice of jhanas, less papañca and story making is associated with the hindrances and there is more understanding of them as a pure hindrance which can eventually be reduced to subtle hindrance.

2 Practices

2.1 Concentration and tranquility

Note 2.1.

The cultivation of concentration naturally leads to insight. Consider mindfulness as a transparency to opacity shift, in which we make translucent sensory and mental framing opaque in order to examine it. Akin to removing one’s glasses, checking them for marks, wiping the glasses, then putting them back on and inspecting for improved vision. In this metaphor the inspection of improved clarity relates to later contemplation practices.

Practice 2.2. Satipatthana (mindfulness)

“Mindful” (satima) literally means being able to remember or recollect. Here it means keeping one’s task in mind. The task here is a dual one—remaining focused on one’s frame of reference [satipaṭṭhāna], and putting aside the distractions of greed and distress that would come from shifting one’s frame of reference back to the world. In other words, one tries to stay with the phenomenology of immediate experience, without slipping back into the narratives and world views that make up one’s sense of the world. In essence, this is a concentration practice, with the three qualities of ardency, alertness, and mindfulness devoted to attaining concentration. Mindfulness keeps the theme of the meditation in mind, alertness observes the theme as it is present to awareness, and also is aware of when the mind has slipped from its theme. Mindfulness then remembers where the mind should be focused, and ardency tries to return the mind to its proper theme—and to keep it there—as quickly and skillfully as possible. In this way, these three qualities help to seclude the mind from sensual preoccupations and unskillful mental qualities, thus bringing it to the first jhana.

Although already implicit in and not separate from the concepts of bare attention and staying at contact, we can tease out another potential aspect of mindfulness practice that likewise contributes to it fabricating less: a simplification of attention. With bare attention in mindfulness practice we are, in effect, deliberately choosing to pay attention in a simpler way and to a simpler, less conceptual, level of experience. With staying at contact, we are also choosing to keep attention with a simpler object – the immediate sense experiences – so that it does not become so embroiled in complexities in ways that give them energy and cause them to grow. In both modes the mind is taken out of the pathways, This can simplify the whole experience, and possibly untie a knot of dukkha.

Close mindfulness can show that the mind joins the fragmented ‘dots’ of momentary experience, and thus fabricates some ‘bigger’ and more solid- seeming experience. And as explained, the bigger and more solid an experience seems, the greater the clinging and the dukkha it involves. Perhaps it is surprising, but the solidification and elevation of some experience seems to require a degree of inattention.

Practice 2.3. Ānāpāna-sati (mindfulness of breathing)

Practice this if the mind is dull or agitated, if it is difficult to feel sensations or difficult not to react to them. You can begin with Anapana and then switch to Vipassana or, if needed, continue observing the breath for the entire hour. To practice Anapana, keep the attention in the area below the nostrils and above the upper lip. Remain aware of each breath as it enters or leaves. If the mind is very dull or very agitated, breathe deliberately and slightly harder for some time. Otherwise, the breathing should be natural.

Practice 2.4. 6 Rs

Remembering to observe how mind’s attention moves moment-to-moment and remembering what to do with any arising phenomena

1. Recognise (janati): Acknowledge and identify the arising thoughts or phenomena, bringing awareness to their presence in the mind.
2. Release (vineyya): Let go of any attachment or clinging to the recognized thoughts or phenomena, allowing them to pass without becoming entangled.
3. Relax (passambhayam): Cultivate a state of relaxation in the mind, promoting a calm and open mental space for greater clarity and understanding
4. Resmile (pasannen): Approach the observed phenomena with a positive and friendly attitude, fostering a sense of goodwill and acceptance towards the experiences of the present moment.
5. Return (punarapi): Bring the attention back to the chosen point of focus or the present moment, redirecting the mind from distractions to enhance mindfulness.
6. Repeat (bahulikaritva): Engage in a repetitive practice of these steps, creating a consistent and intentional approach to observing and managing the fluctuations of the mind's attention.

Practice 2.5. Jhāna

The eight jhanas (1-4 are rūpa or form, 5-8 are arūpa or formless). The formless jhanas are also considered āyatanas and can be understood as extensions of the fourth jhana.

1. First jhana: pīti, rapture, pleasantness that is not coming from sensual pleasure, happiness.

Separated (viviceva) from desire for sensual pleasures, separated from other unwholesome states (akusalehi dhammehi, unwholesome dhammas), a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the first jhana, which is [mental] pīti (“rapture,” “joy”) and [bodily] sukha (“pleasure”) “born of viveka” (traditionally, “seclusion”; alternatively, “discrimination” (of dhamma’s)), accompanied by vitarka-vicara (traditionally, initial and sustained attention to a meditative object; alternatively, initial inquiry and subsequent investigation of dhammas (defilements and wholesome thoughts); also: “discursive thought”).

2. Second jhana: with stilling of directed thought, rapture and happiness born of composure, tranquility, unification of awareness, confidence, nothing in body remains untouched

Again, with the stilling of vitarka-vicara, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the second jhana, which is [mental] pīti and [bodily] sukha “born of samadhi” (samadhi-ji; trad. born of “concentration”; altern. “knowing but non-discursive [...] awareness,” “bringing the buried latencies or samskaras into full view”), and has sampasadana (“stillness,” “inner tranquility”) and ekaggata (unification of mind, awareness) without vitarka-vicara;

3. Third jhana: with fading of pīti, remain alert in equanimity, mindful, joyful abiding

With the fading away of pīti, a bhikkhu abides in upekkhā (“equanimity,” “affective detachment”), sato (mindful) and [with] sampajañña (“fully knowing,” “discerning awareness”). [Still] experiencing sukha with the body, he enters upon and abides in

the third jhana, on account of which the noble ones announce, “abiding in [bodily] pleasure, one is equanimous and mindful”.

4. Fourth jhana: with abandoning of happiness, purity of equanimity, pure bright awareness permeates body.

With the abandoning of [the desire for] sukha (“pleasure”) and [aversion to] dukkha (“pain”) and with the previous disappearance of [the inner movement between] somanassa (“gladness,”) and domanassa (“discontent”), a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the fourth jhana, which is adukkham asukham (“neither-painful-nor-pleasurable,” “freedom from pleasure and pain”) and has upekkhāsatiṭṭhāna (complete purity of equanimity and mindfulness)

5. Fifth jhana: infinite space (Pāli ākāśānañcāyatana, Skt. ākāśānantyāyatana)

complete transcendence of perception of physical form, disappearance of perception of resistance or solidity, not heeding perceptions of diversity, sphere of infinite space
6. Sixth jhana: infinite consciousness (Pāli viññāṇaṇcāyatana, Skt. vijñānānantyāyatana)

transcending sphere of infinite space, focus on infinite consciousness
7. Seventh jhana: infinite nothingness (Pāli ākiñcaṇṇāyatana, Skt. ākiṃcanyāyatana)

realm of nothingness
8. Eighth jhana: neither perception nor non-perception (Pāli nevasaññānāsaññāyatana, Skt. naivasamjñānāsamjñāyatana)

Note 2.6.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL06hhaAzLmiqUzBYuLLJQ8Fex0TRxz8xF>

The whole spectrum of jhanas can be understood as: less fabrication of dukkha (letting go of clinging), less fabrication of self, less fabrication of bodily perception, less fabrication of any perception at all. With abandoning of hindrances comes the first jhana. Jhanas are result of reducing hindrances and the subtle refinement of attention.

The Buddha calls the jhanas *perception attainments*. Instead of training for concentration and insight, jhanas train through playing with perception itself to reveal emptiness. An important aspect of the dharma is about playing with, understanding, exploring perception. Not only labeling, but exploration of the fabrication of perception and the appearance and experience of phenomena. Re-think energy, jhana, dharma in terms of perception. Piti is not a way of gathering energy or unblocking energy but a perception of the body, a perceptual skill, a perceptual attainment, a perceptual art.

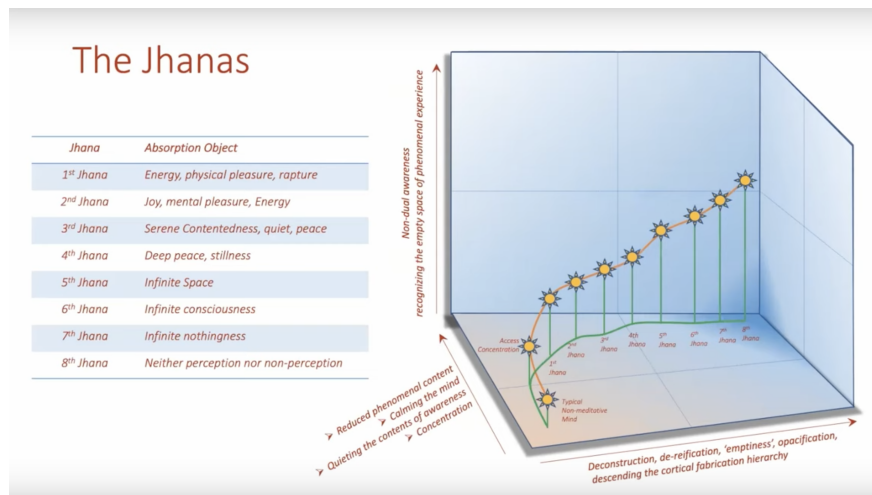
Jhanas alone won’t bring you to total liberation, nor will insight alone. Liberation needs combination of samadhi and insight. Likewise, equanimity is an important part of awakening but is not the goal and is not equivalent to awakening. Awakening involves realizing the emptiness of everything, which opens up a flexibility in ways of looking. Perfect equanimity aids in the realization of emptiness.

The primary goal of jhana practices varies on the teacher and their idea on insight.

1. Changing and eradicating habits of papanca (mental proliferation) toward simplicity
2. Develop precise laser-focused attention in order to dissect phenomena and discover insights
3. Develop unwaivering attention to reveal reality and nature of thing
4. Access deep resources of wholesome states to make letting go of cravings, aversions, fabrications much easier
5. Opening our self to more of the beauties of the world and to other beautiful realms of existence, i.e. the kiss of the mystic
6. Develop sensitivity and subtle discernment of qualities of heart, energy, refinement, attunement to adapt to complex and changing environment.

The goal should not be about qualifying attainments. Instead ask: what do I want? what is important? Avoid snatching at jhana attainments. It's sometimes better to drop the whole jhana framework and focus on the two modes of practice: insight (letting go of clinging) and samadhi (opening to pleasant quality arising from harmony in mind and body).

Base or springboard practice can be anything that reliably allows arising pleasantness/piti in energy body. Find learning edge playground of unmastered progress; marinate there, working/playing/tweaking until mastery. When hindrance arise, do something to antidote them. Learn to refine consciousness through intensity, delicacy, and directionality.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eg3cQXf4zSE&t=101s&ab_channel=ShamilChandaria

2.2 Insight and ways of seeing

Practice 2.7. Śamatha-vipassanā

Move your attention systematically from head to feet and from feet to head, observing

in order each and every part of the body by feeling all the sensations that you come across. Observe objectively; that is, remain equanimous with all the sensations that you experience, whether pleasant, unpleasant or neutral, by appreciating their impermanent nature. Keep your attention moving. Never stay for more than a few minutes at any one place. Do not allow the practice to become mechanical. Work in different ways according to the type of sensations you experience. Areas of the body having different gross sensations should be observed separately by moving the attention part by part. Symmetrical parts, such as both arms or both legs, having similar subtle sensations, may be observed together simultaneously. If you experience subtle sensations throughout the physical structure, you may at times sweep the entire body and then again work part by part.

At the end of the hour relax, letting any mental or physical agitation subside. Then focus your attention for a few minutes on subtle sensations in the body, and fill your mind and body with thoughts and feelings of goodwill for all beings.

Practice 2.8. Noting

To note a sensory event means to clearly acknowledge its presence and then to briefly focus on it, potentially using a label to help with clarity. After this brief moment of being fully present to the sensation, another sensation can be noted, either the same or a new one.

Shinzen Young's See Hear Feel noting technique is a mindfulness practice that involves noting sensory events in terms of three modalities: visual experience, auditory experience, and body experience

Examples of things you might see include: physical sights, mental images, visual rest states (blank mental screen, defocused gaze ...), visual flow states (pixilation, swirling, twinkling in your visual field...), Visual spaciousness (the openness around and/or thinness within a visual experience)

Examples of things you might hear include: physical sounds, mental talk, auditory rest states (physical silence, mental quiet,...), auditory flow states (a background hum in the silence around you, a sense of subtle stirring underneath surface mental talk...), auditory spaciousness (the openness around and/or thinness within an auditory experience)

Examples of things you might feel include: physical body sensations, emotional body sensations, smells and tastes, body rest (physical relaxation, emotional peace...), body flow states (tingling, pulsation, undulation, vibration, expansion, contraction ... in part or all of your body), body spaciousness (the openness around and/or thinness within a somatic experience)

Note 2.9.

Dharma can be thought of as a project in understanding and modifying perception. Intercept fast-clenching reactionary mechanism to reduce cravings and aversion. Improve baseline equanimity, continue purification of mind. Convolutional interpretation of body-scanning. Disruption of subtle body schemas to induce altered states.

2.3 Integration and contemplation

Note 2.10.

Liberation is the result of integrating awakening. There is no final completion of awakening but liberation can reach a point where one sees through all finite sankharas as they arise.

Practice 2.11. Forgiveness Meditation

<https://www.dhammasukha.org/forgiveness-meditation>

Begin by repeating the phrase, “I forgive myself for not understanding.” Put this sincere wish for forgiveness for yourself, in your heart, and stay with that. If nothing comes up, you could try another phrase like, “I forgive myself for causing myself and others pain.”

This wish of forgiveness is your object of meditation. Any sort of a feeling of forgiveness can be there, but the feeling is not the object – just the wish for forgiveness.

Now, when any hard feeling or painful experience comes up in your mind, the first thing you do is to forgive that, then relax and soften into that painful feeling allow it to be there, without reacting, and return to forgiving yourself.

You are removing any trapped negativity, bit by bit. Your objective is to keep forgiveness going until you feel like there is nothing more to forgive.

Note 2.12.

Forgiveness can be understood as an act of no-self or anatta. Blame, resentment, and guilt are the proliferation of self and ego clinging to hurt experienced or inflicted in the past.

Blame is an extreme example of our instinctual way of seeing, which tends to focus on, and solidify, the perception of self. What we can practise then, at first after an event that we are seeing with blame, is a ‘re-viewing’, a looking again in a different manner, in a way that takes at least some of the suffering out of it. There is a deconstruction, a softening of a view that has calcified. And this requires the head and the heart working together. Clarity and thoroughness are here in the service of compassion.

Practice 2.13. Mettā

Mettā is first practiced toward oneself, since we often have difficulty loving others without first loving ourselves. Sitting quietly, mentally repeat, slowly and steadily, the following or similar phrases: May I be happy. May I be well. May I be safe. May I be peaceful and at ease. While you say these phrases, allow yourself to sink into the intentions they express. Loving-kindness meditation consists primarily of connecting to the intention of wishing ourselves or others happiness. However, if feelings of warmth, friendliness, or love arise in the body or mind, connect to them, allowing them to grow as you repeat the phrases. This is analogous to trying to start a fire of love within us or our benefactor, where thoughts and mental imagery are kindling. As an aid to the meditation, you might hold an image of yourself in your mind’s eye. This helps reinforce the intentions expressed in the phrases.

After a period of directing loving-kindness toward yourself, bring to mind a friend or someone in your life who has deeply cared for you. Then slowly repeat phrases of loving-kindness toward them: May you be happy. May you be well. May you be safe. May you be peaceful and at ease. Imagine benefactor or spiritual friend in a happy state, smiling, and at peace. As you say these phrases, again sink into their intention or heartfelt meaning. And, if any feelings of loving-kindness arise, connect the feelings with the phrases so that the feelings may become stronger as you repeat the words. 'loving-kindness' isn't necessarily the best translation of Metta, instead it's closer to the feeling that remains after all needs are met and you feel secure. Metta practice can be used to bootstrap into Jhana practices as it often helps to reduce hindrances.

Practice 2.14. Core Transformation

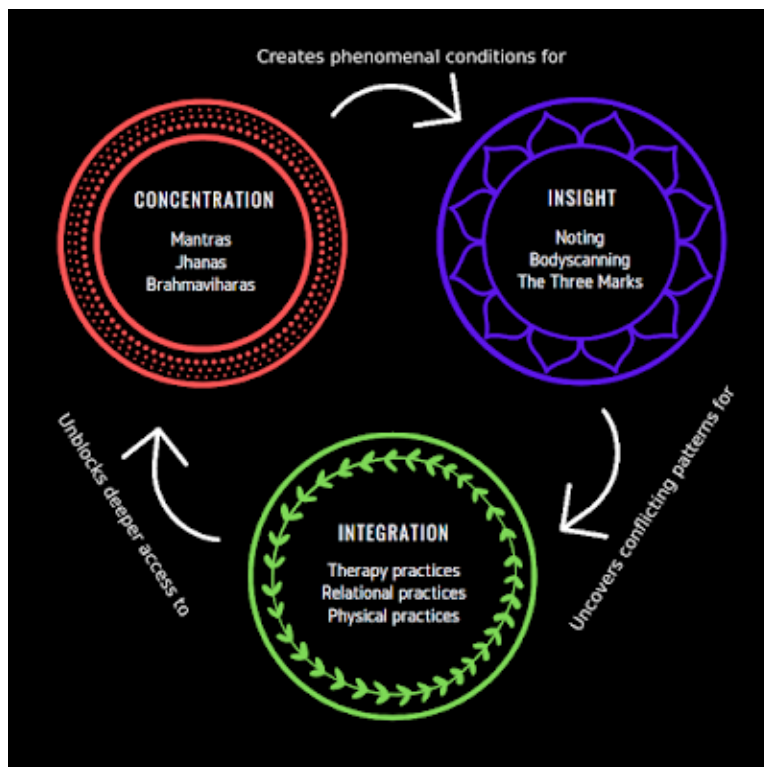
1. Select a part to work with: Experience the part, acknowledge it as belonging to you and welcome it.
2. Discover the intention / the first intended result: Ask the part: "What do you want?"
3. Discover the results chain: Ask your part: "If you have fully achieved [the intended result of the previous step], what do you want to achieve by doing something even more important? Repeat as often as necessary.]
4. The core state: Reaching the inner source: Take a moment to enjoy your core state.
5. Revise the chain of results with the help of the core state.
 - (a) General: Invite your part to consider: "If you have [the core state] as a beginning, as a way of being in the world, how does this change the situation?"
 - (b) Specifically: "How does the [core state] already established as a state of being transform, enrich and radiate the [intended result]? (Repeat with all intended results.)
 - (c) Transforming the original context: "How does the [core state], already established as a state of being, transform your experience of [the context in which you have been living]?"
6. Let one part grow up.
 - (a) "How old are you?"
 - (b) "Would you like to enjoy the benefits of developing through time to your present age, with [Core State] fully present?"
 - (c) Develop the part from its age through time to your present age, with [Core State] present at every moment of time.
7. Integrate the part completely into your own body: Pay attention to where your part is now and let it flow into your body and flow through it completely so that [core state] penetrates every cell.
8. Revise the results chain with the help of the adult part. The part is completely in your body (general, specific, original context).

9. Look for opposing parts: "Does any part of me object to having [core state] as a way of being in the world now? (Guide any opposing parts, and any parts that are also connected to the current problem, through the first eight steps of the process before you go any further).
10. Generalisation of the Time Line.
 - (a) Visualise your timeline and let yourself drift back into your past until just before your conception. As your core state shines through your being, move forward through time and let [core state] colour and transform every moment of experience to the present.
 - (b) Visualise that you are moving along the same path into the future, and note that this too is coloured by the presence of the [Core State].
 - (c) Complete this generalisation of the timeline several times, each time faster.

2.4 Misc meta-skills

(Stevens) Threefold training, deliberate practice, and skill-trees

<http://neuroticgradientdescent.blogspot.com/2021/03/threefold-training.html>



(Folk) Quick start guide

<https://kennethfolkdharma.com/quick-start-guide/>

First Gear

1. Objectify body sensations. If you can name them, you're not embedded there. Notice sensations and note to yourself: "Pressure, tightness, tension, release, coolness, warmth, softness, hardness, tingling, itching, burning, stinging, pulsing, throbbing, seeing, tasting, smelling, hearing." If I am looking at something it is not "I".
2. Objectify feeling-tone. Are sensations pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral? If you can sit quietly and attentively for five minutes and note pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral every few seconds, you are not embedded at that layer of mind.
3. Objectify mind states. Investigation, curiosity, happiness, anxiety, amusement, sadness, joy, anger, frustration, annoyance, irritation, aversion, desire, disgust, fear, worry, calm, embarrassment, shame, self-pity, compassion, love, contentment, dullness, sleepiness, bliss, exhilaration, triumph, self-loathing. Name them and be free of them. These mind states are not "you;" we know this because if there is a "you" it is the one who is looking, not what is being looked at. Below, we will challenge the notion that there is any "you" at all.
4. Objectify thoughts. Categorize them: planning thought, anticipating thought, worrying thought, imaging thought, remembering thought, rehearsing thought, scenario spinning thought, fantasy thought, self-recrimination thought. Come up with your own vocabulary and see your thoughts as though they belong to someone else. The content of your thoughts is not relevant except to the extent that it helps you to label and therefore objectify them.

Second Gear

6. Objectify the apparent subject. Who am "I"? Turn the light of attention back on itself. Who knows about this experience? Are you causing this experience in this moment? To whom is this happening?

Third Gear

7. Surrender entirely. This moment is as it is, with or without your participation. This does not mean that you must be passive. Surrender also to activity.

(Burbea) Seeing that frees practice summaries

<https://dokumen.pub/seeing-that-frees-paperbacknbsped-0992848911-9780992848910.html>

1. *Opening to freedom and strength through reflection.* Cultivate strength then reflect in a way that challenges a belief, discern its fabrication.
2. *Beginning deconstruction.* The elements of experience. look within and around you in a way that 'deconstructs' your world into its aggregate appearances of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, physical sensations, and mental and emotional experiences
3. *Investigating what is being fabricated through the hindrances.* label and recognize which hindrances are present, begin to inquire and deconstruct any fabrications, possibly after hindrance subsides
4. *Beginning to notice space.* Notice Duḥkha of contracting attention when faced with a hindrance, deliberately include an awareness of actual physical space into your attention,

- sounds, field of vision, space around and between objects.
5. *'Staying at contact'*. Try, as much as possible, to 'stay at contact' with sense doors in two modes: With the attention directed (at any time) to a specific sense object, or with the attention more open to the totality of sense contact. Simply notice and investigate feeling of mind being caught up in papañca from arising associations, memories, and reactions, without judgment.
 6. *Questioning abstractions and generalizations*. On an occasion when you are aware that some dukkha is present, see if you can identify any abstraction or generalization the mind has created and is now reacting to.
 7. *Bare attention*. Practise periods of bringing and sustaining, as much as you can, a bare attention to experience – trying to meet experience as it presents itself, as free as possible from the veils of concepts, interpretations, and abstractions.
 8. *Choosing a simpler object of attention*. When there is an experience of dukkha that seems to involve some complexity, see if it is possible to tune the mindfulness to some simpler aspect of the totality of that difficult experience – for instance, the emotions, or the vedanā of the emotions in the body. We are interested in finding ways of attending to that feel like they are helping, soothing or calming the formation of the emotion or the fabrications around it.
 9. *'Dot-to-dot'*. Experiment with giving a whole range of different kinds of experiences a steadiness of intimate, careful, and precise, moment-to-moment attention. Can you notice the 'gaps' in the experience of a 'thing'?
 10. *Ending blame through recognizing the confluence of conditions*. Consider the broader range of dependent conditions of something from the past for which you are blaming yourself. Include the loose categories of 'present, inner', 'present, outer', 'past, inner', and 'past, outer' conditions in your considerations.
 11. *Examining, and loosening, self-definitions*. Notice and make a written list of self-definitions that you hold on to – both the more obvious and the more hidden ones. Notice how it feels and how true these definitions seem as you read the list slowly. Pick one of these self-definitions and see if it is possible to lightly sustain an attention over some days that notices both the presences and the absences of the qualities it implies. Notice the effects of various contradictions of the self-view. Other questions: What do I tend to miss or ignore when I look at myself? What quality within me, or what aspect of myself, am I assuming is the reason for this behaviour (or this thought, or this mood)? What do I stifle within myself?
 12. *A skilful tolerating of craving*. When there is craving – a grasping after, a holding on to, or an energetic movement to be rid of, something – practise bringing a spacious mindfulness to the experience of the craving, and particularly to the sense of pressure or tension that it involves in the body. Can you get a sense how mindfully allowing it to do so develops a capacity to tolerate the experience of craving, and gradually disempowers it?
 13. *Focusing on vedanā to temper the force of craving*. When you notice that there is craving or clinging present in relation to some object of any of the six senses, practise sustaining a focused attention on the experience of the vedanā (the shifting quality of pleasantness, unpleasantness, or 'neutrality') of that object, moment to moment. If the vedanā seems to be feeding reactive thoughts and papañca, notice what effects staying concentrated on

the vedanā has on the strength and amount of these thoughts and papañca, and on the degree of entanglement in them.

14. *Noticing the sense of self.* Begin to include in your practice, both in and out of formal meditation, an awareness of the sense of self, and how that sense fluctuates and moves along a continuum. Notice how the self-sense feels at times of different degrees of dukkha, and when there is upset about something or other. Notice too how the sense of self feels at times of more ease, and particularly at different times in meditation. Especially important is to notice the quality of the self-sense in periods of greater quietude, when mettā, mindfulness, or samādhi are stronger. Notice how the sense of the body mirrors the sense of the self.
15. *Awareness of change at an everyday level.* Regularly take some time at the end of the day to view the day's experiences from the perspective of anicca. The period framed for reflection in this way may actually be of any length. After you have gained some familiarity with this reflection, practise bringing this knowledge of the fact of change to your current experiences – of mood, energy levels, sense impressions, etc. – at any time. Notice, with as much sensitivity as you can, what effects this way of looking has in the moment.
16. *Attending to anicca moment to moment.* For a part or for the whole of a meditation session, or continuing as you move about your day, practise sustaining attention on the moment-to-moment changing that you notice in objects. Take time to familiarize yourself with contemplating the impermanence of phenomena in this way in each of the six sense spheres. In similar ways, practise contemplating the moment-to-moment fluctuation in vedanā; and also in the experience of different emotions or mind states, gross and subtle.
17. *Viewing experience from the perspective of death and vast time.* Reflect on the fact of your birth and death – your appearance and disappearance in the universe. Consider, or even imagine in some way, the vastness of time and space that surrounds your life, and that also surrounds this moment's experience. Play, many times, with bringing attention intensely to any sense impression in the present moment, while at the same time allowing this awareness of the greater context of this flash of experience to inform the way of looking.
18. *Viewing phenomena as 'dukkha' moment to moment.* begin to play at times with a slight transformation of the anicca way of looking by sustaining a meditative view of phenomena, moment to moment, as 'unsatisfactory'. Uniformly apply this to what is experienced as lovely, what is experienced as difficult, and what is experienced as neither.
19. *Relaxing the relationship with phenomena.* As different phenomena arise, practise developing sensitivity to the presence of clinging, particularly through its expression in some sense of contraction in the body space or of the space of awareness. You can experiment with different means of doing this: a) by simply intending to let go in relationship to that phenomenon; b) by relaxing the bodily contraction that accompanies the clinging; c) by allowing, welcoming, or opening to the phenomenon as fully as possible; d) by tuning in to the moment-to-moment disappearance and dissolution of the phenomenon clung to; e) by regarding the phenomenon as 'unsatisfactory'; f) by any other means you may discover for yourself, or find in this book or elsewhere.
20. *Seeing what is external as 'not mine'.* Choose a number of your material possessions for contemplation as 'not mine'. Take some time to hold each within some intensity of attention. Notice if and how the sense of ownership is affected when the mindfulness

- is relatively strong and the mind is less taken by thoughts about the object. See if it is possible to deliberately view these things, one by one, as ‘not mine’. Bring a loved one into your mind’s eye, and hold the image or sense of them in attention with mindfulness. Notice whatever feelings arise. When you feel ready, practise shifting the view to seeing them free of the construct of truly being ‘my friend (partner, child, parent, etc.)’. Carefully notice again any effects this has on your feelings and your perceptions of them.
21. *Regarding the aggregates as anattā, moment to moment.* Take some time in meditation to experiment and find out which aggregate is the easiest for you to regard as anattā moment to moment. Practise sustaining a view of this aggregate as ‘not me, not mine’. If it seems difficult, remember that you can always shift to another way of looking, such as the anicca or dukkha practices or even simple mindfulness practice, mettā, or samādhi, and let the perception of ‘not-self’ arise out of that, until you can sustain the anattā view more immediately. Acknowledge feelings of peace or release and occasionally view the experience itself as anattā. Allow moments of resting in the experience, consolidating it into a state of samādhi. Once you are generally able to sustain a view of that chosen aggregate as not-self, and experience a sense of some freedom doing so, add another aggregate, or element of an aggregate, to the contemplation, and practise until that too can be sustained in the view.
 22. *A vastness of awareness.* In a meditation session, once a little calm is established, settle for a while with an open attention that allows the coming and going of the totality of body sensations in the whole body. After some time, open the attention further to also include a bare attention to the totality of sounds. Listen to the silence between the sounds as well. Notice how sounds seem to arise out of, and fade back into, the silence. Allow, or imagine, the awareness to be like an open sky, clear and vast. Sensations, sounds, thoughts and images appear and disappear, like fireflies or like shooting stars in this space. Feel that in this vastness of awareness there is space for everything, no matter what it is. See moments of sensation and experience appear, float freely, and disappear within the vastness of the awareness. Over and over, watching phenomena emerge from and then melt back into the space, see if you can practise letting all phenomena belong to this space of awareness.
 23. *‘No difference in substance’.* Practise holding an object in attention while recognizing that what is actually perceived is a perception, an experience. Is it possible to sense how a degree of the solidity that is habitually imputed to objects of perception is dropped? Practise sustaining a way of seeing, moment to moment, that focuses on the emptiness of any difference in substance between objects of perception and awareness.
 24. *The sevenfold reasoning in meditation.*
 - (a) The self cannot be equated with one, some, or all, of the aggregates
 - (b) The self is not other than the aggregates
 - (c) The self is not in the aggregates
 - (d) The aggregates are not in the self
 - (e) The self does not possess the aggregates
 - (f) The self is not just the collection of the aggregates
 - (g) The self is not the shape of the aggregates, nor their continuum in time

- Reflect on the principle underpinning the sevenfold reasoning – that the self, or anything else, if it is inherently existent, must be found in one of these seven ways; and that if it is not, it must mean that it lacks inherent existence. Once a degree of samādhi is established, become aware of the sense of self, wherever it is on its spectrum. Begin to go through the seven possibilities refuting each one. Since it cannot be found in any of these ways, and since there are no other possibilities, it is empty, it cannot exist in the way that it appears to. If a perception of a vacuity has replaced the object then that vacuity may now be focused on. Make sure, though, that it is pregnant with the meaning of the emptiness of the object.
25. *‘No preferences’*. In a meditation session, take some time to gather the citta in a state of samādhi to a degree, and then attempt to sustain an attitude of ‘no preferences’, of not picking and choosing between experiences at all. Whenever you become aware of the presence of dukkha or clinging, see if you can identify what duality has been seized upon. Then see if it is possible to drop any preference for one pole of that duality over the other.
 26. *Seeing dualities as empty because fabricated*. Whenever you notice dukkha or clinging is present, see if you can identify the dualistic conceiving that underpins it. Having done so, practise viewing both the duality and the pole or object clung to knowing that, although they are perceived, they are empty. Experiment with using a very light label such as ‘empty’ to help hold this insight within the attention to the object.
 27. *Seeing dualities as empty because mutually dependent*. Whenever you notice dukkha or clinging is present, see if you can identify the dualistic conceiving that supports it. Having done so, practise attending to both the duality and the clung-to object within the knowledge that, although they are perceived, they are void.
 28. *Viewing phenomena as ‘empty’ because they fade dependently*. When you have seen many times that perceptions fade dependent on the release of clinging of various kinds, and when you have understood the implication of their emptiness, you may sometimes now wish to practise a way of looking that views perceptions more directly as ‘empty’, or ‘just a perception’.
 29. *Directing love towards phenomena*. Practise directing mettā, or compassion – or a mixture of the two – towards experience, moment to moment. Begin with whatever experience is prominent at that time. If nothing is particularly prominent, begin with the body sensations.
 30. *Contemplating the emptiness of clinging*. Reflect on the fact that clinging needs an object. And that if the object is empty, that means clinging is dependent on something that is empty, illusory. Clinging must then be empty too.
 31. *The emptiness of parts and wholes*. Whenever there is a sense of solidity to a difficulty – whether it is a citta state, a bodily condition such as physical discomfort or illness, or an external situation that feels oppressive, such as busyness or a relationship difficulty – see if it is possible to directly view it as ‘empty’, based on the conviction that it is the mind that joins the dots to fabricate a solidified whole. Experiment with dots which are spatial regions connected to form a larger whole – for example, viewing a region of physical discomfort as comprising smaller areas of discomfort joined together by the mind. Experiment also with dots which are temporal moments connected to form a more continuous whole – seeing, for example, the individual instances of a particular emotion stitched together.

32. *'Neither one nor many'*. The Buddha taught that the body and all material forms are empty of inherent existence. According to its very nature, form is void of form. Matter itself is void. Voidness does not result from the destruction of matter, but the nature of matter is itself voidness. Both the neither-one-nor-many reasoning and the sevenfold reasoning are among the practices capable of revealing the emptiness of matter even at the most basic levels. Choose an object to view through the lens of this reasoning. Lightly reflect and recognize that it is clearly not one, for instance because it has parts. Then see that actually nothing that is really singular could exist. A partless particle is impossible, since nothing could be formed from such particles. If nothing that is really one can be found, this object now scrutinized cannot be really many. Since nothing that is truly one exists, there can be nothing that is really many, so all objects, being neither one nor many, lack true nature. All things lack inherent existence.
33. *Analysing walking and finding it empty*. Standing at any point, ready to walk, imagine and carefully consider the beginning of walking. See that it cannot begin in a moment when the body is stationary. Nor can it begin once in motion. Realize that there is no third option, so the beginning of walking cannot be found. Notice what effects it has to see this: walking has no findable beginning or ending; but it is not permanent either – it lacks inherent existence.
34. *Deepening mettā and compassion by fabricating less self*. After cultivating either mettā or compassion, bring in one of the emptiness ways of looking, and gently try to sustain it moment to moment, as you continue directing love to a being. One possibility is viewing all that you experience as you practise as anattā. The second dukkha method may be incorporated by repeatedly tuning in to the sense of clinging and relaxing it. Using the anicca characteristic, experiment to find which approaches best support the mettā or compassion.
35. *Searching for the object of negative feeling*. When there is some kind of negative feeling, such as anger or judgment, toward another, practise holding this person in the attention and asking, for instance, “Who exactly am I angry with?”. Notice what happens to your feelings about them when you view them as empty of inherent existence.
36. *Using the aggregates to recognize commonality*. Practise viewing an other – whatever your feelings toward them at that time – in terms of the aggregates. Khandha, literally means ‘heap’, and here it can be helpful to indeed view each aggregate as a collection – as a stream of momentary instances, or a collection of smaller parts such as the organs and elements that make up the body. As you contemplate each aggregate in the other, recognize at the same time that this aggregate or collection exists also in yourself. Even though there are differences, is it possible to see that there is no difference in essence between the aggregates ‘here’ and ‘there’?
37. *Viewing the object of love and compassion in different ways*. As you direct mettā or compassion to another, hold lightly in your awareness at the same time a knowledge of their mortality, and also of their vulnerability to all kinds of changing circumstances, inner and outer. Gently encourage this view to help open and deepen the flow of love. based on your own experience seeing the rapid impermanence of your own aggregates, view an other, as you direct love to them, through a lens that sees the momentary nature of their aggregates. Rather than an absence of connection, seeing their emptiness should support the opening of a beautiful and mystical quality of union and love.
38. *Exchanging self and other*. When there is a moment of happiness. practise tuning in to

- the experience and offering this happiness or pleasure to others. Practise also giving away an imagined experience of pleasure or happiness, as well as the causes of happiness that you are cultivating through practice. When there is some dukkha present, tune in to the experience, and then experiment with imagining that your taking it on relieves an other or others elsewhere of similar dukkha.
39. *Meditating on the mutual emptiness of consciousness and perception.* Hold any perception in attention. Then, based on your conviction from past insights into the emptiness of objects of perception, introduce the view of that object as ‘empty’. As you continue to do so, tune in as well to the sense of consciousness, of knowing, that goes with the perception in the moment. Gently introduce the understanding that this knowing is dependent on, and inseparable from, an empty known, so that it must also be empty. Alternatively, you may sustain the view of consciousness as ‘not me, not mine’ and then add the understanding that it is dependent on empty perception, so that it is empty too.
 40. *This moment is neither one nor many.* Focusing on a sense of the present moment, bring into the view the understanding that this moment cannot be one, since it must have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and these must occur at different times. Maintaining the focus on the present moment, gently reflect that if it did not have a beginning, middle, and end, it could not really exist. See also that this moment cannot be truly many. This ‘many’ would have to be comprised of moments that are truly one. Since no moment can exist without beginning and end, however, there can be no moments that are truly one which could be aggregated to form the many.
 41. *Diamond Slivers – this moment does not truly arise.* Hold the moment in attention with the understanding that, for a present moment considered to have inherent existence, all the possible modes of arising have been exhausted. Therefore neither the arising nor the abiding of this moment can possibly have inherent existence.
 42. *Approaches to the emptiness of time.* As is evident from the discussion in this chapter, it is possible to arrive at a realization of the voidness of time through many different means. Growing accustomed to the insight, a conviction is gradually established that time is empty; and this conviction can then be used in meditation as a platform for further ways of looking.
 43. *Meditating on the voidness of attention and of the elements of mind.* As the attention is held on the object, introduce into the way of looking the understanding that this object depends on this attention; and that conversely, this attention depends on this object. Allow the sense that they are therefore mutually dependent, inseparable, and mutually empty to permeate the way of looking.
 44. *Meditating on the mutual emptiness of subject, object, and time.* Choose an object, and begin to regard it as ‘empty’ or ‘just a perception’. begin to include also in the way of looking the understanding that mind is empty too, since it depends on the empty object. When you feel ready, you can then gently add the contemplation of the emptiness of time and the present moment
 45. *Contemplating the dependencies of saṅkhārā and consciousness.* The mutual dependencies of saṅkhārā – specifically here, intentions and the intentions to pay attention – can also be contemplated. as you hold attention on an object, you can tune in to the subtle sense of the intention to pay attention. Then, just as before, a way of looking can be sustained which understands that the object is empty because it depends on the intention, and that the intention is empty because it depends on the empty object. To this

- view may be added the understanding, as discussed, that consciousness is dependent on intention, and, also, that intention must be dependent on consciousness. It is also possible to delicately incorporate into the view the contemplation that saṅkhārā are dependent on avijjā, in other words on the conceiving of consciousness (or any kind of subject), object, and time (this moment and a next moment).
46. *Meditating on the emptiness of insight.* Choose any object of perception. For a little while sustain any insight way of looking at it that sees its emptiness. If you wish, you may also include insight into the emptiness of the mind that is looking. include the awareness of the insight way of looking. Then begin to include in the view an understanding of its emptiness too. This may rest on the understanding that it exists in time, but that time is empty. Or that the way of looking is dependent on and inseparable from the object it is directed at, which is an empty appearance. Or that it is dependent on and inseparable from consciousness, which is empty too.
47. *Viewing appearances, knowing that avijjā is void.* choose any object of perception and, focusing on that object, begin to view it through a lens that understands, from previous practice, that it is fabricated. Include especially the understanding that it is fabricated by avijjā. Begin to include in the way of looking the understanding that this avijjā operating right now must be empty also. The important thing here is at some point to sustain the viewing of appearances through a lens which silently understands: ‘The avijjā which fabricates these empty appearances is empty itself. These appearances are not really the product of a real ignorance.’
48. *Meditating on the emptiness of fabricating.* Begin to sustain a view that the object of perception is empty. When you feel ready, begin to gradually include in the way of looking the understanding that ignorance, consciousness, and time are all empty. This may be done in any order and through the means of your choice. start to include in the way of looking the implication that follows: that there is no real arising or ceasing, no thing that is really fabricated, and no real source of fabrication – so that fabrication itself must also be empty. Then, since the fabricated is empty, the Unfabricated must be empty too, as they are posited in relation to each other. Let any sense of holding to a conception of a real duality between the fabricated and Unfabricated collapse. Allow the attention to move in a relaxed way between various objects if you wish. Here too, notice the sense of things that this way of looking opens. And notice also the responses of the heart.

3 Meditation objects

3.1 40 subjects of meditation

The seven categories of the forty mediation subjects (enumerated in the Visuddhimagga) are:

1. The ten kasinas (dasa kasinani)
2. The ten kinds of foulness (dasa asubha)
3. The ten recollections (dasa anussatiyo)
4. The four divine abidings or four illimitables (catasso appamannayo)
5. The four immaterial states (cataro aruppa)
6. The one perception (eka sanna)

7. The one defining (or one analysis) (ekam vavatthanam)

These various meditation subjects that the Buddha prescribed for the development of serenity or calmness (samatha) have been collected in the commentaries into a set called the forty kammattana.

Kasina (things that one can behold directly)

1. Earth. (paṭhavī kasiṇa, pṛthivī kṛtsna)
2. Water (āpo kasiṇa, ap kṛtsna).
3. Fire (tejo kasiṇa, tejas kṛtsna)
4. Air, wind (vāyo kasiṇa, vāyu kṛtsna)
5. Yellow (pīta kasiṇa, pīta kṛtsna). See also the three treasures where yellow represents the Buddha, or taking shelter and protection in oneness, the absolute, unconditioned nature of all things
6. Blue (nīla kasiṇa, nīla kṛtsna). See also the three treasures where blue represents the Dharma or Dhamma (teachings).
7. Red (lohita kasiṇa, lohita kṛtsna). See also the treasures jewels where red represents the Sangha (the supportive community).
8. White (odāta kasiṇa, avadāta kṛtsna).
9. Enclosed space, holes or apertures (ākāsa kasiṇa, ākāśa kṛtsna).
10. Bright light or consciousness (viññāṇa kasiṇa, vijñāna kṛtsna).

Asubha (objects of repulsion)

11. Swollen or bloated corpse (Uddhumātaka). One of the ten kinds of foulness from which meditation on these is aimed at reducing sensual lust by gaining a clear perception of the repulsiveness of the body.
12. Discoloured, bluish, or livid corpse (Vinilaka). One of the ten kinds of foulness from which meditation on these is aimed at reducing sensual lust by gaining a clear perception of the repulsiveness of the body.
13. Festering corpse (Vipubbaka).
14. Fissured or cut up corpse (Vichiddaka).
15. Gnawed corpse (Vikkhayittaka).
16. Dismembered, or hacked corpse (Hatavikkhittaka).
17. Scattered, corpse (Vikkhittaka).
18. Bleeding corpse (Lohitaka).
19. Worm infested corpse (Puluvaka).
20. Skeleton stage of a corpse

Anussati (recollections)

21. Buddha.
22. Dharma.
23. Sangha.
24. Morality. Śīla.
25. Liberality cāga.
26. The wholesome attributes of Devas.
27. The body kāya.
28. Death.
29. The breath or breathing ānāpāna.
30. Peace.

Brahmavihāra (Four sublime qualities or divine abidings)

31. Unconditional kindness and goodwill mettā.
32. Compassion karuna.
33. Sympathetic joy over others success mudita.
34. Evenmindedness, equanimity, calm and composure upekkha.

Āruppa (formless or immaterial states)

35. Infinite space.
36. Infinite consciousness.
37. Infinite nothingness.
38. Neither perception nor non:perception.

Eka sanna (The one perception)

39. Perception of disgust of food aharepatikulasanna. Saññā perception. Or the one perception.

Ekam vavatthanam (The one defining or one analysis)

40. Analysis of the four elements earth catudhatuvavavatthana (pathavi), water (apo), fire (tejo), air (vayo). Vavatthāna analysis of the four elements. Or the one defining.

3.2 Physiological meditation objects**Senses**

Definition 3.1. Āyatana (Pali), ayatana (transl.) [Noun]
Common translations: Sense base, sense-media, sense sphere

Intuitions: There are six internal sense bases (Pali: *ajjhakkāni āyatanāni*; also known as, “organs”, “gates”, “doors”, “powers” or “roots”) and six external sense bases (Pali: *bāhirāni āyatanāni* or “sense objects” also known as *vishaya* or “domains”). These correspond to the five familiar to traditional Western psychology (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch) with cognition of mental objects (thoughts, images, and mental perceptions) as the sixth. Less standard translations of *āyatana* better capture the sixth sense base: ‘stretch’, ‘extent’, ‘reach’, ‘compass’; ‘region’, ‘locus’, ‘occasion’; ‘doing’, ‘working’, ‘performance’; ‘sphere of perception or sense’, ‘object of thought’, ‘sense-organ and object’; ‘relation’, ‘order’.

It may be useful to contemplate the cessation of senses, particularly how they devolve during the dying process:

1. Taste — cessation can decline relatively early in the process of dying. People may lose their appetite as their bodily functions deteriorate
2. Smell — cessation occurs when breathing begins to fail
3. Sight — cessation occurs when blood flow into the head begins to cease
4. Touch and muscular proprioception — cessation occurs when blood drains from the skin and limbs
5. Hearing — cessation only occurs after the brain loses function

Systems of human biology

Although the order of evolutionary development of our biological systems is not known, and many likely evolved in tandem, it may be useful to hypothesize on what systems are involved in the earliest and most unconscious levels of our reactive mechanisms.

1. **Basic Cellular Functions:** The earliest forms of life were likely single-celled organisms that carried out basic functions such as metabolism, reproduction, and response to stimuli. These functions laid the foundation for the development of more complex systems.
2. **Circulatory System:** Simple circulatory systems evolved early to transport nutrients and gases within multicellular organisms. Over time, more complex circulatory systems with specialized vessels and pumping structures like hearts evolved to support larger and more active animals.
3. **Nervous System:** Basic nervous systems evolved to allow organisms to respond to their environment. Nerve cells (neurons) allowed for communication and coordination between different parts of the body. Over time, nervous systems became more centralized, leading to the development of brains and more complex sensory and motor functions.
4. **Muscular System:** As organisms evolved to move more efficiently, the need for specialized muscles arose. Initially, simple contractile cells allowed for basic movement, but as organisms became more complex, specialized muscle tissues developed to enable more precise and powerful movement.
5. **Skeletal System:** The need for structural support and protection led to the development of simple skeletal structures in early organisms. Over time, these structures became more complex, evolving into the bones and cartilage found in modern vertebrates.

6. **Respiratory System:** As organisms grew larger and more active, they required more efficient ways to exchange gases with the environment. Simple respiratory structures, such as gills and tracheae, evolved into more complex systems like lungs.
7. **Digestive System:** Early organisms likely absorbed nutrients directly from their environment. As organisms grew larger and more complex, specialized structures for breaking down and absorbing nutrients evolved, leading to the development of digestive systems with specialized organs.
8. **Endocrine System:** Basic hormonal signaling likely evolved early to regulate essential processes like growth, metabolism, and reproduction. As organisms became more complex, specialized endocrine glands developed to secrete hormones that regulate a wide range of functions.
9. **Immune System:** Simple defense mechanisms against pathogens and injuries evolved early. Over time, these mechanisms became more sophisticated and specific, leading to the development of immune systems capable of recognizing and responding to a wide range of threats.
10. **Urinary System:** The need to regulate internal fluid balance and eliminate waste products became more crucial as organisms evolved. Simple excretory structures evolved into more complex urinary systems, including specialized organs like kidneys.
11. **Reproductive System:** Early organisms reproduced asexually through simple cell division. As organisms became more complex, sexual reproduction evolved, leading to the development of specialized reproductive organs and systems for producing and delivering gametes.
12. **Integumentary System:** Basic protective coverings, like cell membranes, evolved early to shield organisms from the environment. Over time, more complex integumentary structures, including skin, hair, and nails, developed to provide further protection, insulation, and sensory functions.
13. **Sensory System:** Early organisms likely had basic sensory structures to detect changes in their environment. As organisms evolved, specialized sensory organs, such as eyes and ears, developed to gather more detailed information from the environment.

3.3 Cognitive meditation objects

Brahmavihārā and Pīti

Definition 3.2. cattāri brahmavihārā (Pali), catvāro brahmavihārāḥ (Skt.), brahmavihara (transl.)

Common translations: sublime attitudes, four immeasurables, four divine abodes, four divine emotions, four sublime attitudes, four divine dwellings

Etymology: Literal translation is “abodes of brahma”, Brahmavihārā may be parsed as “Brahma”, and “vihāra” which is often rendered into English as “sublime” or “divine abodes”.

Intuition:

The brahmavihārās are:

1. Loving-kindness or benevolence (Pāli: mettā, Sanskrit: maitrī) is active good will

towards all. Attitude that takes others wellness as a motive.

2. Compassion or care (Pāli and Sanskrit: karuṇā) results from mettā, it is identifying the suffering of others as one's own. Commitment to work to alleviate suffering.
3. Sympathetic or empathetic joy (Pāli and Sanskrit: muditā): is the feeling of joy because others are happy, even if one did not contribute to it.
4. Equanimity or impartiality (Pāli: upekkhā, Sanskrit: upekṣā): is even-mindedness and serenity, treating everyone impartially. View of all sentient beings as meriting our concern.

A wholesome state of mind is one without any tensions or constrictions. The collection of brahmavihārā leave one with the sense that all sentient beings are of equal importance and there should be no focus on self. Perceiving things in this way lead one to better moral engagement with the world.

Definition 3.3. Pīti (Pali), prīti (Skt.), piti (transl.)

Common translations: joy, rapture, delight, pleasure

Etymology: Inherited from Sanskrit, from Proto-Indo-Iranian priHtīš (“pleasurable sensation”), from Proto-Indo-European préyHtis, from preyH- (“to please”). Cognate with Avestan (friti, “prayer”)

Intuition: Piti is a joyful saṅkhāra (conditioned formation) that is associated with no object, so the practitioner is not attaining it by desire. Pīti is a stimulating, exciting and energizing quality, as opposed to the calmness of sukha. Both pīti and sukha are born of bodily seclusion and mental quietude in first jhāna, then are born of focused concentration (samādhi) in the second jhāna but only sukha is sustained in the third jhāna while pīti fades away in the course of cultivating pure, mindful equanimity (upekkhāsatiipārisuddhi).

Quotes:

“Great king, suppose a skilled bath attendant or his apprentice were to pour soap-powder into a metal basin, sprinkle it with water, and knead it into a ball, so that the ball of soap-powder be pervaded by moisture, encompassed by moisture, suffused with moisture inside and out, yet would not trickle. In the same way, great king, the bhikkhu drenches, steep, saturates, and suffuses his body with the rapture and happiness born of seclusion, so that there is no part of his entire body which is not suffused by this rapture and happiness. This, great king, is a visible fruit of recluseship more excellent and sublime than the previous ones.”

(DN 2.78)

Five remembrances

1. I am subject to aging, have not gone beyond aging.
2. I am subject to illness, have not gone beyond illness.
3. I am subject to death, have not gone beyond death.
4. I will grow different, separate from all that is dear and appealing to me.
5. I am the owner of my actions, heir to my actions, born of my actions, related through my actions, and have my actions as my arbitrator. Whatever I do, for good or for evil,

to that will I fall heir.

Modes of attention: probing vs receiving

The attention can work in a way where it ‘moves toward’ that point and probes it, penetrating that small area of sensation, like an arrow or a laser beam. Alternatively, at other times, it can be more useful to encourage a more ‘receptive’ mode of working, to let the awareness ‘receive’ the breath sensations. Here the breath may be conceived of, and thus perceived, as ‘coming toward’ the awareness, as opposed to the other way around. Rather than being separate modes, these two constitute more the poles of a spectrum.

Note 3.4.

Attention as a pinball machine, galton board, generative flow network

Energy is constantly being dispensed at certain mental locations that are abstractly associated to thoughts, concepts, people, entities, etc. The interaction and configuration of active regions generates a mixture of essences which influences perception and thoughts. There are many parameters to consider in this model of attention:

1. The number of active pinballs at a given moment.
2. The mental location that pinballs are habitually, reflexively, or intentionally being dispensed.
3. The size or energy of different pinballs being dispensed at certain mental locations.
4. The frequency of pinballs being dispensed at certain locations or in general.
5. The background awareness of the board and the multiple moving pinballs.
6. How the different pinballs are interacting, mixing, and effecting perception of each other. What is the generative effect of attending to these different mental locations.

After introspection, we may choose to dispense more energy, more frequently at locations of concepts for anicca, fabrication, emptiness, equanimity, or compassion, and less frequently at specific people, worries or concerns. We can even enrich a single concept, like ‘awakening’, with all the sub concepts it encompasses, then habitually feed that singular concept with a steady stream of energy.

The doctrine of the two truths, particulars vs. universals

The doctrine of the two truths is a framework that distinguishes between two levels of reality, providing insights into the nature of existence. These two truths are known as conventional truth (*samvrti-satya*) and ultimate truth (*paramartha-satya*). The conventional truth involves the way things appear to ordinary perception and language. In this realm, concepts such as individual entities, phenomena, and experiences are valid and serve practical purposes. However, they are considered to be provisional and not reflective of the ultimate nature of reality. The ultimate truth transcends the limitations of ordinary language and conceptualization and reveals the interconnected, interdependent, and transient nature of all phenomena, emphasizing the absence of inherent existence.

Particulars refer to individual phenomena, specific instances, or discrete elements. In contrast, universals encompass general principles, overarching truths, or shared characteristics

that extend beyond individual instances. - The engaged bodhicitta masters perceptual skills on particulars, the aspirational bodhicitta masters inferential skills on universals

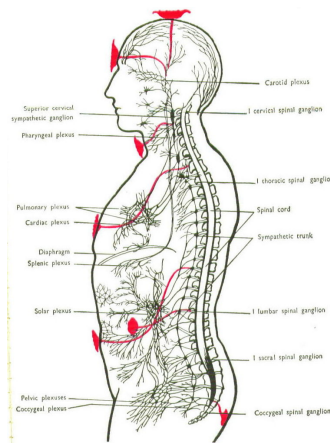
The subtle body and the energy body

A subtle body is a “quasi material” aspect of the human body, being neither solely physical nor solely spiritual. The subtle body, often referred to as the “mental body” or “mindstream,” signifies the continuum of consciousness that persists through various lifetimes. According to Buddhist teachings, the subtle body carries the imprints of past actions (karma) and experiences, shaping the individual’s trajectory across the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth (samsara).

The energy body, in the Buddhist context, is closely associated with the understanding of vital energy or life force, often referred to as ”prana” or ”chi.” While not explicitly defined in anatomical terms, the concept implies the subtle flow of energy within the body that influences mental and physical well-being. Practices such as meditation and mindfulness aim to harmonize and cultivate this energy, fostering a balanced and healthy state of being.

Mindful observation will reveal that any craving or clinging is always accompanied by, and reflected in, blocks and knots in the subtle body. Insight cuts that on which Duhkha depends. And Duhkha depends on craving. Thus insight is any way of looking that releases craving. As the insight and emptiness practices are developed, they can also be used at times to deliberately undo the craving that is mirrored in the knots in the energy body. Craving brings a contraction of the body and mind (materiality-mentality). In the usual formulation of dependent arising, though, the ordering of these two links might seem to suggest that the direction of causality runs from materiality-mentality to craving, not the other way round. Actually, the two links feed each other. And because they do, a sub-loop is created between them that can easily set up a vicious cycle.

Name	Sanskrit (Translation)	Location	No. of Petals	Modern Colour	Seed Syllable	Description
Root	Muladhara (Root Support)	Base of the spine	4	Red	Lam (earth)	Grounding, stability, survival
Sacral	Svadhithana (One’s Own Abode)	Root of sexual organs	6	Orange	Vam (water)	Creativity, sexuality, emotions
Solar Plexus	Manipura (City of Jewels)	Navel	10	Yellow	Ram (fire)	Personal power, confidence
Heart	Anahata (Unstruck)	Heart	12	Green	Yam (air)	Love, compassion, connection
Throat	Vishuddha (Purification)	Throat	16	Blue	Ham (space)	Communication, self-expression
Third Eye	Ajna (Perception)	Between eyebrows	2	Indigo	Om	Intuition, insight, imagination
Crown	Sahasrara (Thousand-petaled)	Crown	1000	Violet	Om or Silence	Spiritual connection, consciousness



Note 3.5.

Energy-body awareness is the integration of the physical felt sense of the body and its homogeneity with attention and experience. Of interest is refining the control of the subtle musculature tone to respond and coax the energy-body into something pleasant, similar to regulating temperature. Play or experiment with posture; expansion and contraction of the body and attentional space, energizing and relaxing the body and attentional space, currents of energy in the body, ways of breathing that feel good and move toward samadhi. Notice positive qualities of your posture; upright, noble, balanced, alert; reflected in the citta (mind). Consider what can be changed to improve the pleasantness of the posture. Various yogic practices, like kundalini, tantra, hatha, and kriya yoga, use movement and subtle contractions and expansions of muscles to distribute energy through the various chakras and regions of the physical body. When the feminine kundalini shakti rises to the crown chakra, it is believed to unite with the masculine Shiva, producing states of samadhi.

Definition 3.6. Kosha (transl.), kośa (Skt.) [Noun]

Common translations: Sheath, casing

Intuitions: The koshas are considered the energetic layers of your body that surround your soul. A covering of the Atman, or Self according to Vedantic philosophy.

1. The physical gross body
2. The subtle body:
 - (a) The five senses of action (hands, feet, mouth, genitals, and anus)
 - (b) The five senses of knowledge (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin)
 - (c) The five pranas or vital breaths (vyana vayu, samana vayu, udana vayu, apana vaya, prana vayu)
3. The mind (manas)
4. The intellect (Buddhi)
5. The causal body, characterized by “emptiness”, “ignorance” and “darkness”
6. The great-causal body, the knowledge of “I am” that cannot be described, the state after Ignorance and Knowledge, or Turiya state

4 Maps

4.1 Four stages of awakening

1. A stream-enterer (sotāpanna) is free from:
 - Identity view (Pali: sakkāya-diṭṭhi), the belief that there is an unchanging self or soul in the five impermanent skandhas
 - Attachment to rites and rituals
 - Doubt about the teachings

2. A once-returner (sakadāgāmin) has greatly attenuated:
 - Sensual desire
 - Ill will
3. A non-returner (anāgāmi) is free from:
 - Sensual desire
 - Ill will
4. An arahant is free from all of the five lower fetters and the five higher fetters, which are:
 - Attachment to the four meditative absorptions, which have form (rupa jhana)
 - Attachment to the four formless absorptions (ārūpa jhana)
 - Conceit
 - Restlessness
 - Ignorance

Note 4.1.

Both the stream-enterer and the once-returner have abandoned the first three fetters. The stream-enterer and once-returner are distinguished by the fact that the once-returner has weakened lust, hate, and delusion to a greater degree.

Stream entry appears to closely correspond with the realization of reaching a critical point in one's practice where they have restructured their nature (perspectives, lifestyle, value systems) to a degree that their development on the path becomes certain to happen.

The Four planes of liberation

(according to the [Sutta Piṭaka](#)^[note 1])

stage's "fruit" ^[note 2]	abandoned fetters	rebirth(s) until suffering's end
stream-enterer	1. identity view (<i>Anatman</i>) 2. doubt in Buddha 3. ascetic or ritual rules	<i>up to seven rebirths in human or heavenly realms</i>
once-returned ^[note 3]		<i>once more as a human</i>
non-returned		<i>once more in a heavenly realm (Pure Abodes)</i>
arahant	4. sensual desire 5. ill will 6. material-rebirth desire 7. immaterial-rebirth desire 8. conceit 9. restlessness 10. ignorance	<i>no rebirth</i>

Source: Ñāṇamoli & Bodhi (2001), *Middle-Length Discourses*, pp. 41-43.

Note 4.2.

The Buddha classified seven different kinds of people that awaken.

1. Dhamma follower. Stream enterer with path, *sottapana*.
2. Faith follower. Stream enterer with path, *sottapana*.
3. Liberated by view. Stream enterer with fruition, right view.
4. Liberated by faith. Stream enterer with fruition, *sottapana*, *satagama*, *aragami*.
5. Body witness. First four *jhanas*, *ayatana*s, cessation, could be stream enterer or not, attains full awakening.
6. Liberated by wisdom. First four *jhanas*, attain *nibanna*, drop all fetters, attains full awakening, *arahat*.
7. Liberated both ways, four *jhanas*, *ayatana*s, cessation, drops all fetters, attains full awakening, *arahat*.

Definition 4.3. *Samyojana* (Pali), *saṃyojana* (Skt.) [Noun]

Common translations: Fetter

Intuitions: A mental fetter, chain, or bond that shackles a sentient being to *saṃsāra*, the cycle of lives with *dukkha*. By cutting through all fetters, one attains *nibbāna*.

1. Belief in a self (Pali: sakkāya-ditṭhi)
2. Doubt or uncertainty, especially about the Buddha's awakeness (vicikicchā)
3. Attachment to rites and rituals (sīlabbata-parāmāsa)
4. Sensual desire (kāmacchando)
5. Ill will (vyāpādo or byāpādo)
6. Lust for material existence, lust for material rebirth (rūparāgo)
7. Lust for immaterial existence, lust for rebirth in a formless realm (arūparāgo)
8. Conceit (māna)
9. Restlessness (uddhacca)
10. Ignorance (avijjā)

Definition 4.4. Āsava (Pali), Āsrava (Skt.) [Noun]

Common translations: Taints, mental defilements, karmic predilections or propensities

Etymology: The commentaries derive the word from a root “su” meaning “to flow.” Scholars differ as to whether the flow implied by the prefix ā is inward or outward; hence some have rendered it as “influxes” or “influences,” others as “outflows” or “effluents.”

Intuitions: inflow, influx, influence; mental bias or canker, festering, cankers that keep one bound to the world of samsāra. Can be interpreted as viruses that replicate and strengthen the parasitic nature of ignorance. Asavas are only completely destroyed after certain attainments (i.e. Kāmāsava by Anāgāmi, Bhavāsava by Arhatship), where ignorance is replaced by right view. Asavas are implicit in the meaning of avijjā (ignorance). The descriptions of the āsavas overlap with, and replicate, the lists of types of craving and of clinging.

1. Kāmāsava - karmic propensities for sensual pleasures
2. Bhavāsava - karmic propensities for existence
3. Diṭṭhāsava - karmic propensities for a viewpoint or perspective
4. Avijjāsava - karmic propensities for ignorance

Quotes:

“When one attends wisely, unarisen taints do not arise and arisen taints are abandoned. [...] There are taints that should be abandoned by seeing. There are taints that should be abandoned by restraining. There are taints that should be abandoned by applying. There are taints that should be abandoned by enduring. There are taints that should be abandoned by avoiding. There are taints that should be abandoned by removing. There are taints that should be abandoned by developing.”

(Sabbāsavasutta, verse 2)

Note 4.5.

Mental fetters (*samyojana*), taints (*āsava*), and hindrances (*nīvaraṇāṇi*) all bound us to suffering and ultimately to *samsara* but operate at different levels of our experience and psyche.

Hindrances effect us at the mundane level of habits and the daily interaction or obstacles that prevent us from pursuing our practice.

Mental fetters are intrinsic aspects of human nature, resulting from instincts that contribute to our evolutionary fitness, i.e. our survival and reproduction abilities.

Taints operate on the karmic level and stem from trauma from our current life path, generational trauma, our inherited and developed personality traits, and karma from our past lives.

Definition 4.6. *Nibbāna* (Pali), *nirvāṇa* (Skt.), *nibanna*, *nirvana* (transl.) [Noun]

Common translations: Liberation

Etymology: interpreting *nir* is a negative, and *va* as “to blow”., giving a meaning of “blowing out”, “extinguish” or “quenching”.

Intuitions: *Nirvana*, the quenching of the burning mind, is the highest aim of the Theravada tradition. In the Mahayana tradition, the highest goal is Buddhahood, in which the Buddha helps liberate beings from *samsāra* by teaching the Buddhist path.

Nirvana has commonly been interpreted as the extinction of the “three fires” or “three poisons”, greed (*raga*), aversion (*dvesha*) and ignorance (*moha*). *Nirvana* has also been claimed by some scholars to be identical with *anatta* (non-self) and *sunyata* (emptiness) states though this contested. Other interpretations were given, such as the absence of the weaving (*vana*) of activity of the mind, the elimination of desire, and escape from the woods, cq. the five *skandhas* or aggregates. Buddhist Theravada scholastic tradition identifies two types of *nirvana*: *sopadhishesa-nirvana* literally “*nirvana* with a remainder”, attained and maintained during life, and *parinirvana* or *anupadhishesa-nirvana*, meaning “*nirvana* without remainder” or final *nirvana*, achieved on death, a death which is not followed by a rebirth or reincarnation in (according to Buddhist beliefs) the usual way.

When preliminary *nibbana* with substrate occurs (that is, *nibbana* of a living being), constructive consciousness, that is, the house-builder, is completely destroyed and no new formations will be constructed. However, *sankharas* in the sense of constructed consciousness, which exists as a ‘karmically-resultant-consciousness’ (*vipāka viññāna*), continue to exist. Each liberated individual produces no new karma, but preserves a particular individual personality which is the result of the traces of his or her karmic heritage. The very fact that there is a psycho-physical substrate during the remainder of an arahant’s lifetime shows the continuing effect of karma

Quotes:

“ Crosslegged he sat under a tree, which later became known as the Bodhi Tree, the “Tree of Enlightenment” or “Tree of Wisdom,” on the bank of the river *Nerañjarâ*, at *Gayâ* (now known as *Buddhagayâ*), making the final effort with the inflexible resolution: “Though only my skin, sinews, and bones remain, and my blood and flesh dry up and wither away, yet will I never stir from this seat

until I have attained full enlightenment (sammâ-sambodhi).” So indefatigable in effort, so unflagging in his devotion was he, and so resolute to realize truth and attain full enlightenment.

Applying himself to the “mindfulness of in-and-out breathing” (ânâpâna sati), the Bodhisatta entered upon and dwelt in the first meditative absorption (jhâna; Skt. dhyâna). By gradual stages he entered upon and dwelt in the second, third, and fourth jhânas. Thus cleansing his mind of impurities, with the mind thus composed, he directed it to the knowledge of recollecting past births (pubbenivâsânussati-ñâ^a). This was the first knowledge attained by him in the first watch of the night. Then the Bodhisatta directed his mind to the knowledge of the disappearing and reappearing of beings of varied forms, in good states of experience, and in states of woe, each faring according to his deeds (cutûpapâtañâna). This was the second knowledge attained by him in the middle watch of the night. Next he directed his mind to the knowledge of the eradication of the taints (âsavakkhayañâna).

He understood as it really is: “This is suffering (dukkha), this is the arising of suffering, this is the cessation of suffering, this is the path leading to the cessation of suffering.” He understood as it really is: “These are defilements (âsavas), this is the arising of defilements, this is the cessation of defilements, this is the path leading to the cessation of defilements.”

Knowing thus, seeing thus, his mind was liberated from the defilements of sense pleasures (kâmâsava), of becoming (bhavâsava), and of ignorance (avijjâsava). When his mind was thus liberated, there came the knowledge, “liberated” and he understood: “Destroyed is birth, the noble life (brahmacariya) has been lived, done is what was to be done, there is no more of this to come” (meaning, there is no more continuity of the mind and body, no more becoming, rebirth). This was the third knowledge attained by him in the last watch of the night. This is known as tevijjâ (Skt. trividyâ), threefold knowledge.

Thereupon he spoke these words of victory:

‘Seeking but not finding the house builder, I hurried through the round of many births: Painful is birth ever and again.

O house builder, you have been seen; You shall not build the house again. Your rafters have been broken up, Your ridgepole is demolished too.

My mind has now attained the unformed Nibbâna And reached the end of every sort of craving.’ ”

(Dhammapada, verse 153)

4.2 Seven Factors of Awakening

Definition 4.7. Satta Bojjhaṅgā (Pali), sapta bodhyanga (Skt.)

Common translations: Seven factors of awakening, enlightenment factors

Intuitions: Similar to the jhanas, these wholesome states mind also arise from a cessation of the five hindrances. There is close similarity to these factors of awakening and the jhanic mental factors.

1. Mindfulness - sati (Pali), smṛti (Skt). Mindfulness of the four foundations of mindfulness: the body, feeling, intention or formations, and consciousness. Mindfulness of dhammas (phenomena), the four noble truths, the seven awakening factors, five aggregates, five hindrances.
2. Investigation of the nature of reality - dhamma vicaya (Pali), dharmapraṇīśana (Skt).
3. Energy - viriya (Pali), vīrya (Skt). Also determination, effort.
4. Joy or rapture - pīti (Pali), prīti (Skt).
5. Relaxation or tranquility - passaddhi (Pali), praśrabdhi (Skt). Tranquility of both body and mind.
6. Concentration - samādhi (Pali, Skt). A calm, one-pointed state of mind, or “bringing the buried latencies or saṃskāras into full view”
7. Equanimity - upekkhā (Pali), upekṣhā (Skt). To accept reality as-it-is (yathā-bhūta) without craving or aversion.

4.3 Map of Saṅkhitta Dhamma Sutta (MN 111)

<https://www.themindingcentre.org/dharmafarer/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/46.6-Sankhitta-Dhamma-S-a-63-piya.pdf>

<https://neuroticgradientdescent.blogspot.com/2023/08/there-are-only-few-suttas-where-buddha.html>

https://library.dhammasukha.org/uploads/1/2/8/6/12865490/a_guide_to_twim.pdf

1. Cultivate the Jhānic factors: directing attention, sustaining attention, physical and emotional tranquility/contentment (Happiness or sukha), physical sensations (generally pleasant though not uniformly so, joy or pīti), and one-pointedness of mind
2. Set aside the hindrances to Jhāna: sensory desire, aversion, ill-will, sloth-and-torpor, doubt, restlessness-and-worry
3. Take Jhāna factors as the basis, apply them to the brahmavihārās (loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative-joy, and equanimity)
4. Take equanimity as the basis, apply this clear state of seeing to the four foundations of mindfulness: the body, feeling tones, mental formations, Dhamma factors. The dhamma factors relate to seeing the three marks in the five skandhas.

4.4 Moksha in Tantra and Shaktism

A deeper attractive force toward awakening can be cultivated by exploring alternatives to the Theravada Buddhism path outlined in this notebook. In particular, certain Tantric Buddhist and Hindu traditions are known to antidote certain nihilistic traps found in the Theravada map. In particular, the non-dual soteriology of Advaita Vedānta, Kashmir Shaivism, and imaginal practices of Vajrayāna provide a more affirmative relationship with the illusory nature of reality than what is found in Theravada teachings.

Instead of a focus on dissolving the distinction between subject and object of perception through an examination of the five aggregates, Advaita Vedānta and Kashmir Shaivism take non-duality

as a starting point. The Trika Shaivism of Kashmir describes the three aspects of this non-dual experience as Nara, the individual, Shakti, the Universal Energy (divine feminine), and Shiva, the Transcendental Being (divine masculine). There are three corresponding paths associated with them, the way of Shiva, the way of Shakti, and the way of the individual, where practitioners can freely modify their path depending on their needs. Shakti can be further broken down into kriya-shakti (action power), jnana-shakti (knowledge power), iccha-shakti (will power). Instead of interpreting the world as an illusion or Maya in opposition to the true reality of Brahmin, we can interpret Brahmin as the trinity of these forces and develop a deeper appreciation of Maya and even Samsara. Instead of denouncing reality as being empty of inherent existence, we can affirm reality and its suffering as the creative expression of Shakti and admire the emptiness of dependent arising as the multiplicity of Shiva.

Although rites and rituals are considered fetters to be dropped in Theravada Buddhism, the practices of deity yoga found in Tantric Buddhist and Hindu schools can bring the practitioner closer to reality. A common example is the worship of Shakti personified as the powerful divine mother Kali, and Shiva personified as Vishnu. In non-dual Shaivism, Bhavana is described as a cultivation process or meditation practice where through imagination what already exists in the practitioner but is not evident is made evident. This conception of imagination differs from our standard understanding in that it is more about revealing what is hidden in us, thus is understood as an 'imaginal' practice instead. Illusions are usually understood as things that can be negated after further enquiry, whereas true reality is a perception that remains true even after deep scrutiny. Deep spiritual experiences are often of the latter type and the visions and messages attained through Tantric practices can often feel realer than the conventional experiences that make up our normative sense of real. The highs from these states and the lows from their come downs, as well as the craving to return to spiritual ecstasy, is common in Shaktism and benefits from the practical equanimity training of Theravada Buddhism. It is also worth mentally noting a distinction between practices that are directly related to development on the path and practices that are helpful for enduring and coping with struggles that arise.

4.5 Satori in Zen

4.6 Personal map

1. Ānāpāna contributes to cultivation of samahdhi related jhanic factors (directing attention, sustaining attention, one-pointedness of mind) as well as antidoting restlessness related hindrances.
2. Jhana meditations for cultivation of pitti and other jhanic factors (directing attention, sustaining attention, physical and emotional tranquility/contentment, physical sensations, and one-pointedness of mind). Pleasant and imaginal aspects of jhana contribute to reinforcing habitual practice.
3. Mindfulness contributes to samahdhi related jhanic factors as well as interoception of fast-clenching tanha and proliferation of dukkha. Insight ways of seeing the second mark (dukkha) in all five skandhas. Mindfulness practices on dependent arising and emptiness contribute insight ways of seeing the third mark (no-self) in all five skandhas.
4. Vipassanā contributes to insight ways of seeing the first mark (impermanence) and the third mark (no-self) in all five skandhas as well as the cultivation of equanimity.
5. Core transformation and forgiveness meditation contributes to overcoming various hindrances and defilements through investigation and letting go. Core transformation and

core states naturally transition into jhanic states, contributing to the cultivation of jhanic factors applied to brahmaviharas (loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, equanimity).

6. Various on and off-the-cushion practices for applying equanimity to the first three of the four foundations of mindfulness (the body, feeling tones, mental formations, dhamma factors). Various practices for understanding and developing self-discipline to overcome five hindrances.
7. Various forms of yoga (Kriya, Hatha, Tantric, Kundalini, Diety) and exercise to antidote hindrances of sloth-and-torpor, restlessness-and-worry, and other aversions to practice and emptiness realizations.