



Patthāna Light

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Ñāṇavamsa

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Preface..... | 3 |
| Introduction: The Abhidhamma | 4 |
| 1. Root Condition (<i>Hetu Paccaya</i>)..... | 7 |
| 2. Object condition (<i>Ārammaṇa paccayo</i>) | 9 |
| 3. Predominance Condition (<i>Adhipati paccaya</i>) | 12 |
| 4+5: Proximity Condition and Contiguity Condition (<i>Anantara paccaya</i> and <i>Samanantara paccaya</i>) | 16 |
| 6. Conascence Condition (<i>Sahajāta paccaya</i>)..... | 20 |
| 7. Mutuality Condition (<i>Aññamañña paccaya</i>)..... | 23 |
| 8. Dependence Condition (<i>Nissaya paccaya</i>) | 24 |
| 9. Strong Dependence Condition (<i>Upanissaya paccaya</i>)..... | 27 |
| 10. Prenascence Condition (<i>Purejāta</i>) | 31 |
| 11. Postnascence Condition (<i>Pacchājāta paccaya</i>) | 33 |
| 12. Repetition Condition (<i>Āsevana paccayo</i>)..... | 35 |
| 13. Kamma Condition (<i>Kamma paccayo</i>)..... | 37 |
| 14. Resultant Condition (<i>Vipāka paccaya</i>) | 41 |
| 15. Nutriment Condition (<i>Āhāra paccaya</i>) | 43 |
| 16. Faculty Condition (<i>Indriya paccaya</i>) | 47 |
| 17. Jhāna Condition (<i>Jhāna paccaya</i>) | 50 |
| 18. Path condition (<i>Magga paccaya</i>) | 54 |
| 19+20. Association Condition and Dissociation Condition (<i>Sampayutta Paccaya</i> and <i>Vippayutta Paccaya</i>) | 58 |
| 21+22+23+24. Presence, absence, disappearance and non-disappearance conditions (<i>Atthi, Natthi, Vigata, Avigata Paccaya</i>) | 63 |
| Abbreviations | 67 |

Preface

The title of this book ‘Paṭṭhāna light’ reflects its content very well. It is a book concerning what is called in Theravada Buddhism ‘Conditional Relations’, a profound Abhidhamma doctrine about the complex interrelationships between different phenomena that can be seen at the level of the ultimate realities. Canonical teaching of Paṭṭhāna is very deep and these days remains alive mostly only in Myanmar, and for the large part of it in Myanmar language. For this reason, it is not easy to get access to it for the one who is in other parts of the world. There is not so much literature available in English regarding the topic, and among what there is, the one who cannot give a full time to studies will find the texts quite complex and difficult to understand.

This book is light. Although it does discuss the ultimate realities, it does so ‘lightly’ and the emphasis is mainly on throwing light on the practical application of the knowledge.

The book is meant for a wide range of people with a varying knowledge of Abhidhamma – for those just getting introduced, for those with some more experience and for the experienced ones who are interested in different or new perspectives on that what they are already familiar with.

A very rudimentary understanding of Abhidhamma will make the reading smoother, but still, some parts will go into the ‘deeper’ parts, which a beginner might find somewhat difficult to follow – in that case, it is perfectly fine to skip them. The main purpose of the teaching is to show different ways of how Paṭṭhāna knowledge can be applied in our day-to-day life making our lifestyles more wholesome and more beautiful. To fulfil this purpose, the book is packed with many inspiring and helpful examples and stories, some of which are known to the Myanmar public mainly, and have not reached outside Myanmar till now.

We hope this book helps you to increase your knowledge and understanding of Dhamma, Abhidhamma and Paṭṭhāna, that it reveals their matchless beauty as well as inspires further studies of the subject, and by making clear some very important aspects of the path will assist you on the way to Nibbāna.

Introduction: The Abhidhamma

Our Lord Buddha taught the Dhamma for around 45 years after he attained enlightenment together with the power of omniscience (*sabbaññutañāṇa*): the power of knowing everything proper to be known, the power of knowing the proper way to present the teachings, and the power of knowing the needs of the listeners according to their faculties. His teachings can be divided into three groups, called *piṭaka*: the collections of the teachings or texts to be learned.

The First collection, the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, is the book of discipline, its concern is morality. The *Sutta Piṭaka*, the second collection, consists of the Buddha's discourses spoken by Him and sometimes his disciples on various occasions. And the third collection is the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, the basket of the Buddha's extraordinary (*visiṭṭha*), exceeding (*atireka*), or highest (*adhika*) doctrine, which is more accurate and precise than the teachings of the first two *Piṭakas*.

The *Suttas* and *Vinaya* are mostly using a direct, conventional, language (*vohāra vacana*), employing such terms as man, animal, body and mind, which are easy to comprehend. The *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, on the other hand, makes use of philosophical, abstract terms, such as, consciousness, mental factors, matter, faculties, etc., which are true in the absolute sense (*paramattha vacana*).

The difference between Suttanta and Abhidhamma is not so much in the objective, both aim to show the way to liberation from all the sufferings of the rounds of rebirth, but rather in the way they treat the subject. Every Sutta is orientated to the needs of a particular audience, to which the teaching is delivered, and the subject, the means of expression and the given perspective will differ in accord to that. So just taking the Sutta alone, without knowing the general background, however deep the discourse may be, may lead only to a partial understanding of the Dhamma. Moreover, because of originally being delivered to people with different temperaments and inner inclinations, sometimes Suttas may even contradict each other. At that time we have to look from a wider perspective, and Abhidhamma is exactly the place that provides the comprehensive view. Here the reality is treated not in the terms of individuals, their qualities, or possessions, but in the terms of ever-changing process of conditionally arising and passing phenomena. The conventional reality is broken down to the minute elements of ultimate realities (*paramatthadhamma*) explaining their characteristics, functions, manifestations and causes. A complex net of causal inter-relationships between the resulting realities is shown as well. Thus the picture one gets is all-inclusive and accessible to any person regardless his temperament, or inner inclination, provided, of course, he makes an effort to understand the doctrine.

The scheme below shows how the reality is broken down in Abhidhamma.

| Reality | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| Conventional | Ultimate | | | |
| Concepts | Consciousness | Mental factors | Materiality | Nibbāna |
| Conditioned | | | | Unconditioned |

Thus we have four ultimate realities (*paramatthadhamma*): consciousness (*citta*), mental factors (*cetasika*), materiality (*rūpa*) and *Nibbāna*, the first three are conditioned, of a momentary duration and the last one is the unconditioned element, which is out of time (*kālavimutta*). They are the main topics of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*.

The *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* consists of seven books. The first one, *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, breaks down the reality, and the last book, which is known as *Paṭṭhāna*, the 'Book of Conditional Relations', synthesizes ultimate

realities into a complex whole. This last book can also be called the ‘Great Treatise’ (*mahāpakaraṇa*). The purpose of the *Paṭṭhāna* is to apply its scheme of twenty-four conditional relations to all the phenomena incorporated in the Abhidhamma-Matrix.

The following is the enumeration of conditional relations:

1. *Hetu paccayo*, Root condition;
2. *Ārammaṇa paccayo*, Object condition;
3. *Adhipati paccayo*, Predominance condition;
4. *Anantara paccayo*, Continuity condition;
5. *Samanantara paccayo*, Contiguity condition;
6. *Sahajāta paccayo*, Co-nascence condition;
7. *Aññamañña paccayo*, Mutuality condition;
8. *Nissaya paccayo*, Dependence condition;
9. *Upānissaya paccayo*, Strong-dependence condition;
10. *Purejāta paccayo*, Pre-nascence condition;
11. *Pacchājāta paccayo*, Post-nascence condition;
12. *Āsevana paccayo*, Repetition condition;
13. *Kamma paccayo*, Kamma condition;
14. *Vipāka paccayo*, Resultant condition;
15. *Āhāra paccayo*, Nutriment condition;
16. *Indriya paccayo*, Faculty condition;
17. *Jhāna paccayo*, Jhāna condition;
18. *Magga paccayo*, Path condition;
19. *Sampayutta paccayo*, Association condition;
20. *Vippayutta paccayo*, Dissociation condition;
21. *Atthi paccayo*, Presence condition;
22. *Natthi paccayo*, Absence condition;
23. *Vigata paccayo*, disappearance condition;
24. *Avigatapaccayo*, Non-disappearance condition.

These 24 conditions (*paccaya*) reveal the inter-relation between mental and material phenomena showing the links between the following:

- 1) The conditioning state (*paccaya dhamma*) being a phenomenon that functions as a condition for other phenomena either by producing, supporting or maintaining them;
- 2) The conditionally arisen state (*paccayuppanna dhamma*) being a phenomenon conditioned by the conditioning states, the phenomenon that arise and persist in being though the assistance provided by the conditioning states; and
- 3) The conditioning force (*satti*) of the condition being a particular way in which the conditioning states function as conditions for the conditioned states.

The word ‘*Paṭṭhāna*’ can be broken down into 2 parts: ‘*Pa*’ and ‘*ṭhāna*’. ‘*Pa*’ means various and ‘*ṭhāna*’ means condition. So the analysis of conditions with their conditioning force and conditioning states is called *Paṭṭhāna*. For example: ignorance, as a conditioning state, it is just one mental factor, yet it can have root conditioning force, object conditioning force, conascence conditioning force, etc.

Paṭṭhāna explains in great detail various conditioning forces that can be exercised by a certain type of ultimate reality. Here Lord Buddha does not look at the desire and the specific temperament of the listener,

it is a doctrine where through the power of His omniscience (*sabbaññañāṇa*), the Buddha demonstrates the natural law of the world.

1. Root Condition (*Hetu Paccaya*)

The root condition is a condition where a conditioning state, functions like a root keeping the associated states that arise with it firmly fixed together. The conditioning states in this relation are the six mental factors known as roots: the three unwholesome roots – greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*); and the three beautiful roots – non-greed (*alobha*), non-hatred (*adosa*) and non-delusion (*amoha*), which may be either wholesome or indeterminate. Sometimes we use the term ‘giving’ (*dāna*) for distinct non-greed root; what we call ‘loving-kindness’ (*mettā*) corresponds to the root of non-hatred; and that, which we refer to as ‘knowledge’ (*paññā*) – to the root of non-delusion.

The conditioned states are the mental states associated with each root, and the conascent material phenomena. Conascent material phenomena are kamma-born matter at the moment of rebirth and mind-born matter during the course of existence. Just like the roots of a tree are the basis for tree’s existence, growth and stability, similarly these roots give rise to the conditioned states and make them firm and steady.

For example, when we see a desirable object – if we love it, our mind is rooted in greed for the object, and the other mental factors and consciousness all are being gathered on this object too. The mind-born materiality is also produced by this greed-rooted mind. So our greed root is the condition for all associated states and mind-born materiality produced by this mind.

The rootless consciousnesses are likened with pond scum; they float here and there without definite direction because they have no strong root.

Although we say the root cause relates to its results – associated mentality and conascent matter by keeping them firmly fixed – it is true in general, but when examining in detail we cannot say this applies to conascent matter. How can matter take an object and be fixed anywhere? Then the question can be raised: why is it included in the result group? The answer is: it is because it arises together with its cause, the roots. In the group of conascent matter we have kamma-born materiality at the moment of rebirth and mind-born materiality during the life. We exclude kamma-born materiality in the course of existence. The reason is that at rebirth our mind and roots can arise together with kamma-born materiality. But in the course of existence kamma-born materiality is not related with the mind directly. Especially during attainment of cessation (of consciousness) (*nirodhasamāpatti*) – although the mind stops, kamma-born materiality continues to arise.

Every being has the suffering of the aggregates and the suffering of fortune and kinsmen. If one wants to be free from these sufferings, he should remove the bad roots by replacing them with the good three roots.

Among the three good roots non-delusion (*paññā*) is the main cause. The phenomena that can analyze reality with knowledge is called wisdom (*paññā*) or non-delusion (*amoha*). To cultivate basic wisdom we should have good friends, should listen to good sermons, discuss the *Dhamma* and practice *Dhamma*. If non-delusion is strong the other two beautiful roots will also be strong. For the one who can weaken greed, hatred and delusion, the other opposite three roots will become stronger. If one can cut the bad roots completely, all suffering will cease completely.

The objects that surround us are not partial: colour, sound, smell, etc. have no intension to stimulate in people wholesome or unwholesome states, as well as they have no intension for a particular human to be reborn in a woeful realm or in a divine destination. For example, both Devadatta and Ānanda saw the Buddha and listened to the Dhamma together. But Devadatta was reborn in hell while Ānanda attained *Nibbāna*. There are people who have wholesome minds, when seeing undesirable objects, as well as there

are such ones who have unwholesome minds when seeing desirable objects. It is all because of the roots. The repeated arising of a particular root will condition the mind to be habitually rooted either in wholesome or unwholesome states. If our habit is connected with a bad root, together with improper attention, independently of whether object is desirable or undesirable, it will cause the unwholesome states, defilements to arise. And if it is connected with a good root it will cause beautiful states. For example if non-greed is habitually arising in the mind, and we encounter a desirable object – non-greed will arise, if the object is undesirable – non-hatred will arise.

Here, I would like to give an example of three plants growing in the earth – chili, lemon and sugarcane. The earth has no intention to make the chili spicy, to make the lemon sour or to make the sugarcane sweet. Depending on their genes and fertilizer they develop various tastes. Similarly the objects we face daily are the same as the earth. Our good or bad roots, which we have allowed to arise or trained in the past, are like the genes, and fertilizer is the same as our attention (*manasikāra*). If our mind gets help of proper attention and good training for good roots, wholesome consciousness will arise in us. If our mind gets the help of improper attention and no good training for good roots, unwholesome consciousness will arise. One cause for proper attention is repeated training of the mind in mindfulness and knowledge. But if we allow feeling to lead us when facing an object it will become a cause for improper attention.

The stronger is our greed root, the stronger is the other associated mental states. Among these states there is also mental volition. This is why our volition is strong as well. If our volition is strong that causes strong bad results in the future. The same applies to the other bad and good roots.

While the bad roots grasp the object firmly, non-greed renounces the five sense objects, non-hatred is satisfied with what we have and non-delusion understands the impermanent nature deeply.

When we can train such good roots to arise in our minds again and again eventually, the energy causing us to be in the rounds of rebirth will become neutral and that non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion will change into functional roots. At that time all suffering will cease.

2. Object condition (*Ārammaṇa paccayo*)

Object condition is a condition where conditioning state as object, causes other states, conditioned states to arise, taking it as their object. The six classes of objects are the conditioning states, the corresponding consciousness and mental factors are the conditioned states.

Like a beautiful garden can condition a person to visit there, all the objects condition all consciousness and mental factors to delight in them. Not only greed, but also delusion, hatred and other mental factors with consciousness, all delight in their objects in various ways. Even the hatred-rooted mind – although one hates it, it takes the hated object again and again.

Just like a handicapped or an old person in order to stand up needs a support and assistance of a cane or strung rope line, so too the six sense consciousness need a support of six kinds of objects for them to arise. Since it is only mentality that can take an object, only mentality can be a conditioned state in this condition. *Nibbāna* (cessation), although counted as mentality, being an unconditioned state, is not a result in this condition. All the object-dhammas that should be known – conditioned phenomena, *Nibbāna* and concepts – are called by the Buddha *ñeyyadhamma*, they comprise the conditioning side. And the fact that in the 24 conditions *Nibbāna* and concepts, which as object are subtle and wide, can be on the side of conditioning states causes object, as well as strong dependence conditions to be the widest ones.

Except non-percipient beings all beings in our world have consciousness and mental factors and all that mentality must have its own object. Although at their present life non-percipient beings don't have any mentality (they were reborn in that plane because they had practiced *jhāna* in their past life, after they die they will have to be reborn as a being with mind and matter (for instance, as a human).

In this condition we get an imagery of an old man for mentality and a walking stick or a rope for the object. The reason is that mentality, consciousness with its associated mental factors, cannot arise without an object. It is similar to the situation with material groups – materiality cannot arise alone, it has to arise in a *kalāpa* (elementary particle) that is in a group of 8 or more different qualities.

Mentality can be divided into three groups:

1) Wholesome – it arises without fault and brings good results in the future. Here the fault means being harmful to us, to others or both when it arises. The key point to bear in mind for the one who wants to develop wholesome states is, irrespective of whether he sees a good desirable object or a bad undesirable one, to make sure to contemplate it properly.

At first a being may see a desirable object and start to relish it and delight in it. Gradually the degree of craving grows and in this enjoyment of the object the lust impulses become stronger and stronger. This stage is called enjoyment (*assāda*). In the field of experience it is one extreme, it is called indulgence in the sense pleasures (*kāmasukhallika*). But when one cannot get mental ease from this the mind changes to dissatisfaction. At that time many reproachable dhammas arise. This stage is called disadvantage (*ādīnava*). It is another extreme in the field of experience and is called self-mortification (*attakilamatha*). But when one contemplates these two extremes with knowledge, the mind can be liberated from both sides – from attachment and hatred, and having found the escape (*nissaraṇa*) it can rest at peace. This situation is called wholesome.

2) Unwholesome – it arises with fault and brings bad results in the future. Whenever our mind indulges in the two extremes it becomes unwholesome and that enlarges the suffering in the rounds of rebirth.

3) Indeterminate – these are the resultant and functional consciousness; they cannot be called neither wholesome nor unwholesome. Materiality and *Nibbāna* are also included in this group. Here materiality can never produce results, it is only mentality, which arises depending on matter that produces results. So it is better to control the mind not allowing any unwholesome states to arise on account of materiality, even if it is of our own body.

Objects can be divided into two groups: normal objects and deeply subtle and attractive objects, called predominant objects. The force of object that can govern and dominate the mind is object predominance condition force.

Lord Buddha taught that following the objects and indulging in them is the same as having boils of leprosy and not taking proper medicine. In *Kusa jāṭaka* (Ja 302) even our Bodhisatta who trained his mind for so many lives could not resist the attraction of the beauty of Pabhāvatī and had to undergo so many hardships on this account. The story of *Pañcapāpā* (Ja 536) is a good example of danger in a tangible object. But in the case of the *Belatṭhasīsa* Arahant, who used to enter *phalasamāpatti* state of attainment for 7 days and on emerging would only take some dry rice sprinkled with water entering the attainment for another 7 days after, we can see how good a predominant object (*Nibbāna*) can be.

Not all meditators are aware of the value of present cessation when they are practicing meditation. Instead they are complicating things by evaluating themselves according to time and stage, they try to measure *Nibbāna* with various worldly things. Five sense objects are matter, that means hoping to get any worldly sense object after doing a wholesome action, is hoping to get only a rootless result (matter). So we have to take care and do rooted wholesome actions, with knowledge and be pleased with our present situation of cessation of greed, hatred and delusion. This is called temporary cessation. After temporary cessation is powerful the permanent cessation, *Nibbāna* is easy to attain. The Buddha allowed us to do various things under the title of wholesome. We should not fix ourselves with place, case, posture, job and objects. If we are bored with sitting meditation we can change our posture, can sweep, can read a Dhamma book and discuss Dhamma, there are so many other wholesome actions that we can do. As long as a particular task can help us to have non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion, we can do it. We only need continuous awareness and our understanding of an object should be detailed and accompanied by knowledge.

The story of physician Jīvaka¹ in Buddha's time is remarkable. According to it after he had acquired medicinal knowledge, his teacher asked him to search for a plant without any medicinal properties within an area of one *yojanā* (about 8 miles). He could not find any non-medicinal plant. As long as the proper dose is known, every plant can be a medicine, but if it is not known – the very same plant can become toxic. The objects we face in our everyday life are just like plants. Attention that is led by mindfulness and knowledge is proper attention. If we can use every object with proper attention, every object can help wholesomeness to arise in us. Otherwise every object can produce an unwholesome mind.

Following good teachers who can support us with Dhamma, we should train our mind not to attach to any worldly object (non-greed), to have forgiveness whatever others may do (non-hatred), and try to realize the

¹Vin (Mahāvagga, 8. cīvarakkhandhaka, jīvakaṇṭhaka)

causes and results with deep contemplation (non-delusion). Practicing in this way is called *pārami* and that will lead us to *Nibbāna* quite well.

Some say their minds become unwholesome or wholesome because of another. But the ‘another’ is not a direct cause for getting a wholesome or unwholesome mind, the cause is oneself. Some search for righteous men while not having any intention to change their bad character. This is very dangerous. For example, Devadatta, he met with the most righteous man, the Buddha, yet he ended up in the lowest hell (*Avīci*).

Every good or bad, desirable or undesirable object attracts us stimulating either wholesome or unwholesome action. That is why we need to control our mind by two types of training. From the point of view of morality (*sīla*) we should ignore the object and restrain our bad habits. From the point of view of meditation (*bhāvanā*) with every object we should train the mind in tranquility meditation (*samatha*) or insight meditation (*vipassanā*) by contemplating impermanent nature.

Handling our minds in this way we will be free from the two extremes of enjoyment (*assāda*) and disadvantage (*ādīnava*), we will find escape (*nissaraṇa*), gain access to the most beautiful object of predominance and attain final cessation (*Nibbāna*).

3. Predominance Condition (*Adhipati paccaya*)

The predominance condition is a condition where a conditioning state dominates over the conditioned states. There are two kinds of this condition:

(1) object-predominance (*ārammaṇādhipati*) and (2) conascence-predominance (*sahajātādhipati*).

1. Object predominance (*ārammaṇādhipati*) is a condition where the conditioning state, as an object, causes the mental states that take it to arise and strongly dominates over them. Only esteemed or greatly desired objects can become the conditioning states in this relationship. Jātaka stories about King Kusa (Ja 531) and beautiful lady Ummānantī (Ja 527) are perfect illustrations of this condition at work.

2. Conascence predominance (*sahajātādhipati*) is a condition where a conditioning state relates to the conditioned states that arise together with it by greatly dominating over them. The conditioning states in this relationship are the four predominants (*adhipati*) — (1) predominant desire (*chanda*); (2) predominant energy (*virīya*); (3) predominant consciousness (*citta*); and (4) predominant investigation (*vīmaṃsā*)². Of these four only one at a time can be predominant, and only when it is associated with two or three rooted *javana citta*s. The conditioned states are the conascent mentality and materiality.

Fifty-two *javanās* (fifty-five minus two delusion rooted and one rootless), both unwholesome and beautiful, can participate in this condition. The supramundane and sublime *javanās* are always governed by one or the other predominant conditioning state. As for the sensual ones, they have a predominance condition only sometimes, so when we are doing good deeds we have to make a special effort to have an energy of predominance, but when unwholesome states arise in us, we should control ourselves for them not to last too long, and not to become predominant.

The predominant factors are very powerful and condition by governing and controlling well. When the four conditioning states of conascence predominance arise in our minds other physical and mental phenomena have to obey to their control.

When being under an influence of predominance condition one faces an object that causes happiness, he is extremely happy, and if the object he is facing is frightening – he is overwhelmed with fear. When the mind is set in the direction of wholesomeness or unwholesomeness and has predominance, it is very systematic, careful and distinct. Actions performed with such a mind will be quite outstanding on the background of actions made by an ordinary mind. The deeds made with a predominant mind of hatred can be shockingly cruel, and those made with a predominant mind of loving-kindness and wisdom awesomely beautiful.

An analogy that commentators give for this condition is that of a King – by his power he rules the whole country alone.

Among all mental factors, only three mental factors can be predominant. This is because the nature of all the other mental factors is weak, they resemble a baby, who by nature is weak and never have an intention to be the best of all.

Out of 24 Paṭṭhāna conditions, only two conditions – predominance and faculty – can govern and control material and mental phenomena that arises because of them. Mental faculties can govern only in the sphere

² Investigation is knowledge, it corresponds to mental factor of wisdom (*paññā*).

that they are concerned with. Material faculties can govern the processes connected to 5-sense objects. But the domain in which conascence predominance can govern, is very wide, it can cover all regions. To illustrate this difference, we usually compare the faculty condition to a minister and the predominance – to a king.

The energy of predominance can be both good and bad. It can be such a wish that nobody can destroy it or prevent one from fulfilling it. It can be such an energy, that with a resolution not to stop ‘even if the bones turn into powder and skin dries out’ we continue applying effort. It can be a mind that never forgets its intention irrespective of where one goes or what one does. It also can be knowledge of very high standard leading to success in what is important for us. Burmese Sayadaws usually say that because we do not really want to be rich we are not rich yet. Similarly, because we do not really want to attain Nibbāna we have not attained Nibbāna yet.

Object predominance arises depending on the object, conascent predominance arises inside our body. Out of those two, conascent predominance is more important.

In the Telapatta Jātaka (Ja 96) the youngest of 100 princes of Vārāṇasi met a solitary Buddha (*Pacceka Buddha*). That solitary Buddha said to the Prince: ‘You cannot be a king in your country, but if you go to Takkaṣilā country within seven days, you will be a king of that country. The direct way to that country is full of dangers and is 50 *yojanās*³ long, and the safe way is 100 *yojanās*.’ The young Prince embarked on the journey together with his five friends. On the way, they encountered female *yakkhas*⁴ who tried to lure and kill them. The prince was the only one who could resist, and without falling into their traps of the sense pleasures, reached his destination. Here we can say that his five friends were ruled by object predominance, and the prince – by conascence predominance, being led by four internal predominances he was able to pass all the obstacles. This story teaches us that in this world it is better to resist attraction of objects, and develop inside predominance within ourselves.

As long as our internal conascence predominance is strong, despite attraction of bad or desirable objects in our surrounding, we can proceed straight to our final destination, to Nibbāna, without difficulty.

While our Bodhisatta practiced perfections (*pāramī*) he never was under an influence of surrounding, he did not care much whether others were good or bad to him. He just emphasized his own duties to help others. Our world allows to leave it only the one who loves it in a beautiful way (with kindness and compassion), but not the one who loves it with strong attachment.

Whenever we do a good deed we have to neglect the other side’s suppression or flattering. As for a bad deed, we have to neglect our wish, and refrain from doing it.

In Mahākapi Jātaka (Ja 407) our Bodhisatta was born as a monkey, and became the leader of his group. One king intended to kill all the monkeys, but the Bodhisatta escaped and by tying a creeper string around his body he jumped to the other shore and formed a bridge. All the monkeys of his group escaped via that creeper string. But when the last one (who in a later life became Devadatta) walked over the rope, he walked on the back of the Bodhisatta monkey, even though that caused pain and was unpleasant, the Bodhisatta still hanged on patiently, ignoring the bad action of the pre-Devadatta-monkey.

³ 1 *yojanā* ≈ 8 miles

⁴ Ogresses

It should be clear to us that we better take refuge in and respect our Lord Buddha and the Dhamma, which he taught. When we practice Dhamma, we should imitate and follow the Bodhisatta's footsteps.

On the unwholesome side there are only three dominant factors, but on the side of wholesome they are four, the fourth being knowledge. So, wish, effort and mind, these three factors have to be under control so that they lead us to do good deeds only.

Since knowledge is only on the side of wholesome, it is very important to practice the way that will increase our knowledge. When the knowledge is mature enough the mind, energy and wish can be trained easily.

Here we can still expand on three objects to be emphasized in our practice that can support our inside predominance. They are:

1. self-predominance (*attādhīpati*);
2. predominance of the world or surrounding (*lokādhīpati*);
3. predominance of the law of nature (*dhammādhīpati*).

1. Self-predominance. To reduce and remove our ego, it is a good practice to gradually expand our ego-region up to all the 31 realms. This means that instead of thinking that 'I alone have to be rich', we can expand our ego to include our family, our city, our county: 'May all in my surrounding be rich'.

Our Bodhisattva hermit Sumedha thought that, 'Despite I am able to attain Arahantship in this life, I would like to attain enlightenment together with omniscience (*sabbāññutañāna*).' Because of his decision, his egolessness, in the present time we can experience various kinds of happiness and peace. In Myanmar our great teacher Mahāgandhāyon Sayadaw taught Dhamma up to two hours before his death. He said that, 'If I don't die today, I will carry on teaching tomorrow.' Our great teacher Pa-Auk Tawya Sayadaw at times teaches Dhamma to so many students, that one would doubt it is possible at all to give individual guidance to so many people at a time, and yet. In Myanmar there are so many Sayadaws who can serve as an ideal for those who practice Dhamma together with predominance.

2. Predominance of the world or surrounding. To avoid doing wrong deeds it is helpful to emphasize that, 'If I do something wrong, my surrounding, or at least the spirits and devas around me, will know it.' Also by thinking about the gratitude to the parents, teachers etc., with the mind of wishing to pay back the depth of gratitude, we can improve the predominance factors within ourselves. Buddha teaches that in the course of existence the support with the four necessities of life is like that of our parents. In ancient times in Sri Lanka one elder monk attained enlightenment because of the sense of urgency that arose in him while reflecting on the gratitude to poor donors of the food after he had gone on the alms round.

3. Predominance of the law of nature. Emphasizing the practice of Dhamma that we can believe in and accept is called *dhammādhīpati*. In the Visuddhimagga it is said to be a good way to promote the energy. Reflecting on the great effort of our Lord Buddha, and his great disciples after they got their definite prophecies, can stimulate a motivation to become similar to practitioners such as famous ven. Sāriputta, ven. Uppalavaṇṇā and so on.

Our lord Buddha used to say that he is just a good leader who shows the way to liberation. But it is a duty of followers to practice themselves in order to liberate themselves. This statement is the same as saying that one's own dominating factor can liberate only oneself. He also encouraged saying that if one's morality

(*sīla*) is pure he can attain whatever he wishes and whenever one has strong predominant factor he can get whatever he wants.

So our duty is to have:

1. Pure morality,
2. Good volition, and
3. Strong predominant factor.

With that we can obtain both mundane and supramundane wealth. These four predominances Buddha also called the four basis of psychic power or every success (*iddhipāda*). If we do not know how to use this way to success, we lack the right view and misunderstand that we are the ones who create or it is some other powerful being who does so. This kind of believes fall into two categories: believe in creation (*issaranimmāṇa*) and that in absence of cause (*ahetuka*) – they are wrong views.

May I stop the discussion about predominance here.

Sukhi hotu.

4+5: Proximity Condition and Contiguity Condition (*Anantara paccaya* and *Samanantara paccaya*)

These two conditions are identical with respect to the states involved and the conditioning forces. They differ only in the letter, and not in the meaning. By definition proximity condition is a condition where the conditioning mental state causes the conditioned mental state to arise immediately after it so that no other mental state can intervene between them. Contiguity condition is a condition where the conditioning mental state causes the conditioned mental state to arise immediately after its ceasing in accordance with the fixed order of the mental process.

To illustrate these conditions two analogies can be given. Proximity is similar to the eldest son of a king ascending to the throne after his father dies. Contiguity is similar to the eldest son of the king ascending to the throne after his father renounces the world.

The reason for having two conditions with the same meaning but different in name is to make the subject accessible for different listeners, and to present it like an ornamentation of Dhamma.

Anantara is composed of ‘*an*’, which corresponds to negation, and ‘*antara*’ that means ‘between’. Thus the literal meaning of the word is ‘nothing in between’. There are three kinds of ‘between’ (*antara*):

1. between nature (*dhamma antara*);
2. between time (*kāla antara*);
3. between lives (*bhāva antara*).

These proximity and continuity conditions are concerned only with ‘between mentality’, which is a part of ‘between nature’ (*dhamma antara*) category. Here, with the exception of the death consciousness of an Arahant, any consciousness and mental factors that have just ceased are the conditioning states, and the consciousness and mental factors that arise immediately afterwards are the conditioned states.

In our world there are five fixed orders (*niyama*):

- 1) the fixed order of temperature: it regulates which flower blooms in a particular season, which season comes after a particular season, etc.
- 2) fixed order of seed: it is responsible for which flower blooms in a particular plant, which fruit comes from a particular tree, what type of being is born from a particular type of being.
- 3) fixed order of kamma: it ensures that one can get good results if he does good actions, and bad results if he does bad actions.
- 4) fixed order of nature (Dhamma): it governs over occurrence of particular strange events in the last birth of a Bodhisatta and during Buddha’s life and so on, especially things happening with relation to the Buddhas.
- 5) fixed order of consciousness: it regulates the order of occurrence of different consciousness. Because of it, consciousness of adverting, seeing, receiving investigation, determination, impulsion, etc. occur in the fixed order.

Proximity and contiguity condition occur according to the fixed order of consciousness. When one gets new life, the subliminal consciousness (*bhavaṅga*), which makes up the majority of our life, guards the life.

The kind of mind that arises in the earliest part in our life is called rebirth-linking (*paṭisandhi*) consciousness. The final consciousness in our life is of the same sort with it, but is called with accords to its function: death (*cuti*) consciousness. The interval between these two mind-moments is called course of existence (*pavatti*). The major consciousness of the course of existence (*bhavaṅga*) guards the life up to the time our doors are impinged by objects. When five objects impinge the five doors, five-door cognitive processes arise. When our minds meet with a nature (*dhamma*) object mind-door cognitive process arises.

For a five-door cognitive process to take place four supporting conditions are necessary:

1. a base,
2. an object,
3. attention,
4. an outside aid – such as light for the eye, space for the ear, wind for the nose, water element (saliva) for the tongue, and element of hardness (earth) for the body.

As for the mind-door process – there are so many causes for it: something experienced before, a believe, something we like, contemplation of nature, consideration with knowledge, kamma, spirit creation, analyzing, etc. All these can cause an object to arise in our mind door.

Our mental processes arise according to the fixed order. None arise because of any creator. When a previous consciousness causes a conditioned state, next consciousness, after it perishes that condition can be called absence condition. And since with the arising of the conditioned, next consciousness the previous consciousness disappears, it can also be called disappearance condition.

When one from the sense world enters the attainment of cessation (*nirodha samāpatti*) for 7 days, for this 7 days, consciousness, mental factors and mind-born matter ceases, consciousness arises only before and after the attainment. The consciousness before it can be a conditioning state and the consciousness after it can be a conditioned state because there is no other mentality intervening between these two. In the fine material world (*rūpa bhūmi*) beings can enter *nirodha samāpatti* for many long years because they do not need any physical nutrients. Nevertheless, despite the large time gap, the two consciousnesses that arise before and after still relate by that two conditions. If one passes away in the sense world and, let us say, is reborn in the world of non-percipient beings (*asaññasatta*) and he lives there for about 500 world cycles, after that he is reborn again in the sensual (*kāma*) world. The death (*cuti*) consciousness of a pre-non-percipient being and the rebirth (*paṭisandhi*) consciousness in the sensual realm also relate by this two conditions.

The power of mind is very great. In our daily life we understand that a conditioning state causes the conditioned state during the time they exist. But our mental power can cause the conditioned state when conditioning state is absent or has disappeared as well. Here, in Paṭṭhāna, not only good results are conditioned, the bad results as well. The disappearance of some phenomena can cause both good and bad.

One of our friends passed away in his previous life by being crushed under a tree. In this present life on his body he has big red spots in the places where the blood came from the wounds in his previous life. How powerful are proximity, contiguity, absence and disappearance conditions! One Burmese Sayadaw said that a monk in his monastery had a scar. This scar was not because of any event in this life - he got it because of being cut with a knife in his previous life. In some country when the government wants to give death punishment, they try to kill a person by making a small hole in his neck to let the blood out and collect the blood in a bucket. One time they told this to a prisoner and blindfolded him. They made a small hole with a

needle in his neck and made the sound of the dropping water from a water pipe. After a few hours he died. So we can kill mind with mind and can support mind with mind too.

The one who cannot concentrate on any object has to be careful not to be extremely sad or glad when he loses his object. The one with good concentration power has to be careful too – if he does not have any mindfulness, the emotions of sadness or gladness, when they arise, will be overwhelmingly strong. So concentration still needs to be controlled by mindfulness.

Here we have to know about three kinds of attention (*manasikāra*):

1. The attention that attends to knowing the object (*ārammaṇa paṭipādaka manasikāra*). When a visible object impinges on the eye door, at least one *bhavaṅga* passes, after that one *bhavaṅga* vibrates and one arrest *bhavaṅga* arises. After that five door-adverting consciousness arises followed by the arising of eye consciousness. Among these the vibrating *bhavaṅga* consciousness is called *ārammaṇa paṭipādaka manasikāra*.
2. The attention that arises because of five door-adverting consciousness of a cognitive process (*vīthi paṭipādaka manasikāra*).
3. The attention that arises because of *javana* consciousness, mind-door adverting consciousness or decision consciousness (*javana paṭipādaka manasikāra*).

What we call proper attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) and improper attention (*ayoniso manasikāra*) is a third kind of attention. For a wholesome or unwholesome consciousness to arise in *javana*, the object is not important, the attention before it is more important. The basic fundamental cause of wholesome states is proper attention and the cause of unwholesome ones is improper attention.

This proximity condition shows how our consciousness is functioning, how previous and next consciousness are linked. When we understand this, various doubts concerning the rounds of rebirth disappear.

The four types of methods by which the Dependent Origination should be understood closely relate to these conditions, they show the function and relation of mentality. And as it is not possible to make an end of suffering without having broken the wheel of becoming, it is worthwhile to take a look at these methods. They are:

1. The method of identity (*ekatta*). In a being in the round of rebirths, except for the time of taking rebirth as a non-percipient being (*asaññasatta*), all mentalities are linked to each other by repeated arising and passing away. So if one understands that the rounds of rebirth are a continued series of arising and passing mental phenomena we call that he knows the method of identity.
2. The method of diversity (*nānatta*). If one understands that even though the round of rebirths is the same series of arising and passing away of mentality, the arising of one consciousness and another consciousness is different, as well as that they have different functions and arise separately, he understands the method of diversity. This knowledge destroys a belief in a Creator and thinking that in previous and next life there is same 'I'. Few similes can be given to illustrate this Lord Buddha's teaching: that of a stamp, of lighting a candle and of the relationship between a mango fruit and a mango tree. The stamp on the paper does not arise independently from the original inkpad, but it is not the inkpad. The fire of the next candle is not the same as of the one it got it from, but they still relate. Also a mango fruit is not a mango tree, but it still is related to the mango tree.

Knowing the method of identity leads to the elimination of belief in annihilation (*uccheda diṭṭhi*), and knowing the method of diversity – to the elimination of belief in persisting ego (*sassata diṭṭhi*).

3. The method of uninterest (*avyāpāra*). The previous consciousness does not have to make any effort to make the next consciousness to arise, that means consciousness does not have any special action with respect to each other. When we know this method, believe in ‘I can do’, ‘I do’ or ‘he does’ - the idea that we perform our actions, make mental formations - disappears. Actually we cannot make any effort with regards to any mentality. All mentality is following the fixed order of mind.

4. The method of unavoidable regularity (*evamdhammatā*). All mentalities arise according to their own fixed order. When we know this, believe in the absence of cause (*ahetuka diṭṭhi*) disappears. All physical and mental dhammas are following the ordinary law of the world.

So let’s try to understand the mental phenomena with proximity, continuity, absence and disappearance condition and by practicing insight meditation on their causes, results and conditioning power go to Nibbāna where there is no mental suffering.

6. Conascence Condition (*Sahajāta paccaya*)

The word ‘*sahajāta*’ is composed of two: ‘*saha*’ and ‘*jāta*’ that mean ‘together’ and ‘born’ respectively, and by definition is a condition where a conditioning state and conditioned states arise simultaneously.

Traditional analogy that is given to illustrate this condition is that of the flame of a lamp, which when arises, does so together with the light, color, and heat.

In the Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha the relations between conditioning and conditioned states of this condition are divided into three groups, it reads as follows:

1. Consciousness (*citta*) and mental factors (*cetasika*) are a condition for one another and for the conascent material phenomena (*rūpa*);
2. The four great essentials (*mahābhūta*) mutually and for the derived material phenomena;
3. The heart-base and the resultant (mental aggregates) for one another at the moment of rebirth-linking.⁵

To reiterate, the power that causes resultant states to arise simultaneously with the cause is called conascence condition. Here it is worthwhile noting that not all states that occur simultaneously are related by this condition. From the simile of a lamp we can see that the states have to arise together, stay together and support each other. As an illustration we can consider a family of three: a husband, a wife and a child. Although, they stay together, father and mother do not depend on the child, so the child is not a conascence condition to his parents. But husband and wife can help and support each other, so they relate to each other by this condition.

Normally people think that result always appears after the cause. But, when learning Paṭṭhāna, it becomes obvious that there are also conditions where cause and effect arise simultaneously, and it is even possible for a cause to arise after the state it conditions.

If we consider the analogy of lighting an oil lamp again, we may note that (a) light appears immediately; (b) in the same time the oil and the wick are burning; (c) and darkness is dispelled. No time gap occurs between these processes. This is the reason they are called conascent.

Now let us take a closer look at the aforementioned three groups.

1. Mind, mental factors and mind-born matter.

When a wholesome consciousness arises in the five aggregate world it is always accompanied by 32 to 34 mental factors. Any consciousness and its mental factors have to (a) arise at the same time; (b) cease at the same time; (c) depend on the same base; and (d) take the same object. So consciousness and its mental factors are conascence condition to each other.

⁵ They can also be divided into five groups, as it is done in Paccayanidessa of Paṭṭhāna:

1. The four mental aggregates – *citta* and *cetasika* — condition each other;
2. Each mental state conditions the conascent material phenomena;
3. Each of the four great essentials condition the other three great essentials;
4. Each of the four great essentials condition the derived material phenomena; and
5. At the moment of conception, the heart-base and the resultant mental states condition each other.

There is also materiality arising together with the mind, so the consciousness and its mental factors are not only a conascence condition for each other, but also for the mind-born matter, which arises together with them.

Mental states are strong and powerful immediately at the arising stage. That allows the mind-born and kamma-born matter to arise together with them. As long as the past kamma's force is not exhausted the kamma-born matter caused by it will be arising continuously every sub-mind moment. And the mind-born matter caused by present consciousness will be arising at every moment of arising phase of the consciousness. This means the matter caused by mental states can be born at the same time with the mental states.

On the other hand the primary cause of temperature-born and nutriment-born matter is matter. The matter is powerful only at the standing phase. At the time of arising it is weak and cannot produce another matter. That means the matter caused by matter can be born only while the cause is at the standing phase.

Rebirth consciousness is very weak, like a person who has just arrived to a new, unfamiliar place and is cautious and hesitant to do anything. It is like a guest of a new life and at that time cannot produce mind-born matter. Apart from this occasion, during the course of existence (*pavatti*) the mental states are powerful and all consciousness – except the two sets of five-fold sense consciousness and immaterial resultant consciousness – can produce mind-born matter at the time of their arising. Even though mind-born matter and consciousness arise at the same time, the mind-born matter will never be a conditioning state for the mind, it is only mind, which is powerful at its arising stage and conditions mind-born matter, and not otherwise. The mind-born matter cannot support mental aggregates in return so they are not related mutually. At the time of conception rebirth consciousness and kamma-born matter are conascent, there is no mind-born matter.

Here is an example of practical application of our knowledge about conascent mind-born matter: when a person has a wholesome mind his face is clear, and the face of the one with unwholesome mental states taking place will be dirty. Seeing a person with a wholesome mind will encourage wholesome states in others and vice versa. So in this way the quality of our mental states can influence the environment.

We do not have much control over what we see or hear, the objects that we encounter unexpectedly. We cannot change the objects, but our face, mind, deeds we can. As these in their turn become objects for others, we can say that when doing good deeds, we become a good object for others and help them to experience wholesome mental states. For example, by keeping our Buddha altar and environment clean, by changing our mind, removing anger and leading our life with a smile on the face we are creating good objects for others and help them too to avoid ugly states letting the beautiful mind prevail. When we are on the receiving end, when we are experiencing objects, every single one of them we have to accept with proper attention so that our life is full of wholesome mind moments. And when we are giving, we better try to give others pleasant, good objects.

2. Four great essentials and derived material phenomena.

Four great essentials are a conascence condition for each other. Moreover, they are a conascent conditioning states for the derivative matter (*upādā rūpa*). However, the derivative matter is not a conditioning state for the Four great essentials. In other words, the Four great essentials are always on the side of conditioning states (cause) and derivative matter is always on the side of conditioned states (effect). It cannot support the Four great essentials in return to the support it gets from them, so there are not related by condition of

mutuality. For example, let us say there is a bottle of 8 matters: hardness (*pathavī*), temperature (*tejo*), pressure (*vāyo*), cohesion (*āpo*), color, smell, taste and nutritive essence. Among those matters the first four are primary, important; the others are subordinate and not so important. If there is no hardness, cohesion cannot exist, if there is no temperature, hardness cannot exist and so on. So the Four great essentials mutually support each other by conascence condition.

As for Nibbāna and concepts – out of 24 conditions there is not even one where they would be on the side of conditioned states, they are not included in the dhammas that arise and cease (*saṅkhata dhamma*) and do not need anything to condition them.

3. Resultant mental states and heart-base at the time of rebirth-linking.

Resultant mental states at the time of rebirth-linking relate to each other by conascence condition. At the same time these mental states and heart-base are also mutually related by the same condition.

In the world of five aggregates all mental states have to have a base to depend on. For this reason, at the time of conception the heart-base has to arise together with the mentality. In terms of aggregates (*khandā*), the rebirth consciousness together with its mental factors comprises four mental aggregates. These four relate to each other as well as to the heart-base mutually by conascence condition. In the five aggregate world if heart-base were not to arise, the rebirth consciousness would not arise and vice versa. So these mind and matter support each other by being conascent. After the moment of conception, the mental states support each other and mind-born matter by conascence condition.

7. Mutuality Condition (*Aññamañña paccaya*)

A condition of mutuality forms a part of conascence condition. There we have seen 5 groups of dhammas related to each other: four mental aggregates to each other; four great essentials to each other; mental aggregates and kamma-born materiality (heart base) at the moment of conception to each other; mental aggregates to mind-born matter; and four great essentials to derivative matter. Among those some are related reciprocally and others not.

Mutuality is comparable to a tripod where each leg assists the other legs reciprocally enabling the tripod to stand.

In order to have the condition of mutuality dhammas have to not only arise together, but also to have a reciprocal connection. And that makes this condition narrower than that of conascence. We get it only between mentality and mentality; matter and matter; and mentality and matter at the moment of rebirth.

To explain it in worldly terms – mental aggregates, that is consciousness, perception, feeling and mental formations cannot arise separately, they must arise and cease at the same time, take the same object, and depend on the same base. In these phenomena, one aggregate conditions the other three, three condition one and two condition the other two. This is called mutuality.

Similarly earth, wind, fire and water elements, in every matter, in every particle arise and cease together, and condition each other just like the mental aggregates.

In the world of five aggregates, at the earliest time in our life, the mentality at the moment of conception, which is a seed of mentality, and kamma-born matter (the heart base), which is a seed of materiality, arise at the same time and they condition each other reciprocally.

This kind of relation somewhat resembles the way siblings, Dhamma friends, teachers and students, countries and citizens, appreciate and help each other.

8. Dependence Condition (*Nissaya paccaya*)

Dependence condition is a condition where the conditioning state supports the conditioned states to arise by serving as the base on which they depend. To illustrate this, two analogies can be given: that of the soil, which serves as a base for the plants growing in it, and of the canvas that is related to the painting as a base on which it depends.

This condition can be divided into two big groups:

1. A conditioning state (base) arises at the same time with the conditioned state – conascence dependence (*sahajātanissaya*);
2. A conditioning state (base) arises before the conditioned states – prenascence dependence (*purejātanissaya*).

With the respect to dhammas participating it can be said to be threefold:

1. Consciousness and mental factors are a condition for one another and conascent material phenomena;
2. The four great essentials for one another and derived material phenomena; and
3. The six bases for the seven consciousness elements.

Conascence dependence condition is identical in with the conascence condition. When there is a conascence condition, dependence condition also will be. There are no simultaneously arising phenomena not related by dependence condition. So the five types of conascence (as listed in *Paccayanidessa*) are also dependence condition. The three types of mutuality also include dependence. They are called conascence dependence condition (*sahajāta nissaya*).

Prenascence dependence condition. The six physical bases (except for the heart base at the moment of rebirth) are a prenascence dependence condition for the consciousness and mental factors that arise depending on them. In the prenascence dependence condition the six bases that arise before mental states are serving as conditioning states for mentality. In order to see, the eye-base has to arise before the eye-consciousness and serve to it as a prenascence-dependence condition. For a thought to occur in the mind, the heart base has to arise before the consciousness and its mental factors and so on.

During the course of existence all consciousness and accompanying mental factors in the sphere of five aggregates, except for the two sets of five-fold sense consciousness, depend on the heart-base matter that has arisen together with previous consciousness. At the time of attainment of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*) there is no consciousness, no mental factors. So at the time of emergence from the attainment there is no mind that precedes the fruition consciousness of non-returning and Arahantship (*anāgāmiphalacitta* and *arahattaphalacitta*). But even though there is no previous consciousness, the heart base materiality keeps arising every moment. So when we say that these fruition consciousness depend on the heart-base that has arisen one mind-moment before, it is only a general statement.

The five sense bases not only serve as a base on which consciousness depends, but also are a faculty condition for it. They can control the respective consciousness and govern their cognizing of sense objects. For example, for a person with a weak eye-base, the eye-consciousness will also be weak. For example, for a person with a weak ear-base, the ear-consciousness will also be weak, and so on. Thus these five are conditioning states of faculty condition as well.

Sometimes the heart-base (*hadaya vatthu*) on which the mind depends (*nissaya*) and has arisen before it (*purejāta*) can become an object of the mind (*ārammaṇa*). On that occasion the condition will be four-fold: **base-object-prenascence-dependence** (*vatthu-ārammaṇa-purejāta-nissaya*).

For example, at the moment close to death, all *jāvanas* depend on heart-base, this base can also become an object of the mind. This combination of base-object-prenascence-dependence is possible only for the heart-base, because it is the only dhamma that can fulfill four requirements of being a base, an object of conditioned states, arise before the conditioned states and provide a support on which the conditioned states depend.

Paṭṭhāna everywhere. In every situation there are many conditions. For example if one kills a mosquito: hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*) become a root condition (*hetu*); the visible form of the mosquito is an object condition (*ārammaṇa*); each of the mental states in the mind process are related by conditions of proximity and contiguity (*anantara, samanantara*); if you seriously want to kill, the desire to do so (*chanda*) may become a predominance condition (*adhipati*); all mental states are mutually related, arise together and depend on each other (*aññamañña, saha-jāta, saha-jātanissaya*) and so on. So many conditions are functioning during the process of killing a mosquito, unwholesome actions are a fearful process. On the contrary wholesome actions are lovely and beautiful. For example, when one is studying Dhamma, many conditions are at work: object, proximity, contiguity, absence, disappearance, conascence, mutuality etc.

Difference between dependence, mutuality and conascence conditions.

Various analogies can be used to illustrate and apply these conditions on a conceptual level in our daily life. For example, we can compare the mutuality condition to a family members helping and supporting each other, it is the narrowest on its scale. The conascence condition would be like people of one nation helping and supporting each other, it is wider. And the dependence condition – people of great compassion and sympathy to others helping and supporting people of the whole world, its range is the widest. And again, mutuality – is to think and care about one-self (*attattha cariyā*); conascence – is to think and care about the immediate environment (*ñātattha cariyā*); dependence – is to think and care about the whole world (*lokattha cariyā*).

One famous Burmese Sayadaw (Toomoung Sayadaw) gave his disciples following instructions: ‘If you stay together in one monastery, you relate by conascence condition. But you have to consider all the others in the monastery as your best friends and in this way be related by mutuality condition, then you all can support each other and be a dependence condition. If you do not have mutuality condition and do not help others, there is no dependence condition to support you.’ Here the Sayadaw deals with the direct meaning of mutuality.

Another famous Sayadaw (Masoeysin Sayadaw) from Mandalay taught his disciples taking another meaning of mutuality. ‘Bhikkhus, do not relate to the lay-people as mutuality condition, your relation should be that of conascence, then you and others can become dependence condition and support each other.’

The nature of mutuality is interdependence. In simple terms it is like: if you are good to me – I am good to you, if you are bad to me, I am negative in return. So if you relate to other people with the mind of mutuality you will serve them only if you can get profit from them, you will always think in terms of give and take, cause and effect, and you will calculate and expect profit from them. It is like a person is only paying back his debt to the world, but not taking responsibility for it.

Sahajāta, on the other hand, has no expectations of profit; it does not expect to get good results. Different kinds of states are conditioned by it: mental aggregates condition each other and also for the mind-born matter (which is of different nature); four great essentials are conditioning states for one another and also for derived matter (which differs from them). In the similar way we should also serve and help different kinds of people with whom we associate, be they different in nature, have different religion or come from different country.

9. Strong Dependence Condition (*Upanissaya paccaya*)

A conditioning force that is more powerful than normal dependence is called strong dependence.

Just like all plants, trees, animals etc. strongly depend on rain, the conditioned states strongly depend on the conditioning states.

To explain difference between strong dependence and normal dependence we can use the example of cooked rice. We need rain, seed, fertilizer etc. to get grains of rice from a seed of rice. These conditions are called strong dependence. To go from raw rice to cooked rice we need a pot, fire, water etc. these conditions are like normal dependence. Strong dependence is primary, principal dependence whereas normal dependence conditions results close to their arising. For eye consciousness to arise, we need past action (*kamma*), presence of eye sensitivity, visual object, light and attention. Our past *kamma* is similar with strong dependence and present four causes are like normal dependence.

The strong dependence is also called great condition (*mahā paccaya*), because it is very wide. There are three types of this condition:

1. Object strong dependence (*ārammaṇūpanissaya*),
2. Proximity strong dependence (*anantarūpanissaya*), and
3. Natural strong dependence (*pakatūpanissaya*).

When a valuable desirable predominant object conditions arising of the mind and mental factors it is called object strong dependence (1).

Similar with the object predominance condition, proximity condition itself, is the strong dependence for the arising of following mind and mental factors and we call it proximity strong dependence (2).

Strong dependence that is not related to the object or proximity but is powerful by nature is called natural strong dependence (3). For the conditioning force to be strong dependence the result has to be produced (*uppādita*) by and depend (*upasevita*) on the cause. Therefore, on the conditioning side are mentality, materiality and concepts. But on the conditioned side there is only mentality. Matter does not need special strong dependence for it to arise. Therefore, from the Abhidhamma point of view, it is a misunderstanding that luxurious living conditions are a result of strong dependence. However, in Suttanta way of explanation, sometimes we could say that matter is on a result side. For example, we could say, that our kamma-born materiality strongly depends on the kamma that produced it – this would be the Suttanta approach. As for Nibbāna, it fulfils the requirement of depending (*upasevita*), but not that of producing (*uppādita*), that is – many wholesome states can depend and benefit from Nibbāna, but Nibbāna itself cannot produce anything.

In *Paṭṭhāna*, *upanissaya* is the widest condition, so if you say that cause and effect are linked by the way of strong dependence, generally you are right. But, to have a good result by this condition four achievements (*sampatti*) have to be present, namely:

1. Achievement of existence in good time, good era (*kāla sampatti*);
2. Achievement of existence in a good realm (*gati sampatti*);
3. Achievement of body with attractive appearance and unimpaired faculties (*upadhi sampatti*);
4. Achievement of right practice, that is to say, following the 10 wholesome courses of kamma (*payoga sampatti*).

Even if you have done wholesome deeds in the past, you still need the right time for their fruits to manifest. You must be in a proper time, proper existence, and must have achievement of appearance. Let's say you are blind; then various good results cannot get a chance to arise. Also if you do not practice properly (*payoga sampatti*), if there is a lack of current effort, you cannot get any good results. If you have these four achievements, wholesome results have a better chance to manifest. On the other hand, if these achievements are not there, but rather their opposites, four failures (*vipatti*), are present, this supports manifestation of unwholesome results.

Furthermore, to have a success on the path to enlightenment, four other achievements are needed:

- 1) *pubbe ca kata puññatā* - one should have done wholesome actions previously;
- 2) *paṭirūpadesavāsa* - one should be at the proper place;
- 3) *sappurisasupanissaya* - one should have proper association;
- 4) *atta-sammāpaṇidhi* - one should set oneself in a right direction.

To illustrate *paṭirūpadesavāsa* and *sappurisasupanissaya* two stories can be given: the story of a prince, who despite being a son of a king ended up in hell, and a doctor, who despite being a son of a prostitute, became Sotāpanna. In the beginning, both of them had good minds. But the prince was called Ajātasattu, which means: 'Enemy before Birth'. This name in itself created an unfavorable environment. Later he associated with Devadatta and this man became a cause for the king's son's later downfall. As far as the story of the doctor goes: his mother was a prostitute and after his birth she abandoned him on a side of the road. Prince Abhaya heard the baby crying as crows already started picking it and with compassion the Prince noted: '*Kiṃ jīvako*' (It's still alive!). He adopted the child and gave him the name Jivaka. He received good education and care up to royal standards. But because he was aware he was not a real prince he left the country and studied in a university to become a doctor. On return he became a royal physician. Having heard the Dhamma, he gained great confidence in the Buddha, and after becoming a *Sotāpanna* he donated a monastery to the Buddha and the order of monks. So a good name, environment and association with the Blessed One became a strong dependence condition for all these beautiful results.

Some people say that there is no need to go here and there, what actually matters is only intention. But to say so with regards to a normal person is totally wrong. Even for the Bodhisatta, in his last existence, despite the fact that his *pāramis* were already mature, he still had to leave the palace and find a proper place to achieve what he was aspiring for. And only after becoming a Buddha, a perfectly enlightened one, he would stay not only in the forest, but also in a city area. He spent 25 rain retreats in the city of Sāvattī. But the reason for that was that most of those who were ready to receive the teaching (*veneyya* persons) were dwelling in city areas. The place is not important for those who have done what has to be done, who have eradicated all defilements, but it is no so for the rest of us.

Furthermore, not only should we seek a proper environment and good association for our own progress, but we should also try to become a good powerful support for others to progress in Dhamma. And for that we should possess following:

1. *sacca* - truthfulness,
2. *dama* - cleverness,
3. *dhiti* - energy or courage,
4. *cāga* - renunciation or generosity.

To just be truthful is not enough. One should use the truth skillfully. For example, in Myanmar if we ask: ‘Do you have a father?’ – it is a proper, well-formulated question; but if we ask: ‘Does your mother have a husband?’ – even though the meaning is the same, such question is considered to be very rude.

Another point to note is that the one who does not want to change himself and only searches for good places and good persons is in danger of following in Devadatta’s footsteps. Even though Devadatta met the Buddha, he did not change himself or his bad habits. On the contrary, Ānanda set out in search for a teacher having changed his mind first. The Buddha confirms this *sappurisasupanissaya* when he says to Ānanda that good friendship is the whole of the holy life⁶. In the Paṭṭhāna this idea is expressed by the words ‘*puggalopi upanissayapaccayena paccayo*’ (person also is a strong dependence condition). In this ‘*puggalopi*’ not only the *sapurissasampatti* can be understood. If we can keep our actions well directed (i.e. have *atta-sammāpaṇidhi*), even a *duppurisa*, or bad person, can be helpful to us. If *atta-sammāpaṇidhi* is present, encounters with an evil-minded person can stimulate our sense of urgency.

Now let us turn to the last of the four achievements needed on our path to total freedom: *pubbe ca kata puññatā*. It is important for the reason that if we have not done wholesome actions previously, the conditions for us to meet a proper person will not arise. If we do not meet a good person, we will not hear good Dhamma and without hearing good Dhamma we will not know about proper practice.

In one sutta Buddha may teach some specific *sampatti* and in other he may emphasize another. He does so, because the listener is a *pacchimabhavika*, one who is to gain liberation in this very life, his *pāramis* are mature, so he needs to consider and develop only some things. As for us, we better take care of and cultivate all of them.

Object strong dependence

Importance of the object strong dependence can be well shown with a story of Dhammaruci Thera from Therāpadāna. When Gotama Buddha to be, hermit Sumedha, was getting a definite prophecy from Dīpaṅkara Buddha, his friend Megha was present. The scene of Sumedha making aspiration and receiving a confirmation from the Buddha made a very strong, deep impression in his mind. He ordained, but after some time disrobed and not only that, he also killed his mother. For this heavy *kamma* he suffered in hell for a long time and in the time of our Gotama Buddha got a life of a giant *peta*-fish. One day he heard some shipwrecked sailors calling the name of Gotama and the object of Sumedha getting a prophecy from Dīpaṅkara Buddha arose in his mind causing a sense of urgency in him, with this mind the fish passed away and was reborn in Sāvatti. He met the Buddha very early in life and became an arahant at the age of seven.

Proximity strong dependence

Some teachers say that this is the real *upanissaya*. The rest strong dependence conditions are particularly powerful when they occur together with proximity strong dependence. If it is absent there is no guaranty that wholesome conditioning state will not cause unwholesome or vice versa, without it we cannot predict what will happen. Devadatta’s case is a perfect example of how wholesome states accompanied by wrong attention can become a cause for unwholesome states. Based on faith, morality etc., he gained worldly meditative attainments, but he used them to increase his fame and wealth, performing unwholesome actions himself and causing others to do the same. And to illustrate the opposite case scenario Gaṅgātīriyathera’s

⁶ SN 45.2

family story can be told⁷. One lady married twice but abandoned her families – leaving behind a son in her first marriage, and daughter in the second. Many years later she met her son and being strongly attracted, but not recognizing each other, they got married. Later, when the son met his stepsister, with whom he also fell in love, he took her as a second wife. One day they discovered the truth about their real relation. All of them felt extremely humiliated and ashamed of their lust so they decided to renounce the worldly life and in the due time all three became Arahants. So in this case earlier lust and dissatisfaction became a strong support for later eradication of all impurities of the mind.

Even beautiful factors if we pay wrong attention become very dangerous (like for Devadatta). Even menacing factors, such as lust, if we pay right attention can cause beautiful ones to arise. So wholesome states can become a strong support for both wholesome and unwholesome ones, as well as unwholesome states for unwholesome and wholesome.

You might have seen someone very rich with a wrong livelihood trying to change his life, change his means of survival to right livelihood and as a result becoming poor. Not being able to live like that they change back to their previous occupation. A question may be asked: why? The general tendency would be: the people who had right livelihood in their past lives and used their earnings properly (not only caring selfishly about themselves, not just cultivating their greed, but also sharing with others) will stick to right livelihood in this life too (this is their previous habit) and will be rich; those who had right livelihood, but used their wealth in a wrong way will have right livelihood, but will be poor; those of wrong livelihood in the past and wrong usage of gains, will be of wrong livelihood again and poor; those of wrong livelihood in the past and right usage of gains, will be of wrong livelihood and rich. If a person of this last category tries to change his livelihood – he becomes poor, so most of the time he would switch back to his wrong livelihood.

To conclude, if you want to depend on this strong support condition you have to consider both internal and external support, that is to say: *uppādita pakata* – you have to take care that good states arise internally – it is your own duty; and *upasevita pakata* – you have to search outside for a good person, proper requisites of life and Dhamma. Even a concept can become an *upasevita pakata*. Like in a case when we have a good name, we do not want to spoil it or when we consider that we are an ordained person and restrain ourselves on this account.

So let's try to develop Dhamma inside and go the middle way: gradually relinquish the things we should relinquish, and keep and increase the things on which it is proper to depend. Practicing in this way let's relinquish all our defilements and go into final renunciation attaining final independence.

⁷ ThA commentary to verses 127-8 (Gaṅgātīriyathera story)

10. Prenascence Condition (*Purejāta*)

The instance when a cause arises before a result and does not cease, but is at a static phase (*thiti*) when it conditions later consciousness and mental factors to arise is called prenascence. The 24 conditions in Paṭṭhāna get their names by reference to cause or result. In this case the name refers to the result: the state that has arisen (*jāta*) before (*pure*) the result. Here on conditioning side we have matter and on the conditioned side – mentality. It is similar to the Moon and the Sun, which arose in the world first, they provide light and heat to the beings that arise after. There are two types of prenascence condition: object-prenascence and base-prenascence.

Object-prenascence. The five sense objects (form, sound, smell, etc.) arise before the five sense-consciousnesses that take them as object, so they are related by prenascence condition, so do the other sense-sphere consciousnesses that arise in the five-door mental processes. Present concretely produced matter can be an object of insight meditation and likewise is related to the insight consciousness by prenascence condition. That means not only present five sense objects can be a condition for the mind in insight meditation, but also the five sensitivities can be related to the consciousness by object-prenascence. On the other hand these same sensitivities and the heart base can become a base for a consciousness to arise, but they can do so only after they have arisen themselves and are in the static phase. So generally we can say that during the course of existence a relation between a base and the consciousness that depends on it is that of **base-prenascence**. Unlike in conascence condition, by which mind and its base are related at the time of conception, but not during the course of existence, the prenascence condition between mind and base occurs during the course of existence, but not at rebirth. If we consider consciousness from the stand point of seven consciousness elements (*viññāṇa-dhātu*) – that is five sense-consciousness elements, mind element (*mano-dhātu*) (five-door-adverting and two receiving consciousnesses) and mind-consciousness element (*mano-viññāṇa-dhātu*, the rest 76 consciousnesses) – we will see that our rebirth consciousness is included in the last group. From this we can conclude that sometimes the mind-consciousness element is not conditioned by base-prenascence.

For the mentalities to arise through the five-sense door mental process there has to be a base, an object, attention and an external aid. Out of these four conditions, the object has to arise at least one moment before the consciousness, and the base at least few moments before its conditioned state. When dealing with this condition we should bear in mind these restrictions:

- time - only present;
- realm - only five aggregate world;
- dhamma - we exclude four immaterial resultant consciousnesses and take only present eighteen concretely produced matters.

It is worth considering that even though conditioning state has to arise at least one mind-moment before the conditioned state, we will still have both of them present after the result has arisen, which means they also will be related to each other by the way of presence and non-disappearance. In Paṭṭhāna there is no such thing as only one condition in one mind-moment. The one who studies conditional relations will gradually come to understand the depth of Buddha's omniscience partially. If not for the Blessed One himself, who else could have had investigated and revealed these complex and intertwined laws that we see in Paṭṭhāna?! All the Paṭṭhāna conditions are interrelated.

When one discerns cause and effect by the method of Dependent Origination or conditional relations, he can gain the knowledge of apprehending the causes (*paccayapariggahañāṇa*). The Buddha said not even in a dream is it possible to realize Nibbāna without gaining insight into the relationship of cause and effect.

11. Postnascence Condition (*Pacchājāta paccaya*)

A condition that supports the result that has arisen previously is called postnascence.

It was mentioned in the Introduction that a conditioning force can either produce, support or maintain the result.

The energy of postnascence can only maintain, because the result arises before the cause has arisen.

An analogy that could make this a little bit clearer would be that of a plant – it grows out of a seed, but still needs a support of the rain. Here the support of the rain is similar with postnascence. Or another example could be that of a human being – the main causes for him to be born are kamma and genes of a mother and a father, but in order to be alive, he still needs a support of nutrition. That later nutrition is similar with postnascence condition.

Both prenascence and postnascence can manifest only in the world of five aggregates because the conditioning and conditioned states involved in these relations are mind and matter. Prenascence condition can be compared to a real mother and postnascence is like a foster mother.

Let us consider one of the five aggregate worlds, the human world. At the arising phase of rebirth consciousness *kamma*-born matter arises. This matter is called *ekaja rūpa* or produced by one cause. At the static phase of rebirth consciousness temperature-born materiality begins to arise, at that time there are two types of matter, they are said to be produced by two causes (*dvija rūpa*). At the arising phase of the first bhavaṅga mind-born materiality arises, and the matter, taken all together, is produced by three causes (*tija rūpa*). And lastly, when a foetus starts getting nutrition from his mother nutriment-born materiality starts to arise and the matter present at that time is produced by four causes (*catuja rūpa*). This shows the gradual arising of the different matter, thus the later born mind will support matter originated from different causes also gradually.

Mind is powerful already at its arising phase, however matter at the phase of arising is weak; it gains strength only at the static phase. For this reason mind can give support as soon as it arises, whereas matter only in its standing phase. Moreover, matter is able to receive the support at its static phase only.

When postnascence condition is at work both cause and effect are present, so there will also be an energy of presence and non-disappearance conditions; and since it is mind and matter that are related here, the energy of dissociation will also give its support.

So far, we have seen this word '*jāta*' (meaning 'born') in three conditions: conascence, prenascence and postnascence. But despite the fact that the word is same, in different conditions it refers to different phases. In conascence all 3 phases of arising, standing and perishing are included. In prenascence – only the static phase – matter can support mentality only when it is at a static phase. The phenomena that are related by postnascence will be at either of two phases – arising or static.

Our kamma-born matter supports new kamma-born matter to arise and it ceases later. But we still need support of temperature and nutrition. Support provided by consciousness is especially powerful. For example, a physician tells one he is due to die now, but that man still has a strong wish to see someone – and even though he is not taking any medicine or food anymore, he does not pass away until he meets with one he wanted to see.

Knowing that mind can support matter empowers us to have control over it, and when the mind is dull we can prevent it from becoming extremely dull; or when it is very happy – from becoming extremely happy. Also, seeing these relationships between mind and matter we begin to understand that it is only pure phenomena rolling on (*suddhadhammā pavattanti*). But even though this is the reality, we still suffer a lot. Why? The problem is that we tend to think in terms of ‘I, me, my’. This ignorance (*avijja*) obstructs our vision, not allowing seeing the things as they are; and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*) sets us in a wrong direction. At the same time our craving (*taṇha*) embraces all that as ‘my, mine’. Sometimes we, Buddhist, pray: ‘May I get happiness of Nibbāna’. We misunderstand that Nibbāna has happiness. For the one who really wants to be free from these complications there are only two ways: penetration by listening (*savana paṭivedha*), that is establishing knowledge by listening and learning; and penetration by practicing (*bhavana paṭivedha*).

Applying Suttanta approach to this condition we can say that in the world our ancestors have founded many good things, but new generations cannot maintain it well. For this reason some say that postnascence is more important than pre-nascence – it is more difficult to maintain than to setup or start something. Those who established good things in the past did so with the mind of renunciation and detachment, those who inherited it, seeing it all as ‘my’, act with the mind of ego and greed. This kind of attitude destroys the society. Therefore postnascence is important in our daily life.

The one who understands how mind and matter condition each other will have a continuous growth of dhamma-knowledge and conditions will support him to relentlessly do good deeds with less and less attachment. At that time the perfections (*pāramī*) develop and that will bring about total freedom from physical and mental suffering later.

12. Repetition Condition (*Āsevana paccayo*)

The word ‘*asevana*’ is composed of two: ‘*ā*’ and ‘*sevana*’ that mean ‘repetition’ and ‘subsist on’ respectively, and by definition is a condition where conditioning mental states support arising of new mental states of a similar kind and give them power. When receiving this energy, the new mentality becomes more powerful in its own functions and in knowing the object. This condition can be obtained only in *javana* (impulsion) mind-moments of a cognitive process. But we have to remove the last *javana* on the side of cause because it does not have energy to support arising of similar type *javana*.

The resultant (*vipāka*) mentality arises because of the past *kamma* and has no energy to produce anything; it cannot make any effort to support the arising of new mentality and because of that it cannot have a repetition conditioning power. The Path mind-moment is also excluded from conditioning states since it cannot produce another Path mind-moment and the Fruition that follows it, is a mind of another kind. But the Path mind-moment can be on the side of result: being wholesome itself it does get energy from the wholesome mind preceding it – either change-of-lineage or cleansing mind (*gotrabhū* or *vodāna*) – despite the fact that those consciousness belong to different realms (*bhūmi*) – supramundane- and mundane-realms. Moreover, in the very same Path process, despite the fact that they have different objects, the mind of adaptation (*anuloma*) is a repetition condition to the following mind of either change-of-lineage or cleansing, the preceding one takes formations and the next one – Nibbāna as an object. Eighteen functional minds (excluding two adverting consciousness) arise because of powerful practice and for this reason are also included in this condition.

A conditioned state of this relation gets the support after its conditioning state has passed away so they are also related by conditions of absence and disappearance.

Pa Auk Sayadaw says there are four ways to cause arising of wholesome states:

1. one has to decide for himself that he should have wholesome mind (*niyāmita*);
2. he should incline his mind to the side of wholesomeness (*vināmita*);
3. he should direct the attention towards wholesomeness (*ābhujana*); and
4. he should practice what is wholesome (*samudācāra*).

In the long rounds of *saṃsāra*, before we become aware, our minds incline with these four factors to the unwholesome side, for this reason, on seeing a lovable object, we love extremely, and on encountering undesirable object we hate it heavily – we become slaves of the objects. When we practice something repeatedly, it becomes a trait (*bīja*) that will form a character (*carīta*) if we keep pursuing the same course of actions. The character in its own turn after having ruled one’s actions repeatedly for a very long time will turn into a tendency (*vāsana*) to behave in a particular way even in the future lives. It is only the Perfectly Enlightened who with eradication of all defilements gets rid of this past tendencies as well. They get engrained so deep in the continuum of an individual that no disciple is capable of destroying it. A good example of this that we get in the scriptures is ven. Pilindavaccha⁸, his habit of addressing others as ‘outcasts’ remained even after he attained Arahatsip.

⁸ Ud 3.6

But when a particular habit is at the level of character it still can be changed, and, for example, if one is of an angry temperament, if he practices in this life to change this habitual pattern by cultivating loving-kindness, in the next life he may become a soft kind-hearted person. So, gradually, step-by-step we should train ourselves to do good. As for bad actions – the best is to stop performing them before they turn into a habit, if it is already a trait stop it from becoming a temperament, if it already a temperament, prevent it from becoming a deeply engrained tendency. In Myanmar they say: ‘If you have already eaten one onion, two won’t make a difference – better do not stop and eat up to the full.’ This is a very likely logic that people follow when performing unwholesome actions – once a small misdeed is accomplished it opens the gates to performance of bigger and heavier actions. A story of queen Sāmavāṭī’s past life can be given as an illustration⁹. Once she was a queen and with 500 of her ladies went to bath to a river. Feeling cold after bathing they set one bush thicket on fire. With the perception that it was (just) a heap of grass they did not notice a solitary Buddha meditating inside. As the fire burned the grass they saw the solitary Buddha, then thinking ‘The king’s Paccekabuddha is burning; if the king comes to know this, he’ll murder us. Let’s make sure he is burned totally and we are not discovered’, they all fetched grass, wood etc., heaped it on top of him, ignited the fire, and departed in the belief that ‘Now he’ll burn’. Having been those who at first acted unintentionally, they became those acting with unwholesome minds.

When we see something often, it affects our brain, we start thinking about it, and thinking about something a lot provokes physical and verbal actions; the more we repeat the actions the more serious consequences it brings for us, even in the future lives.

No consciousness gives repetition energy to the first *javana*. That is why it is relatively weak and can give result only in this very life. The last *javana*, even though still has some power to it, is not strong enough to cause one more *javana* to follow, and the volition associated with it can only give result in the immediately next life. Only the middle five *javanās* get repetition energy in full and are capable to leave *kammic* force that can give result in any later future existence. And it is not too wise on our part to perform deeds of merit with hope to get immediate fruits (*diṭṭhadhamma vedanīya*). With this hope we search for a holy person, someone of great meditative attainments. But even if we succeed, the result we get is minor – it only effects our physical wealth in this life. However valuable treasure may be, it is only matter (*rūpa*), and all matter is rootless, it cannot become a strong cause for a result in the far future. It resembles a very beautiful flower bud or shoot with a very weak or even no root – it cannot last long, let alone give good fruits in the future. Separation in this world is unavoidable. With some things we part during the life, with others we part when we die. In any case, we have to separate from all the ones we love and all our possessions. So it is better to be a little more farsighted than just caring about getting this rootless result in this very life.

The way to eradicate the bad habits is to replace them with good ones. We have to train our mind to incline towards a good object, or to train our mind in paying proper attention when we encounter bad objects.

The action by which we reduce craving (*taṇha*), conceit (*māna*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*), and that is accompanied by enough compassion (*karuṇa*) and skill (*upāyakosalla*) is called perfection (*pāramī*). Please, do not do unwholesome actions and when you do wholesome, may it be a perfection. By acting in this way repeatedly may you attain Nibbāna, which is free from the repeated suffering (*dukkha*).

⁹ UdA 7.10

13. Kamma Condition (*Kamma paccayo*)

Specialisation (*vyāpāra*) of volition is called *kamma*. When the result arises at the same time as the volition, it is called conascence-*kamma* (*sahajāta-kamma*) and when there is a gap in the time between the cause and result – it is asynchronous-*kamma* (*nānākkhaṇika-kamma*). It is volition that we call *kamma*. Volition that is arising during an action is conascence-*kamma*, and the energy that volition has left behind after wholesome or unwholesome act had been done, is called asynchronous-*kamma*.

Without knowing the workings of *kamma* it is not possible to get right view of knowing actions and their results (*kammassakatāsammadiṭṭhi*), which is the most basic knowledge for every Buddhist.

After the *kamma* has finished giving result, or the time when it could have given result has elapsed, it becomes defunct or ineffectual (*ahosi*). At that time the volition has no more energy. For example, ven. Aṅgulimāla before becoming a monk had killed many people, but when he had become an Arahant, the past volition had no more kammic energy to produce result in the future. All his good and bad *kamma* became defunct because he had removed the craving-cause. Only in these two instances – when craving-cause is removed, or the *kamma* becomes out-of-date – *kamma* does not get a chance to give result. Otherwise the kammic force will be never lost and will follow one throughout the *saṃsāra*.

Most Buddhists are very familiar with the instruction given by the Buddha¹⁰:

*Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ,
kusalassa upasampadā
Sacittapariyodapanaṃ
etaṃ buddhāna sāsanaṃ.*

Not to do evil,
To do what is good,
And to cleanse one's own mind:
This is the teaching of all the Buddhas.

But even though they know this well, most do not follow the advice before they turn eighty.

Volition is likened to a manager that organizes other mental factors to perform their functions well or to a chief disciple who encourages himself to make effort and complete his own task and the younger disciples to make efforts to complete their individual tasks.

During the course of existence together with volition, mind-born matter also arises, so it conditions this materiality as well. After the volition has passed away it leaves behind a seed planted that can give result in the future by causing wholesome and unwholesome resultant mentality (*kusala* and *akusala vipāka*) and *kamma*-born materiality (*kammajā rūpa*) to arise. This is asynchronous-*kamma*.

¹⁰ Dhp 183

When a visible object impinges on our eye-sense-door, there is a support of light, and we pay enough attention to it, the eye-door-cognitive process arises. At that time one mind-moment already has passed, then for a mind-moment *bhavaṅga* vibrates and with the following one the flow of *bhavaṅga* is cut. Mind adverts to the object, sees it, receives, investigates, and determines it. If we experience the object fully, seven *javana* mind-moments follow, and in case the object still has some life-span left, two moments of registration take place. After that *bhavaṅga* flow resumes.¹¹ It is the volition of wholesome and unwholesome seven *javanas* that is most important to us, because it forms asynchronous-*kamma*. The volition associated with resultant and functional consciousness does not have enough energy to give result in the future. Resultant consciousness is a result of past *kamma* already and functional consciousness arises just in order to perform its function in the present moment.

Volition differs by time of ripening – some can give result during the present life, other – during the next one, still other have no time limit for the result to ripen and can give fruit at any future life before one attains *parinibbāna*. The fourth type is, already mentioned, defunct or expired *kamma*, which cannot give result anymore.

It is important to understand the value of the mentality that arises while performing actions. Its value is much more than that of any material treasure. Another person can be good to you only on the physical level, and it is only you yourself who can improve your mind. When another person abuses you, he can only harm you on the physical level, and it is only you yourself who can harm your mind. Beware: the physical damage is not as serious as mental, so oneself can become the worst enemy of oneself. When somebody harms you, you can think, ‘Yes, now he harmed me physically, but I won’t let him damage my mind’. As long as your mind is strong enough, nobody can cause unwholesome states to arise in you.

In order to perform a wholesome action of giving that can produce its result already in the present life, immediately effective *kamma*, some factors have to be fulfilled:

1. Volition and faith have to be strong.
2. Property to be offered has to be acquired by the means of right livelihood.
3. A receiver has to be a truly holy person – an Arahant or an Anāgāmī.
4. At the time of offering the receiver has to just have emerged from the attainment of cessation.

At that time, if one makes an offering with the mind of expectation to get the results, the wholesome action is of inferior (*omaka*) class, an action bounded by craving.

Whenever wholesome action is done it should be accompanied by knowledge and done with a happy mind, bounded by wholesome states both before and after the deed itself.

Ledi Sayadaw divided the wholesome deeds according to their superiority into three groups¹²:

1. those done with expectation of fame and gain (*yasakāmatāyapavattitaṃ hīnaṃ*), it is the lowest kind of *kamma*;
2. those done in wish to acquire merits (*puññaphalakāmatāya pavattitaṃ majjhimam*), it is *kamma* of a middle grade;

¹¹ Bhavaṅga literally it means ‘a factor of life’, a necessary parts of our life. It maintains the life when there is no cognitive process taking place, it arises because of the past kamma.

¹² Ven.Ledi Sayadaw ‘A Manual of the Excellent Man’ (*Uttamapurisa Dīpanī*)

3. those done just because of knowing that doing good is a way of holy people, that this is the course of action of noble ones, this is the way to be followed (*kattabbamevidanti ariyābhāvaṃ nissāya paṇitaṃ*), it is of the highest class.

The Buddha said, that if beings only would know the cause and effect relationship as he does, nobody would dare to do anything unwholesome, and nobody would postpone doing good deeds.

By order of ripening *kamma* is classified into four types:

1. Weighty (*garuka*) *kamma*. It is wholesome *kamma* of practicing *jhāna*, and unwholesome *kamma* of fixed wrong view and five heinous crimes.
2. Death-proximate (*āssana*) *kamma* – the action that one performs or remembers on the verge of death.
3. Habitual (*āciṇṇa*) *kamma*. It is either an action that one does repeatedly, or something one does once, but remembers repeatedly.
4. Stored-up (*kaṭatta*) *kamma* – any other action that has been done and is strong enough to cause rebirth.

Sometimes people misunderstand and think death-proximate *kamma* is the most important. But in fact, if there is a prominent habitual *kamma* it will easily become death-proximate. That is why we should take care of our *kamma* before death knocks on the door.

There are two kinds of works (*vyāpāra*) one can pay attention to: the personal (*puggala*) work and nature (*dhamma*) work. Here personal refers to a person taking care and making effort, and dhamma – to the nature taking care and bringing results. The most important for us is personal work. In the practice of meditation we only need to take care of our practice, the results and attainments is the care of dhamma. Unfortunately, nowadays people tend to focus more on results instead of taking care of their practice. They talk a lot about their attainments and forget to continue with their practice. If we emphasize dhamma work more, our personal care suffers. And it is a very big danger if you think you have attained and stop practicing, while in reality you have not attained anything yet. Our Buddha, meanwhile the audience would chant three times ‘*Sadhu*’ in the end of a Dhamma talk would go into the attainment of cessation. He never stopped practicing, even though he had attained the highest of all dhammas. As long as we are still carrying the burden of five aggregates, we should never stop practicing, the attainments will come in their own turn in accord with the workings of dhamma. If one does not take care of his duties and is only discussing the salary, he will be kicked out from his job.

Normal wholesome action can produce a result that will send one to a good destination (*sugati*), but it can cause many sufferings and complications as well. A wholesome action that is a perfection (*pāramī*) has the power to send one to a good destination too, and on top of that it can also give a good rank, knowledge in this life, as well as send to Nibbāna in the future.

Kamma is similar to a seed. And with regard to a seed we have three duties:

1. Before we plant, we have to take care of it (making sure the insects do not eat or spoil it).
2. We have to plant it.
3. We have to take care of it by pouring water, giving fertilizer, weeding etc.

The duty of past *kamma* is to send one to a proper life. But one still has the duty to maintain the good *kamma* in the present. You can be born in a good realm, have good healthy body and have capacity above average to concentrate, be mindful and apply effort, but with the view of the future you still should improve

yourself. According to Ledi Sayadaw if one at least understands four elements with their individual and common characteristics this will be enough of a perfection to support the attainment of Nibbāna in the next life. So it is better to take care of both present and future. And in order to do that four kinds of supports, which already have been mentioned in the discussion of strong dependence condition, are very helpful. Let's recall them again:

- 1) *pubbe ca kata puññatā* - one should have done wholesome actions previously;
- 2) *paṭirūpadesavāsa* - one should be at the proper place;
- 3) *sappurisasupanissaya* - one should have proper association;
- 4) *atta-sammāpaṇidhi* - one should set oneself in a right direction.

We can see that environment is important, but it is not the only factor to take care of, our genes or seeds we carry within us are also of great importance. It is only those who will surely attain full liberation in this very life do not depend so much on the environment, some of great *pāramī* could attain Arahantship despite the unfavorable and difficult external situation of their life.

So we say that seed is important, but it still has to be planted, one still needs knowledge with regards to how to plant it. One needs enough knowledge to direct the *kamma*.

Sometimes a simple tale can carry deep meaning. Three fishes caught by a fisherman were lying in the boat while he was rowing back to the shore. One fish trusted only in the present effort and kept jumping with the hope to escape. As a result, the fisherman simply killed it. The second one thought, '*Kamma* will save me', and did nothing; in this way it followed to a pot and turned into a curry. The third one relied on the wisdom and effort – when fisherman was looking at it – it played dead, but when not – it jumped out of the boat and gained freedom.

We can divide beings into four groups:

1. Those that make livelihood in reliance on effort (*uṭṭhāna phalūpajīvī*).
2. Those that rely on the past merit (*kamma phalūpajīvī*), these are especially beings in celestial worlds and hells.
3. Those that rely both on effort and the past merit (*uṭṭhāna kamma phalūpajīvī*).
4. Those that cannot rely nor on effort, nor on the past merit (*neva uṭṭhāna na kamma phalūpajīvī*).

As human beings we should believe in *kamma* as well as practice, try hard. In order to get good results, as we have mentioned in the chapter on strong dependence, we need four achievements – of time, realm, bodily faculties and that of right practice. The first three of those are also called achievements by birth (*jāti upapatti sampatti*) and the fourth – achievement by practice (*ācāra upapatti sampatti*). Out of the two the last one is more important – keeping morality is of much more benefit than beautiful appearance. Here we would also like to add to the list of four a fifth one – achievement of knowledge (*ñāṇa sampatti*), which could be considered to be a part of the right practice. We should keep applying our knowledge and effort in order to continue with doing good deeds, in this way we will get present happiness, future good life and we can attain Nibbāna, the final cessation of the *kamma*.

14. Resultant Condition (*Vipāka paccaya*)

The resultant condition is a condition where a conditioning state is quiet, calm and effortless and it causes the associated conditioned states to be even calmer and more stable than they are.

It is likened to a person sleeping under a shady tree – he is already calm – when a soft breeze passes it makes his sleep even calmer.

When we say ‘calm’ what is meant is effortlessness. Both conditioning and conditioned states are resultant. On the cause side is mentality, on the result side – associated mentality, mind-born matter and kamma-born matter at rebirth, excluding the two intimations (*viññatti*).

We can say that kamma condition is similar to doing work, and resultant condition is like receiving pension after the retirement.

When we perform any deed, good or bad, our temperament and craving influences the actions and therefore also effects the result. Everyone has different temperament and different cravings, so we all get different results. We can see an example of this in the story of a rich man Mendaka¹³. There were five people in his household. At the time of famine all of them offered same amount of their last rice to a Solitary Buddha that had just emerged from the attainment of cessation. Even though they all made same offering, same merit, their aspirations, wishes, their cravings were different. Mendaka’s wish was to have the means to give seed-rice to all the inhabitants India and to never be obliged to work for his living, to have his granaries always full. His wife aspired to have the power by which she could feed all people of India from one pint-pot of boiled rice. His son wanted to have the power with a single purse of a thousand pieces of money to give money to all those living in India; and no matter how much he would give, have that purse full. The daughter-in-law wished to have the power by setting a basket of grain before her to give seed-rice to all Indians. And lastly, his slave made a wish, when he plows, ‘may seven wide furrows run’, and although he could have wished for any high rank, post and position by reason of his attachment to his mistress and his master, he also aspired to be a slave of the very same woman and the same very man in future lives. They all made the same donation, but the result will differ according to the craving that bounded the action and according to their temperament. So we should be very careful when we perform actions, because we cannot control the result, the outcome; it will be determined by our current action, craving and temperament. If we want good result, it is better to control our craving and temperament while performing actions.

We say that result is stable, calm and quiet, but a question may arise whether this is also true with regards to an unwholesome result. When we encounter a desirable object, we experience wholesome result, when the object is undesirable – the result is unwholesome. Both those experiences are calm. A sleeping moment of a dog and a sleeping moment of a man do not differ; the *bhavaṅgas* of both are continuing to take their objects calmly. On the occasion when a visible object impinges on the eye-door, excluding the five-door-adverting consciousness, the eye, receiving, investigating and registering consciousnesses are all resultant, they simply arise for a moment and cease regardless of whether the object is desirable or undesirable. All those just know the object, perform their function and do not experience the object in full, unlike *javana*. If compared with *javana* mind-moments, wholesome and unwholesome resultant consciousness are light, not active.

¹³ For the full story see the Dhpa to the verse 252

Resultant states are a result of mature wholesome and unwholesome *kamma*. According to the law of nature these do not have an ability to experience the object as they like. The only exception to that is the Fruition consciousness, which take Nibbāna as its object experiencing it fully.

When unwholesome result ripens during the sleep we get nightmares. Can it be said that one is calm when experiencing a nightmare? Logically we could say that on the background of an intense dream *bhavaṅga* appears even calmer than when it is looked at in a continuous flow.

The importance of knowing the function of result can be shown by a story from Mahānārada Kassapa Jātaka (Ja 544). At a certain time there were three people: a queen, a general and a slave. All three could recollect their past lives, but only the queen Rujā, being able to see seven past lives, had right view and understanding. Alāta, the general, could only discern his last past life in which he was a cow-butcher, so he thought bad and good actions do not bear fruits – he had killed so many animals, and yet his present life is very good. The third one, Bījaka the slave, could see that in his past life he had been a rich man that he had been doing a lot of offerings, had kept good moral conduct, observed the *uposatha* and had been praised for that by everybody. Despite all that, he became a slave in this life so he drew a conclusion that virtuous behavior is of no fruit. A king, who was searching for the truth, was quite confused on hearing their stories and it took a Bodhisatta himself to come down from the Brahma world, in which he was dwelling at the time, and explain the actions of the past of those people in full, and show the real causes for their statuses in the current lives. At the time of Kassapa Buddha, Alāta-to-be offered a garland of flowers to the Buddha. This *kamma* influenced his other unwholesome deeds not to give result right now, ‘covered and hid’ them for a short while. As for the slave – at the time of Kassapa Buddha a Bījaka-to-be was a farmer, and one day while looking for a lost cow he met a monk, who had lost the way and asked for directions. In reply he abused the monk calling him a slave. This unwholesome action influenced the situation of his current life. Knowing *kamma* and result just partially can easily bring one to the wrong conclusions, therefore it is very dangerous, and an effort should be made to have a full understanding, it should be accompanied by the knowledge of the law of dependent origination. It is said that as long as one does not know the dependent origination, the law of cause and effect, even though he could see his lives as far as 40 world-cycles back, he still will not be able to understand the workings of the reality. But even just a theoretical knowledge and acceptance of the law of cause and effect is of great benefit and protection.

Resultant states condition the nascent mentality. But even that being so, a dog can never become a Stream-enterer. The reason is that its resultant consciousness does not provide a proper condition for it to understand the Dhamma. *Bhavaṅga* restricts one as to how far he can progress on the path. Only the one whose *bhavaṅga* allows can enjoy higher dhammas such as *jhāna*, Path and Fruition. So for the one who wishes to attain these high dhammas not only present actions (*bhava*) have to be of a high grade, the result of the past (*bhavaṅga*) has to be of a high grade as well.

May all of my Dhamma friends practice higher *bhava*, reach high future *bhavaṅga* and attain final cessation of *bhava* and *bhavaṅga*, Nibbāna.

15. Nutriment Condition (Āhāra paccaya)

The energy that brings the result of the condition well is called nutriment condition.¹⁴ Here ‘brings’ means ‘supports to last long’. The nutriment can support in two ways: by its producing energy and by its supporting energy. In the body there are two kinds of nutriment: physical and mental. Material food helps to maintain our physical body. Mental food helps to maintain associated mentality and mind-born matter, as well as kamma-born matter at the time of conception.

Physical nutriment, in Pali ‘*kabalīkāra āhāra*’, literally means a lump of food that one can bring to the mouth with a hand. But that is only what we call nutriment on the level of conventional reality. From the point of view of ultimate reality, the real nutriment is a nutritive essence (*oja*), which is found in every *kalāpa* (elementary particle). That nutritive essence ceases very soon after it has arisen, it lasts only 17 mind-moments. But before ceasing the fire element of the *kalāpa* produces new *kalāpa* in another place, which in turn will produce another before ceasing itself. For this reason, it is impossible to bring the same nutriment in a lump to the mouth, but we still use the term because the Buddha did not want to neglect the truth of conventional reality.

Mental nutriment constitutes contact, volition, and consciousness. The rest of the fifty mental factors also bring their results, but are not called nutriment, because it is only these three that are of great benefit to our body.

The Buddha taught a doctrine of non-self, and in order to break down one’s ego, according to His teachings, we have to understand about the nutriment.

To maintain our mind and body we need the support of nutrition. But on the other hand, both excess and deficiency of support cause problems, and perpetuate the rounds of rebirth.

Buddha gave striking similes for the four nutriments.¹⁵ He compared food to the meat of one’s own little son, he instructed to eat bearing this simile in the mind. One should be mindful and maintain the knowledge at the time when searching or keeping food and properties, because this is a ground where it is very easy for unwholesome states to arise. Volition is compared to two executioners that drag a man towards and into a pit of glowing embers. These two are our good and bad *kamma*. If good *kamma* gets its chance, it will throw one into the fire of a good existence; if bad *kamma* gets its chance, it will throw one into the fire of a bad existence. Consciousness is similar to a torturer who thrice daily pierces a prisoner with three hundred spears. Our mind is just like that – defilements keep arising when thinking about past, present and future. The contact is compared to a skinned cow, which cannot escape contact with creatures nibbling at it, even for a moment. Whenever our six sense-doors encounter an object – contact arises, with the contact – feeling arises, the feeling is followed by craving, and all actions that are based on craving bring suffering of impermanence. In one Jātaka we read a story about a beloved king’s general that on victorious return from a serious battle has been granted by the king a wish. The general requested to get the king’s wife. He was not refused, but instead, king asked him to bring three cups – golden, silver and copper and fill them with a very bitter decoction of a tree bark. Having made him drink from each cup, the king asked if the taste differed.

¹⁴ In Pali language ‘āharati’ means to bring.

¹⁵ SN 12.63

The general saw – it is all the same, and gave up his wish. In the same way all sensations are impermanent, they bring only suffering. All contact, being the food for feeling should be understood in the same manner.

From a perspective of Abhidhamma physical nutriment brings the matter, body, that is nutriment-born materiality; volition as nutriment brings new existence; contact brings three types of feelings; and (the rebirth) consciousness brings the associated mental factors and matter.

But even though from the similes given by the Buddha the seriousness of the nutriment, the suffering associated with it can be clearly seen, we still cannot avoid it.

To get a life as human, a human-rebirth, three conditions have to be fulfilled:

1. The genes of a mother and a father have to mix;
2. The mother has to be in a proper season.;
3. A seed of rebirth consciousness has to come in.

With these coming together normally three kinds of *kamma*-born *kalāpas* and the earliest *bhavaṅga*, which is called rebirth-linking consciousness, arise. During the first seven days a ‘*kalala*’, a tiny drop of liquid forms; in the next seven days it turns into a ‘*abbuda*’, a spongy substance; and that turns into a ‘*pesi*’, a block, in the next seven days; a ‘*ghana*’, a bigger solid particle forms during the next week, developing into a ‘*pasākha*’, a form with five branches, a week later. After that our sensitivities, such as eye, ear, etc., start to form gradually.

During this development step-by-step the matter of the body changes from being produced by one cause (*ekajakāya rūpa*) all the way to the matter produced by four causes (*catujakāya rūpa*)¹⁶. The nutriment-born materiality starts to arise when one starts receiving the outside nutriment support. From that time onwards the nutriment-born materiality continually arises in the body up to the time of death.

How does the body get nutriment from the food, which is a temperature-born materiality? The nutritive-essence of the *kalāpas* of food nourishes the body mainly with the assistance of the digestive fire – the fire element of the life-nonad *kalāpas*, which are found throughout the body. There are two stages of nutrition. The first stage takes place when the digestive fire meets with the nutritive essence of the food in our alimentary canal. By that meeting, further materiality is generated throughout the body: that is, nutriment-born octad-*kalāpas*. The second stage of nutrition is when the digestive fire meets with the nutritive essence of those nutriment-born octad-*kalāpas* as well as the nutritive-essence of other materiality of the body. By that meeting, two to twelve generations of further materiality is generated. So for example, in the case of an eye: when in the second stage, the nutritive-essence of a nutriment-born octad-*kalāpa* together with the digestive fire meets with the nutritive-essence of an eye-decad *kalāpa* four to five generations of nutriment-born octad-*kalāpas* are generated. Then the fire element in those new *kalāpas* generates ten to twelve generations of temperature-born octad-*kalāpas*. And this same process takes place with the other kinds of *kalāpas* found in the eye (body decad, sex decad, consciousness-born octad, etc.). In the same way the

¹⁶ See

nutriment from food and drink nourishes the whole body¹⁷.

The material nutriment is important – if we do not take food we will not be able to practice the way to liberation. But if we remember that the Buddha said that if he would have to define the fifth grave-offense causing defeat (*pārājika*) it would be craving for the taste (*rasa-taṇha*), we will understand how great is the danger associated with this attachment. The problem is that we cannot stop eating, even lord Buddha had to surrender to the nature and eat, but while we are concerned about consuming food, many problems arise on the way.

Mental nutriment is not much safer either. In the Suttanta approach wholesome volition is good, but from the standpoint of nutriment, there is no good volition – any volition can send one to a new existence, new suffering.

If one wants be free from rounds of rebirth, he better does wholesome actions, which are opposite of unwholesome, without any wish to get a worldly good result on this account. As long as there is an attachment to the results, it is impossible to be free from *saṃsāra*. The best is to bind any wholesome action by insight knowledge, contemplating that the result of wholesome and unwholesome is impermanent. This kind of reflection turns the action into a perfection (*pāramī*). When doing a good deed, a wise man pays attention only to how to do a good job, carrying about well-being of others.

Having explained how nutriment controls our lives, let's see if and how we can escape from it. Even though we cannot go too far from the four nutriments, we still have the chance to control and manage our volition, our kamma, and our mind.

Description of how nutriment spreads and supports the body given above shows how all the matter produced by four causes (by *kamma*, consciousness, nutriment and temperature) is closely interrelated and influences each other. We cannot change results of our past *kamma* that we are experiencing now, but we surely can influence the mind. Control over the mind can become a powerful tool with the help of which we can reduce suffering greatly despite the fact of being bounded by matter.

There is an ancient Sinhalese story about a king named Janavasabha. His astrologer predicted that he could remain on the throne for 12 years only. But he changed his *kamma* by freely giving water, medicine, dwelling, by renovating the old buildings, by keeping five and eight precepts. In this way he remained as a king of the country for 40 years. If the *kamma* is not too heavy, we can influence it. Temperature and food can as well make the life span longer or shorter. We can see it when we consider the difference between lifespans of various Buddhas. To become a Buddha everyone has to accumulate same *pāramī*, or, we can say, to have same *kamma*. But the Kassapa Buddha lived for 8000 years, whereas Gotama – 80. Why? It is because of different nutriment and temperature support. Even if the *kamma* is good, but one does not care about food he will die; even if the *kamma* is bad, but one takes care to get proper nutrition, he can extend his live. If we take two people who are practicing insight meditation – both are with wholesome minds and have good *kamma* – if they have different support of temperature and nutrition, definitely their life span will differ. Therefore, we not only need mindfulness and knowledge, but also should take proper food and have a support of suitable temperature.

The power of mind is really great and cannot be underestimated. The Buddha says if one practices the four bases for success (*iddhipāda*), he can stretch his life span to the full *āyukappa* (a normal life-span during the

¹⁷ For more details, see Ven. Pa-Auk Tawya Sayadaw 'Workings of Kamma', 2nd edition, p.100-101

particular era). The king Bimbisāra could stay in the jail without taking food because of the practice of the attainment of fruition, a powerful base for success.

If you want to have a long life and continue doing a lot of good deeds, support yourself and others according to the Buddha's teaching, please, practice these four bases (i.e. wish, mind, energy and knowledge).

Nutriment being a part of mind and matter is the object of the insight-knowledge. With the growth of the understanding about this nutriment the understanding of the two basic knowledges of insight – the Knowledge of Definition of Mentality and Materiality (*nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa*) and Knowledge of Apprehending the Cause (*paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa*) – will also grow. If you practice insight-meditation based on these two knowledges, your insight knowledge will progress and you can attain Nibbāna. May all of my Dhamma friends manage and use nutriment well and attain Nibbāna, which is free from the support and enemy in the form of nutriment.

16. Faculty Condition (*Indriya paccaya*)

The faculty condition is a condition where a conditioning state governs and controls the conditioned states in a particular area or function with which it is concerned.

This condition is of three kinds:

1. When the conditioning state controls the mind and matter that arise together with it, it is conascence-faculty (*sahajātindriya*) condition.
2. When the conditioning material state controls the mind and it has arisen before the conditioned state it is prenascent-faculty (*purejāta-indriya*) condition.
3. The life-faculty that has a control over the kamma-born materiality that arises together with it is called physical life-faculty (*rūpa-jīvitindriya*) condition.

There are twenty-two dhammas that are called ‘faculty’ (*indriya*):

five physical sensitivities (*pasāḍindriya*);

two sexual faculties (*bhāvindriya*);

physical and mental life faculties (*rūpārūpa jīvitindriya*);

mind faculty (*manindriya*),

feeling (*vedanindriya*),

five faculties-powers (*bala indriya*): of faith (*saddhindriya*), energy (*viriyindriya*), mindfulness (*satindriya*), concentration (*samādhindriya*) and wisdom (*paññindriya*);

three faculties of special knowledges: the faculty of ‘I will know the unknown’ (*anaññātāññassāmītindriya*), of final knowledge (*aññindriya*) and of one who has final knowledge (*aññātāvindriya*).

Of them the five sensitive matters are conditioning as prenascent-faculties (*purejātindriya*); the life-faculty of matter as a physical life-faculty; and all mental faculties as conascence-faculties.

Among the twenty-two faculties named above there are also femininity and masculinity, but they are not a conditioning state in this relation. Although they control the feature, mark, occupation and deportment of a person to be feminine or masculine, they do not have this power all the time – for example, at the time of rebirth as such they do not have any chance to manifest.

Some say that getting life of a male or a female is concerned with person’s wholesome and unwholesome kamma. But we have to consider that to get a life there has to be not only kamma, but also clinging (*upādāna*). And in some cases kamma will overweight clinging, in others clinging will be stronger. For example, in a case of a transgenderist – there is a strong kamma to be a man, but the clinging to man’s life is very weak. Or we may take a very smart lady – even though she has a good past kamma, nevertheless she is a woman because she has a strong attachment to a life of a female. There also may be someone who would like to be reborn as a man but he cannot because his kamma does not allow. So the same gender may be determined both by presence and lack of good kamma. In the West mostly people easily accept gay or lesbian life, in the East – not so, there people believe it is a result of bad kamma. But even someone with a great amount of good kamma, if he is attached to the life of a gay, he will be reborn as a gay, and his good kamma will support him in leading his life with dignity, without experiencing pain on account of complicated relationships.

In Samyoga Sutta of Anguttara Nikāya¹⁸ the Buddha says that as long as a man delights in his masculine comportment, appearance, aspect, his desire, voice and ornamentation and becomes excited by external feminine features, he cannot escape from man's life if there is a kamma to support that. And it well may be opposite: also there is a kamma for a rebirth as a man, but a lady delights in her feminine comportment, appearance, aspect, her desire, voice and ornamentation and becomes excited by external masculine features, she cannot escape from being reborn as a woman. If one still would like to say that it is because of unwholesome kamma that one is reborn as a woman, and on account of good kamma – as a man, then he should consider a case of Devadatta. The amount of unwholesome deeds he had done in the past for sure should have given him a life of a female. Or in the case of Yasodharā, for the uncountable acts of good that she had done, surely she should have been reborn as a man.

Taking into consideration the 'third gender', all those who do not fit into a standard box of being a man or a woman, we can see that behaviour can depend more on the clinging, temperament and habitual tendencies; and the two faculties of sex not always can control not only in the early time of life, but also during the later course of existence, consequently they are excluded from this condition.

As for the physical life faculty, it is present only in the kamma-born matter. The matter that originates from other causes – temperature-born, nutriment-born and mind-born – do not have it. For those three the temperature, nutrition and mind that produces them is like their parents and these 'parents' are there when the 'child' is born. But for the kamma-born matter the kamma that produced it, and which is similar to the parents, is gone, it is in the past. So the matter that arises because of the past kamma needs something in the present to maintain it, and this is the function of life-faculty.

The reason for the Buddha to teach faculties is to show the mid-point between two extremes, the middle way. The one who wants to go to Nibbāna should control six faculties and

avoid the extremes of luxury and asceticism. The two extremes arise because of these faculties. If one controls them too much – he falls into extreme of self-mortification, and if one gives too much freedom to them – he winds up in indulgence in the sense pleasures.

If you want to be free from suffering of arising and passing away you should control these six and become their master, otherwise you will be their slave. The controlling faculties are compared with ministers. If you can control them – you will become the king ruling over them, but if you do not, then you will become like a citizen that has to pay the ministers taxes.

To be able to control the physical faculties one has to control his mental faculties, by doing so he will be the one in charge of all faculties.

Every formation in this world is impermanent. One day we have to part from our property and those dear to us. But at the time when that happens people do not think it is something natural. We find difficulty to explain it, we do not want to except it. All this happens because our attachment covers the truth, conceals it from us. The one who is clinging to the sense pleasures is attached to outside more, whereas the one who is clinging to self-mortification is attached to inside more. In order to be free from these two extremes, one should have the five faculties-powers (*bala-indriya*). Among those five the faith (*saddha*) is the most basic and it can be both cause and result. The faith that is the cause makes one to believe well. The faith-result makes one calm. But if the faith becomes extreme one will accept everything without any objection, without any consideration. On the other hand, having too much intellectual knowledge makes one cunning. What is really needed is knowledge, a proper knowledge (*paññā*) is the best property in the human life.

¹⁸ AN 7.51

A high level of energy will help one to go through whatever suffering life may present, to surmount any obstacle. A good one-pointedness will enable one to see everything as it really is. But if the energy becomes excessive it causes restless; and if it is concentration that is not balanced it will cause dullness. The main controlling factor, by which one can adjust the faculties, is mindfulness.

When one gains the skill to balance the faculties well by means of mindfulness, real wisdom arises.

While the Bodhisattva was practicing perfections he used to live with mind concerned about how to support and help others. When he became fully enlightened, when his perfections had been fulfilled, he became the best in understanding the needs of others, the best in helping others. That is why he knew all the things proper to be known. He knew the method of presentation, how to teach, the temperament of a listener, as well as whether his five faculties-powers were mature or not. By knowing the other, we can better help him better. Without knowing the other, you cannot really help him.

If you want to live peacefully, harmoniously with your surroundings, maintaining equanimity, try to understand the needs of others and try to help others as much as you can. And even at the time when you cannot help another, try to control your faculties not to harm yourself or others. By exercising this kind of control, may you attain the three faculties of special knowledges, that is to say, the knowledges of path and fruition.

17. Jhāna Condition (*Jhāna paccaya*)

The *jhāna* condition is a condition where a conditioning state closely contemplates the object and causes the conditioned states to do the same.

The analogy of this condition is that of a person who being on the top of a hill sees for himself objects down below and he tells about what he sees to those who are on the ground.

The conditioning states here are five *jhāna* factors – initial application of thought, sustained application, joy, feeling and one-pointedness. They themselves contemplate an object closely as well as condition the associated mentality to contemplate the object closely just like they do. For example, when one reaches the first mindfulness of breath (*ānāpāna*) *jhāna*, the five *jhāna* factors remove opposite hindrances, and help the associated mentality to contemplate the object closely just like they do themselves. This shows the two functions that *jhāna* factors have:

1. removing hindrances; and
2. leading associated mental factors to contemplate mental object closely just like they do.

This is just what the word '*jhāna*' means – closely and strongly contemplating the object, and burning the opposite hindrances.

The main cause for not being able to attain *jhāna* is obstruction caused by the five hindrances. If we can remove or suppress these, we can attain *jhāna*.

In *ānāpāna* first *jhāna* there are thirty-four mind and mental factors. Out of those only five mental factors are called *jhāna* factors (initial application, etc.). Others are not *jhāna* factors, because only these five perform the function of the *jhāna* fully – they themselves contemplate the object closely and remove the hindrances. There is no 'I' that contemplates the object, it is just *jhāna* factors doing so. When we know this, we can get the right view concerning object and person as well as remove the wrong view of persisting existence of self (*sassata-ditṭhi*), understanding that it is just nature carrying on its functions – not I, not me, not mine.

Now let us see how the *jhāna* factors actually perform the function of removing hindrances.

The nature that makes one dull is sloth and torpor. It does not allow *jhāna* to arise. The factor that removes this hindrance is initial application of thought (*vitakka*); it causes the mind to repeatedly think about an object. Sometimes we cannot sleep because of multitude of arising thoughts – at that time the same nature of initial application – dispelling the sleepiness – is manifesting. Whenever one repeatedly thinks about an object, drowsiness runs away.

The next *jhāna* factor - sustained application of thought (*vicāra*) - leads the associated mentality to stay around the object by contemplating it repeatedly, examining it from different angles. When the sustained application is doing its job, doubt, which makes one think whether 'this is right or wrong' cannot stay, it runs away.

Joy (*pīti*) makes the associated mental factors to be pleased with the object. When it arises, ill-will (*vyāpāda*), which causes dislike and dissatisfaction in the mind, has to disappear. In our daily life, when someone asks us: 'Are you free from anger?' We answer: 'Yes, I'm free – because I'm happy.'

Happiness (*sukha*) experiences the object calmly and peacefully. When it is present restlessness and worry (*uddhacca kukkuca*) have to run away.

One-pointedness (*ekaggatta*) causes the associated mentality to fix to, to fit with, or to absorb in the object. When it becomes powerful, the sense-desire (*kāmacchanda*), which follows after the objects here and there, stops.

‘The Discourse on the fruits of the recluse-ship’ (Sammaññaphala Sutta, DN2) compares the five hindrances to a debt, sickness, confinement in prison, slavery, a desert road. Sense-desire is like a debt – until you have paid the debt back, you will always worry about it, and will not be able to do whatever you want. Sloth and torpor are like confinement in prison. If you are drowsy during your meditation, maybe for the whole sitting you do not know anything. Other meditators may get results of Dhamma, whereas you cannot get anything. It is like you would be confined in prison while the whole of the country is enjoying a festival – everybody is celebrating, but you miss out, you do not know anything about it. Doubt is similar to someone who is standing at the crossroads and cannot go anywhere, because he cannot make up his mind about the direction. Ill-will is similar to a disease. If you are afflicted even if there are very tasty cakes, curries, etc. offered you cannot eat any of that. As long as you suffer from the disease of hatred you will never be able to enjoy the graceful taste of the Dhamma. Restlessness and worry make a person in whom they arise their slave – if you worry about food or about anything else you become its slave.

Having overcome the hindrances, one becomes free from debt, sickness, imprisonment, slavery, one has reached a safe place. One can attain *jhāna*. Here it is proper to point out that *jhāna* and special or direct knowledges (*abhiññā*) are not the same. The direct knowledges (like knowing the minds of others, divine (remote) seeing and hearing, etc.) are attainable only by those with *pāramī* suitable for that, after they have developed all the eight *jhānas* and repeatedly practiced the fourteen ways of sharpening the mind as described in the Path of Purification.

Jhāna makes the mind very powerful. When such a mind contemplates an object and is supported by a proper attention very potent wholesome states arise. But if the contemplation gets support of an improper attention it will cause grave unwholesome states in the mind – a gambler, a fisherman or a junkie – all have concentration, but it is of an unwholesome type. If clinging is supported by powerful concentration it will cause a great deal of suffering to us – if we cannot get what we are clinging to, we cannot be satisfied with what we have: say, the mind is fixed on a particular type of food, it will not allow one to eat anything else, even though there would be the most healthy, delicious, but other than desired foods available. In one city a young boy of twelve stole money from a donation box in a pagoda. At the time when he was put in the juvenile detention centre he saw a big pagoda in the window, immediately he started to scheme and think about how to get the gold from that pagoda evaluating how much money he could get from that. This shows how important it is to control the *jhāna* with proper attention.

The fine-material sphere and immaterial sphere *jhānas* can come about in two ways:

by intentional practice (*samathānuyogapaṭiladdha jhāna*); and

together with the attainment of Path and Fruition knowledge (*maggasiddha jhāna*), on the account of past perfections, and not because of intentional practice in this life.

In the Theravada texts, on the side of wholesome, 40 objects for developing concentration are described. Thirty of those lead to absorption *jhāna*, and the remaining ten lead to access to *jhāna*.

Here we can relay one story. One Sri Lankan Mahāthera named Phussadeva every day would sweep the monastery and spread the white sand, making the surrounding clean and tidy, while doing that he could see a stupa, concentrate on it and practice the Recollection of Buddha's qualities (*Buddhānussati*). One time Mara decided to disturb him by creating a big monkey. When the Mahāthera saw it his mind did get distracted from his object for a little while. The next day Mara created an old cow. The day after – an old man with crooked legs. That made the Mahāthera wonder, 'Might this be Mara?' The answer he heard was, 'Yes'. To which he said, 'You are very good in creating. But are you smart enough to create Buddha's body for me?' Mara did that. When the Mahāthera saw it joy arose in him, then with this happy and pure mind he practiced insight meditation and attained Arahantship.

When practicing for the development of *jhāna* it is good if we understand an object of meditation clearly.

First of all, it is important to note that there are two different ways for meditative contemplation: contemplating the object (*ārammaṇūpaniṇḥāna*), and contemplating characteristics (*lakkaṇūpaniṇḥāna*). In calm meditation (*samatha*), for example mindfulness of breath, one has to be aware of one object and be paying attention to it in one particular way – this is *ārammaṇūpaniṇḥāna*. In insight meditation one has to contemplate closely three characteristics of the objects – this is *lakkaṇūpaniṇḥāna*, and as long as he is looking at phenomena in the light of three characteristics – every object is a meditation object. So one has to be sure about what he is practicing. When it is mindfulness of breath the object is breath only, not feelings, and so on; when it is insight meditation – the object is common characteristics – impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self – of the worldly ultimate realities.

There also should be no confusion whether the meditation object is ultimate reality or a concept when one is trying to develop *ārammaṇūpaniṇḥāna*, that is to say, when one is practicing *samatha*.

Some practice recollection of the Buddha by just focusing on an image of the Buddha – this is not a proper practice. In this meditation the object is ultimate realities – the qualities of the Enlightened One. So having started with a visible object, one should go beyond it and focus his mind on the Buddha's qualities.

Or let us take a Loving-kindness (*mettā*) meditation. The object of that is a concept of unlimited beings. So if one sends *mettā* and does not see any being(s) – we cannot say he is practicing loving-kindness meditation to attain *jhāna*. It is not easy to send *mettā* to a deceased person precisely, that is possible only if you know his next destination, where and as who he or she has been reborn; otherwise, the most what can be done – is sending *mettā* to all beings, which includes this particular one as well, in general. Some people ask if a particular person can receive the loving-kindness that they radiate towards him. Whether it is received or not will depend on that person, on his *kamma*. Actually, when well-developed loving-kindness can influence the surrounding strongly. Because of the power of loving-kindness even tigers would not harm such famous Sayadaws of Myanmar as U Sīla and U Uttama. One time Sayadaw U Sīla was staying in the forest in a vicinity of a fireplace in order not to be too cold. Together with him there was a tiger and a layman-assistant by the fire. At some point the tiger being sleepy yawned exposing his jaws – a fear arose in that layman's mind followed by the thought of throwing the burning firewood into the animal. The tiger having felt the change in this person's mind jumped up roaring. Sayadaw U Uttama propagated Buddha's teachings in the mountainous areas. No animal would cause any harm to him while he was dwelling in the wild nature. But in one city, after he had chanted the protective verses by invitation of lay people, the very same people, when Sayadaw was leaving, believing that they can protect themselves by getting something from Sayadaw, were trying to cut pieces of cloth from his robe or at least to pick a body hair from him. Sayadaw commented that people could be more frightening than animals.

Nowadays many associations for helping others are being found, but many of them break up very soon after. It is because they fail to glue their organisation with loving-kindness. When the Dhamma is taught people focus on Path, Fruition and Nibbāna, and they forget to love their surroundings. Others may try to be good, but at the same time they keep comparing themselves with others, they always want to be better than another. This practice is not in accord with Buddha's teachings, instead of that one should try to be good and compare oneself with oneself only. Moreover, one should not forget about wisdom and compassion. It is not wise to forget about the body and care about the mind only.

At the time of cyclone Nargis, foreign aid workers asked a Buddhist monk what he was doing at the time of such big, to what he answered, 'I share merits and send *mettā* to those who has departed'; meanwhile the foreigners said they support those who are suffering in whatever way they are able to at that very moment. Someone committed suicide because of his outstanding debt. Then, according to the tradition, his family invites monks for making offerings and donations getting into a greater debt... Sometimes in Myanmar we emphasize mental side only, and forget about material things. It is true, we should take care of the mind, but not only, we should also take care of our surrounding by allowable means. Mahāgandayon Sayadaw compared teachers to a theatre director, and those who practice the method that is thought to actors. When people watch a play they only see the actors, they do not know the director. So mostly teachers only direct, they do not do themselves.

In Myanmar we teach young generation not to kill, not to steal and so on – the five precepts. In other countries, instead of teaching youngsters to follow the precepts they educate children to value the surrounding. For this reason, they care about protecting the nature by not killing animals and not destroying the plants. Even if a dog would happen to be drowning – many would try to save it, or when a whale throws itself on a shore – so many try to rescue and take it back into the water. In Myanmar however, when we set free birds or fishes, we make a wish they help us in the future at least ten times. If we do not value physical side of existence, how can we value the mental side?

To sum up, please, take care when contemplating a subject closely. May all of my Dhamma friends start by contemplating their surrounding, and by contemplating closely this body and mind, may they change from the inside and attain Nibbāna, an object of Path and Fruition *jhāna* consciousness.

18. Path condition (*Magga paccaya*)

The path condition is a condition where a conditioning state, a mental factor that is a path factor, sends the associated mentality-materiality, the conditioned states, to a particular destination.

The simplest way to describe this condition would be to say that right path leads to a good destination and wrong path to a bad destination. However, the path factors are also present in the functional consciousnesses and those do not send one to any destination. So Mahāghandayon Sayadaw formulated this condition as an energy that leads the associated phenomena to the object and function that it wants.

When one starts learning Abhidhamma, one sees that there are both right and wrong path factors. The path factors of the beautiful consciousnesses constitute the right path, whereas those of unwholesome consciousnesses – the wrong path. They are divided into these two groups for a practical reason – we can apply this knowledge by abstaining from unwholesome actions and developing wholesome ones.

The order of presentation of the unwholesome path factors – wrong view (*micchādiṭṭhi*), wrong thought (*micchāsankappo*), wrong effort (*micchāvāyāmo*), and wrong concentration (*micchāsamādhi*) – has logic to it. When one wants to perform a bad action, a wrong view starts to arise, he accepts it and continues with wrong thinking, then he makes an effort to accomplish that action and directly follows it.

There are three types of wrong view:

1. The heaviest is not accepting good and bad cause and result, which is called: nihilism (*natthika diṭṭhi*). Good friends of it are ‘view of the uncausedness’ (*ahetuka diṭṭhi*) and ‘view of inefficacy of action’ (*akiriya diṭṭhi*). They are pure wrong views and prevent one from realizing Path and Fruition.
2. The second is an illusion of self (*atta diṭṭhi*) – a believe that there is ‘I’ and it can get this or that. It causes attachment by way of thinking ‘this is my house, my car, my son, etc.’, it prevents one from realizing Nibbāna partially.
3. The third is identity view (*sakkāya diṭṭhi*), that is a misunderstanding that this body and mind is ‘me’.

The opposites of these wrong views are:

1. *Kammassakatā sammādiṭṭhi* – understanding of the workings of kamma, which dispels the first kind of wrong views.
 2. *Vipassana sammādiṭṭhi* – the insight knowledge of the three characteristics, which destroys the second one.
 3. *Catusacca sammādiṭṭhi* – the penetration of the four noble truths, which eliminates the identity view.
- So these constitute the first of the eight factors of the right path, the right view (*sammādiṭṭhi*). The rest of them are:

- Right thought (*sammāsankappo*), which is removing the following three wrong thoughts: those that are sensual (*kāma*), those with ill-will (*byāpada*), and those concerned with harming (*vihimsā*).
- Right speech (*sammāvaca*) is refraining from four wrong kinds of speech – false, divisive, harsh speech, and idle chatter.
- Right action (*sammākammanto*) is threefold – abstinence from destruction of life, from taking what is not given, and from sexual misconduct.

- Right livelihood (*sammā-ājīvo*) is abstinence from the four kind of wrong speech and three kinds of wrong action when earning livelihood.
- Right effort (*sammāvāyāmo*) is the four right strivings (*sammāpadhāna*)¹⁹.
- Right mindfulness (*sammāsati*) unites action, mind and knowledge by letting them sink well on the same object.
- Right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*) is close contemplation of an object or of its characteristics.

Those wholesome path factors can be grouped in the following way:

1. Right view and right thought are the path factors of wisdom (*paññā*).
2. Right speech, right action, right livelihood – these three are the path factors of morality. (*sīla*)
3. Right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration are path factors of concentration.

When we are walking the path we should start from morality, then continue by practice of concentration and use that for the development of wisdom.

One time Anāgāmī Saya Thet approached Ledi Sayadaw for an admonishment. Sayadaw instructed, ‘Oh, lay supporter, try just to practice the path factors of morality fully, thoroughly, in detail – that will cause concentration to arise automatically. Then you should continue to practice path factors of concentration fully, thoroughly, in detail – that will cause wisdom to arise automatically.’ This is quite remarkable. The three path factors of morality are not present when we sit for meditation. But before the work of meditation we have to prepare ourselves by purifying the mind by means of moral behaviour. We can compare morality to a doorman – it opens the door to concentration. And concentration is like a worker who goes to a factory to do the job.

In order to concentrate well one has to pay attention to his object closely and continuously, this will cause *sammāsamādhi* to arise; and the path factors of wisdom will follow the right concentration. So this is the order of practice of the right path. However, the question may arise as to why the Buddha has listed the factors of wisdom first. It is because they are very beneficial for the attainment of Nibbāna, and are a decisive support for that.

If we were to condense all of the Tipiṭaka to one word, we would arrive at mindfulness (*sati*)²⁰. All beautiful consciousnesses are associated with mindfulness, but not all are accompanied by knowledge – those that are not lead to increasing suffering in the rounds of rebirth. We emphasize mindfulness because it is a foundation, it is very important. However, even on a good foundation a slaughterhouse can also be build, that is why wisdom is of highest importance. Devadatta got *jhāna* because he had mindfulness, however it was not led by wisdom and resulted in psychic powers, which eventually caused a lot of harm to him.

¹⁹ 1. Effort to overcome or reject evil unwholesome acts that have arisen, or are in the course of arising;
2. Effort to avoid (not only in this life but also in the lives that follow) the arising of unwholesome acts that have not yet arisen;

3. Effort to arouse the arising of wholesome acts that have not yet arisen;

4. Effort to increase and to perpetuate the wholesome acts that have arisen or are in the course of arising.

²⁰ The last words of the Buddha were: ‘Appamādena sampādettha’ – ‘With mindfulness endeavour diligently’. DN 16

When we are wishing for happiness of Nibbāna, we misunderstand that Nibbāna has happiness, we think that it is something special and we want to become someone special. However, ‘someone’ and ‘something’ are concepts. When the work of meditation is controlled by these concepts and is not supported by wisdom, it will obstruct the arising of Path and Fruition. Nibbāna is free from time (*kālavimutta*), from place (*desavimutta*), and from persons (*puggalavimutta*). When the cause is fulfilled, when it is perfect enough, you will automatically attain Nibbāna in accordance with the work of nature (*dhamma vyāpāra*, which was explained in the discussion of *kamma* condition). But our ego, conceit and wrong view make us to misunderstand that we can attain this or that, forgetting to continue with the practice in the present. Sometimes craving makes us contented with the level we think we have attained, and conceit tells us, ‘I am the smart one who can attain this and that’. Being under the control of these craving and conceit we misunderstand Dhamma. In that case it is not just an attainment that one misses out with, but also there can be no *pāramī* for this person. Remember, that for an action to be a perfection it has to reduce craving (*taṇha*), conceit (*māna*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*), and be accompanied by enough compassion (*karuṇa*) and skill (*upāyakosalla*). According to Ledi Sayadaw if one does mundane work having forgotten about *kamma*, the result will be dubious; so too, if one does supramundane work having forgotten about *pāramī*, the result also will be dubious. Please, be careful.

At one time, one Sri Lankan Thera having not seen any defilements arising in him for thirty years thought he attained the goal of the holy life. And it was only because his disciple intervened that he got to see that it was not the case yet. With the latent tendencies (*anusaya*), however long they are dormant, we can never be sure. Be careful.

To attain Nibbāna both the consensual (*sammuti*) and the ultimate (*paramattha*) truths have to be made use of. On the level of the right view on the workings of kamma (*kammasakātā sammādiṭṭhi*) we need to use conventional truth; and when we are on the level of right view of insight knowledge (*vipassana sammādiṭṭhi*) we need to learn about ultimate mentality and materiality first, then when discerning it practically we utilize the ultimate truth. Similarly, on the level of morality (*sīla*) and concentration (*samādhi*) – conventional truth is needed. We cannot say that our mother and wife are just same mind and matter, our duties with respect to them are different. And in the practice of development of concentration nearly all objects are concepts. As for the practice of insight, in the beginning, when we are learning, we still have to make use of the conventional truth, and only when we practice we turn to the ultimate.

There is a difference between worldling’s and noble person’s knowledge of the wholesome and unwholesome. A worldling, even though he knows something is not good, he still likes it. The Noble one knows and does not want to try even a tiny bit. We can compare them to someone with high blood pressure, despite he knows eating pork is not good for him, he still does eat it; another one knows that watermelon and duck egg together are a poison – he does not even consider trying it.

In order to gain knowledge, we should start the practice with right thought (*vitakka*).

In the sensual realm the wholesome states cannot arise without thought (*vitakka*), it is possible only for the wholesome states of the sphere of tranquillity *jhāna*. So insight consciousness is always with *vitakka*, that is to say, with right thought (*sammāsankappo*), and it leads to the arising of insight knowledge, the right view (*sammādiṭṭhi*). This is the connection between these two wisdom path factors.

If we were to place right thought in the middle, above it we would have the right view, and below – we would have excessive talking, which leads to different actions. In order to control the actions of body and speech the three path factors of morality are needed. Acting and speaking well (*sammāvācā* and

sammākamanto) leads to a pure livelihood (*sammā-ājivo*), but any livelihood still needs a support of effort (*sammāvāyāmo*), and among all the efforts, the four right strivings are the highest. These four in their turn need a support of mindfulness, and with that being present the mind can concentrate well.

Following this course of practice, the path of knowledge (*ñāṇa*) becomes more powerful than the sensual one (*kāma*). The first one leads to Nibbāna, the second – perpetuates the rounds of rebirth. As the path of knowledge becomes more powerful it can gradually destroy the sensual path. If it can cut all the unwholesome that leads to rebirth in the four woeful realms one becomes a stream-enterer; if it can cut all the wholesome and unwholesome that would cause more than one rebirth in the sensual world – he becomes a once-returner; if it can cut all the sensual kamma – one becomes a non-returner; and lastly, if it can cut all the kamma – one becomes an Arahant. The wider is our path of knowledge, the narrower is the worldly one.

May all of my Dhamma friends avoid the four wrong paths by continuous walking on the eight right paths straight until they reach Nibbāna.

19+20. Association Condition and Dissociation Condition (*Sampayutta Paccaya* and *Vippayutta Paccaya*)

In Paṭṭhāna some of the conditions form pairs, like:

- kamma and resultant conditions;
- prenatal and postnatal conditions;
- association and dissociation conditions;
- presence and absence conditions; and
- disappearance and non-disappearance conditions.

So the association and dissociation conditions form one pair.

The association condition is a condition where the conditioning state, each of the four mental aggregates, while being associated with each other by four means (arising and ceasing together, having the same base and the same object) do not oppose, but follow each other.

Pali ‘sampayutta’ is composed of:

- ‘sam’ = ‘*samaṃ*’ = equally;
- ‘pa’ = ‘*pakāra*’ = different types; and
- ‘yutta’ = associated.

Different types of mentality, which have different characteristics, when associated become equal, they equally incline to the object.

The analogy for this condition is the four sweets (*cātu-madhura*)²¹ where all the ingredients are rich in taste – sweet and oily – on being mixed thoroughly and inseparably they become even richer in taste – sweeter and oilier, and we neither can point out which one of them causes that, nor distinguish a separate taste of butter, honey, etc.

This condition is of the conascence group, which means cause and result arise together. Consciousness, perception, feeling and the rest of mental factors have different nature – the consciousness knows, the feeling experiences, the perception notes and recognizes, faith believes the law of kamma, and so on – but they arise and cease together, depend on the same base and take the same object; they follow each other – this is the nature of association.

The dissociation condition is a condition where the conditioning and conditioned states do not associate by arising and ceasing together and do not follow each other.

In the world of five aggregates mind and matter cannot arise without each other.

This condition is expounded on the occasions when there can arise doubt whether particular mind and matter, are associated or not.

²¹ A medicinal sweet made of four ingredients: honey, palm sugar, ghee and sesame oil.

It is compared to a curry, where different tastes – salty, sour, spicy, sweet, etc. – even though mixed together in one pot, still can be separated; a skillful person will be able to say which taste is stronger, which is less. There are even people, the tasters, who make their livelihood from this ability to feel separately different tastes, they even insure their tongue – an ability to know the dissociation clearly plays very important role in their life.

There are two types of disassociation: dissociation by absence (*abhāva vippayutta*) and dissociation by not mixing (*asamsaṭṭha vippayutta*). This Paṭṭhāna condition is concerned only with the later one.

There are different types of this condition. One of them is **conascence-dissociation**. It involves the mind and matter arising at the moment of rebirth – they arise together, but condition each other by not mixing. We can suspect them being mixed because of conascence, and to dispel this doubt the dissociation is stated. So too in the case of seventy-five consciousness during the course of existence that produce mind-born matter – as soon as that mind arises, the mind-born matter arises, as they arise together a question may occur as to whether they are associated or not, and in order to show clearly that they are not, the dissociation is indicated.

During the course of existence the eye-base depending on which eye-consciousness arises appears a moment before that consciousness, that is in this case the matter arises before the mind and they are related by **base-prenascence-dissociation**.

Or if we look at the same mentality and materiality from another point of view and consider that eye-sensitivity is a *kamma*-born matter, the direct cause of which, *kamma*, has disappeared long time ago, and it continues to exist because of the support of the consciousness that arises in dependence on it, we will see the **postnascence-dissociation**.

If we were to say that all matter and mind are related by dissociation, we would have to include the relationship between the visible object and the eye-consciousness. But we do not do, because they are not related directly, and there is no doubt that they are not mixed together.

Only mentality and mentality can be related by association, and only mentality and materiality – by disassociation. The four Great Essentials and derivative materiality are matter only, for this reason we cannot say they are associated or disassociated.

Now how can we apply the knowledge about this conditions in our daily life?

The general idea would be: when we are mixing things of the same nature, good with good – it is like association condition, and when we are mixing things of the different nature, good with bad – it is like dissociation. As an example we can say, that the Lord Buddha and ven. Ānanda were related by association, whereas Devadatta and the Buddha – by dissociation.

In our world there are so many different things that result in beauty when joined together. Like a rose flower – when flower is joined with the stem, leaves, thorns, and flower pot it turns into a delightful object to look at. The components are all different, but their association gives rise to beauty.

We too should associate with our surrounding, but we better do it properly. ‘Should associate’ does not mean we should always say ‘yes’, it rather means that independent of the object, any meeting, any association should result in wholesome states. In the Vinaya we find that in the case when the surrounding is totally wrong, we do not have to accept and follow it, at least in the mind we can reject it. We should not approve the unwholesome done by others, if we do – it becomes our unwholesome action too. The wrong

conduct (*duccarita*) becomes unwholesome kamma not only when you do it yourself, but also if you approve, praise or encourage another to follow the evil ways.

The Buddha had enough loving-kindness and compassion, but he did not always say ‘yes’, he did not handle the leadership over the order of monks to Devadatta when he requested that. Even the One of greatest compassion would sometimes rebuke others.

One foreign Dhamma friend asked, ‘Impermanent and suffering nature are clear and easy to see in daily life, but how to understand the non-self nature?’ The suggestion to that was to try to give an unnatural command to the body, for example try to command it to go to sleep in the middle of the day. It is not easy – even our body mostly does not follow our wish. So with the surrounding even more so, we should not try to change others forcefully when we associate with them. The most we can do is to prepare the basic support for the change to occur, rather than trying to mold another. If you want to help another, you should first know that other. Usually Buddha’s help to others was of great benefit, but he did not try to help all. The real loving-kindness is to help others to become the best they can in accordance with their present situation. When one tries to help another to become the best according to his own ideal, greed arises and that only leads to worry in the minds of both helper and the receiver. Our wish has to be pure and proper (*kusala chanda*) when we are helping others. The Buddha had given two long Dhamma talks to Saccaka Paribbājaka²² despite knowing the fact that the listener would be able to accept only the truth about impermanence and suffering, but not the non-self nature of existence. But in his later life, 200 years after Buddha’s *parinibbāna*, he attained Arahantship. While the Bodhisatta was fulfilling the perfections, he always cared about the welfare of others. During the countless lives he got to know the needs of others better and better, so by the time he had attained to his goal he became the one who knows the needs of others perfectly. We should try to emulate the Buddha. They say if you know all, you can forgive all. Nobody praises the Buddha for his patience towards Ānanda, but people do admire his patience towards Devadatta.

To test the quality of gold it used to be common to use a touchstone²³. Later, when someone wanted to sell it, they would also polish the gold. But what will be a criterion of its value for the buyer – a test with the touchstone or its smoothness? The objects that we do not like are like a touchstone, and the ones we like – like polishing. People usually want to have a contact only with objects that they like, but if one wants the gold of real value, he has to accept both. We should be able to perform wholesome actions regardless of what kind of people we are associated with. Without polish the gold is still valuable, but without the touchstone we cannot determine its value.

Avoiding a problem is not good, searching a problem is not good either. So no need to avoid or search, rather when problem does arise try to solve it with the wholesome mind.

Having said that, however, there is another thing to consider. During the practice of the contemplation of feelings (*vedanānupassanā*) if the body is in pain while you are practicing insight meditation, but you can continue seeing the impermanent nature of the phenomena – it is ok to continue. But if you cannot bear the pain, if the patience that is at your disposal is not enough and displeasure is arising, it is better to change the posture (the object). One should know how much he can handle, if the situation is going out of control and it is not possible to handle it with wholesome mind, it is better to change, to avoid the object. Here we will

²² MN 35, 36

²³ a piece of fine-grained dark schist or jasper formerly used for testing alloys of gold by observing the colour of the mark that they made on it. (Oxford dictionary)

give another story. Once upon a time a country was governed by a very bad king. The people of that country kept praying for their king to die. And as if their prayers were heard, he passed away. But the new king that ascended to the throne was double as bad as the previous one. The citizens were praying again in the same manner. But when this king died too, a new one was trice as bad. This time the people became silent. And their king, knowing himself to be far from perfect, and seeing the patience of the nation, decided to see what is happening by going out, disguised as a poor man. After talking to people he found out that they were afraid that if they pray for another king, he would be even worse than the present one.

So, if you can be patient – please, be patient, but if it is getting too much, do not be afraid to change the object, but bear in mind, that you cannot avoid objects and people for the whole life – sooner or later you will have to face them. And when you do, please, make sure that you have proper attention, it will allow you to have a wholesome mind irrespectively of the object you have encountered.

There is another analogy to make this point clear. When the electric line in the house gets heavily overloaded, it blows the fuse. Some, instead of solving the problem and reducing the power in the circuit, only change the fuse for a more resistant one, if that happens to burn again, they change it for even a thicker one. Continuing in this way the whole house may burn in the end. The real solution to the problem is either reducing the load on the line, or changing the electrical wire. Here, the outside object corresponds to the fuse, the inner attention – to the wire. We tend to always blame the object in our mental suffering, and when trying to escape a problem, just change the object – it is a solution, but only temporary. In the end, if we really want to fix the situation, we better develop proper attention letting the mind to become mature.

In the story about the Māgandiyā couple²⁴, the Brahmin Māgandiyā who was searching for an appropriate husband for his daughter saw the Buddha and immediately offered her to him. The Buddha gave a discourse to the family and ended it by rejecting the offer saying that, the daughter's body is a corpse filled with the thirty-two parts and he would not touch it even with the sole of his foot. The daughter got very angry with that and opposed the Buddha for the rest of her life; she was reborn in hell. As for the old couple, when listening to the Buddha's discourse, they got the sense of urgency, and became non-returners by the end of the talk. Here one could accuse the Buddha in being cruel. But, remember, the earth has no intention to make the chilli spicy, the lemon sour or the sugarcane sweet. It is because of proper and improper attention – the fertilizer, the previous training in good and bad roots, which correspond to genes of the seeds, that meeting with an object – the earth – results in sweet, sour or hot experience – taste.

Not only we should try to maintain wholesome mind regardless of an object, but also we should try not to be an object that stimulates unwholesome states in others. However, there is a boundary with regards to that – some will have unwholesome mind despite our effort to support the arising of wholesome states in them. Such cases are out of our control.

One wise Myanmar man says that when we unite to perform some action together we should be able to adjust according to the situation; he calls it *hānopādāna* (*hāna* – decrease; *upādāna* – supply) – being able to decrease as well as to increase whatever quality or thing may need adaptation in a particular situation. This is a good description of the association condition.

The lifespans of mind and matter, as well as their nature and causes, differ, but when they are performing their functions, they rely on each other. Even though the mind and matter change at different rates, they arise

²⁴ Dhpa verse 179

depending on impermanent cause and are impermanent themselves. We too perform our functions being together with others, and whether we are mixing with the surrounding by association or dissociation conditions, to do so harmoniously, it is of great help to understand the impermanent nature of the world. We tend to follow, chase the objects trying to adjust and change them so that our hopes are fulfilled. But all the objects, being compounded (*sankhāra*), will be gone one day anyway. This trying to adjust the surrounding according to our wish is the suffering of formations (*sankhāra dukkha*), even if you succeed, the most what you can get is happiness of feeling (*vedayita sukha*), but that is just a synonym of suffering of formations, it too is impermanent. A clear understanding of this allows one to adjust with regards to worldly things and be ready to accept the suffering of compounded things with proper attention.

The more we can appreciate the impermanent nature of the world, the easier it is to reduce whatever hopes there may be and replace them with a wish to do (hope causes suffering, whereas wish unites us).

Let us give an example of application of this law of nature. When visible object and eye sensitivity meet, the eye-consciousness arises. With the coming together of the three there is a contact; the contact gives rise to feeling; and because of the feeling craving arises. So what is the cause for the eye-consciousness, and so on, to arise? Is it the visible object or the eye-base? Actually it arises because of many conditions coming together. And as those conditions are impermanent, with their cessation, the result also ceases. So we better make enough effort to reach our final destination before the result ceases. We better reduce our ego and change ourselves so that we can unite with different things and people in our surrounding, we should not be afraid to do that. It is not the outsider who can harm us the most; it is we ourselves who can become our worst enemy. If someone causes us harm, it is just rootless, physical damage that he can cause; and it is only we ourselves who can cause to us rooted harm. If we are not able to manage the environment skillfully it can cause many dangers for our present and our future; but if are – we get very beautiful situations, good for us and equally beneficial for the others. When dealing with the worldly things, loving-kindness is invaluable, and for the supramundane side of the practice, perception of impermanence is vital. With those two you can perform same functions in different environment, regardless of the kind of people you are associated with; and with the clear understanding of suffering of formations you will have a sense of urgency strong enough to make you to apply effort to liberate your-self from the rounds of rebirth.

May all of my Dhamma friends be able to cause their mind to associate well and by practicing the insight meditation to attain Nibbāna where there is neither equality, nor difference, in this very life.

21+22+23+24. Presence, absence, disappearance and non-disappearance conditions (*Atthi, Natthi, Vigata, Avigata Paccaya*)

The last two pairs of the Paṭṭhāna conditions will be treated together.

In Paṭṭhāna the Buddha uses different words to show different conditioning forces. But some of the conditions, even though they are same by nature, still have different names. We have already seen it in proximity and contiguity conditions and now we see two more sets: presence and non-disappearance; and absence and disappearance. We will reiterate the reason for giving different names to them. The Buddha does so in order to make the subject accessible for listeners of different temperament, and at the same time he decorates, beautifies the Dhamma (*desanā velāsa*).

The presence condition is a condition where a conditioning state at the moment of its presence conditions the states that are also present at that moment.

The states that relate by this condition can be in any of the three phases – arising, static or dissolution; both cause and result have to be present at the same moment, and the energy of the relationship can be both producing and supporting. According Mahāgandayon Sayadaw this condition is most obvious when the states involved in it are at the static phase.

The analogy for this condition is that of Earth supporting whatever vegetation grows on it to be alive and green.

We get this condition together with several others:

- with conascence (*sahajātatthi*) – four mental aggregates to each other; the Four Great Essentials to each other; consciousness and mental factors to mind-born matter; the Four Great Essentials to derivative matter;
- with both object and base-prenascence (*purejātatthi*);
- with post-nascence (*pacchajātatthi*);
- with nutriment (*āhāratthi*) – edible food;
- with faculty (*indriyatthi*) – life-faculty of matter.

Nibbāna is a conditioning state only in object, predominance and strong dependence conditions, but not in this presence condition. It is because a conditioning state can relate to conditioned state by this condition only when it is present, and it will not be a presence condition when it ceases – that means the cause here is impermanent. But Nibbāna is ever present, so it does not have energy of presence condition.

As we have said, presence and non-disappearance conditions are same in meaning, but some commentators do point out a slight difference between them. When the conditioning state that relates, is an ultimate reality that is distinctly present at that moment it is that of presence condition. But when a conditioning state, which relates, is an ultimate reality that has not yet disappeared and ceased, it is that of non-disappearance condition.

The opposites of presence and non-disappearance conditions are absence and disappearance.

When a dhamma supports the arising of the following dhamma by not being present it is called absence condition. And when a dhamma supports the arising of the following dhamma by ceasing it is called disappearance condition.

These two conditions are same, but some commentators still try to point out some difference, they say that disappearance is simply ceasing, and absence is about becoming nothing after having ceased.

The analogies for these conditions are that of putting out of the flame of a lamp giving rise to darkness; and disappearance of the sunlight allowing moonlight to manifest.

Basically these two conditions and those of proximity and contiguity are exactly the same.

The commentators also show that if we want to condense the 24 conditions, we can reduce all to the following four: object, strong dependence, *kamma* and presence. In the whole universe with all the various realms there is no dhamma that could not become an object of mind, so all the dhamma can become an object condition. There is also nothing that cannot become a strong dependence. All beings depend on *kamma*, moreover, even worlds with all the inorganic things arise on the account of *kamma* of the being who inhabit that world, so there is no dhamma not related to *kamma*. And every dhamma can give support while it is present, moreover even in order to become a condition of absence, disappearance, proximity and contiguity a dhamma has to arise in the first place, so these four follow presence condition. Sayadaw Nandamala goes even further and summarizes all the conditions under two headings: presence and absence.

From the point of view of Dhamma we can say that the absence can be a more powerful support than presence, just like we can see it is in the following story. A lady had only one son whom she loved a lot. He happened to pass away before her and his death provoked strong grief in her. When she was going around searching for the remedy for her dead son, she met the Buddha, as a result of that meeting a strong sense of urgency was ignited in her, so seeking for a relief from suffering of separation she turned to the practice of meditation and could develop in it very fast.²⁵ We can say that the disappearance of her son caused for her a swift progress in Dhamma.

If we really understand suffering (*dukkha*), we also understand that not having causes more happiness than having. Let us consider a hypothetical case of someone being offered a million dollars. He happily accepts the offer. But, say, he is offered that at the moment of acute appendicitis and asked if he would prefer to have a million dollars or not to have appendix now. Surely, he would prefer not to have, rather than have.

Another application of ‘having’ versus ‘not having’ is this: if you love one - you have one suffering, if you love two – you have two, if three – you have three sufferings.

In India one poor family had only one cow on which they all depended. They follow one teacher, a hermit, and whenever he would come, they always prayed for their cow to be healthy and live long life. They worried if their cow dies they will have no livelihood. One time when their teacher was leaving he requested a man to kill the cow. Strangely enough, after the cow was no more the family became wealthier. While they had that animal they were not looking into any other occupation, but after it was gone, all of them tried to find other ways of maintaining themselves and the family became richer. We can say this is a manifestation of the power of absence.

²⁵ This is a story of Kisā Gotamī, DhA verse 114

Buddhism is introduced to people not just by explaining them the possible holy result that can be experienced only in the future, people are also offered benefit that they can feel immediately. The Buddha taught two kinds of cessation: permanent (*samuccheda nirodha*) and temporary (*khaṇika nirodha*). The later cessation of craving can be sensed by anyone practicing three trainings – morality, concentration and wisdom. The final goal, Nibbāna, is not something to be accepted just by believing in what one has been told by a teacher, it can be partially experienced by anyone developing wholesome states, be he a Buddhist or not.

Some say that they will believe something only when they see with their own eyes. However it is not always possible, on those occasions the information derived from comparing the facts can be useful. We can see our father and grandfather, but it is rare for a person to see his great grandfather. Yet having considered that one is born because of the father, and he was born because of the grandfather, and so on, one will come to the conclusion that there must have been a great grandfather. We arrive to this knowledge by comparing the facts.

We can apply same method to meditation and cessation (of defilements) that is experienced at the time of practice. Discerning the in- and out-breath (*ānāpānasati* meditation) differs from sleeping. Cessation that takes place during the sleep is because of not knowing, whereas the cessation that occurs during *ānāpāna* is cessation on account of knowing. When practicing meditation greed, which has the nature of attaching to something; hatred, which has the nature of not being satisfied with something; and delusion, which has the nature of not knowing inherent characteristics of the object cease, but at the time of the practice one is not aware about that, he only knows his object, the breath. If he can concentrate on the breath-object continually for fifteen minutes, after coming out of that concentration, he can compare the state of mind before and after. At that time he will see many changes, he will see how much calmer the mind became – this is the result of temporary cessation that one experiences during the practice of mindfulness of the breath. And it does not depend on person's religion or gender, on place or time – anybody, anywhere can sense it if one practices. For this reason there is no need to force anyone to believe a teacher or the wider public – just come and see, try for yourself.

In our human world people are so happy when a child is born, but if we look just one mind-moment before the conception, we will see death. So what is the point in the happiness of rebirth? There is not even one mind-moment between these two and we have to understand presence and absence together – there is no need to be happy with birth, as well as no need to be sad about dying.

The meaning of our life is to get a chance to develop the perfections and support our surroundings. It is true, and very important to understand that this world is impermanent, but there are two ways to appreciate this law. A lazy person will say, 'it is *sankhāra* – everything will arise and pass away – whether you make an effort or not', but Mahāgandayon Sayadaw says, 'because of the arising and passing away we get a chance to make a special effort to create the conditions for the arising of new things after the present situation has ceased.' So the phenomena not only cease, it arises repeatedly, and one has a chance to condition this new arising. If there is no effort on your side, the new phenomena will not depend on you, but if you do – it will be in your hands. Buddha not only said that life is suffering, he also pointed out the chance for making effort in this very life. In celestial realms there is an abundance of good things, happiness is very clear, and suffering is not apparent. In hells the situation is opposite. Whereas in the human world all three feelings can be known distinctly and when we are practicing contemplation of feelings, we need to know all the three. The scriptures say that celestial beings can also attain liberation, but it does not depend on their present effort much – they had done their 'homework' in the previous lives and the liberation they gain now is like a

graduation ceremony. In human world on contrary, we need to apply effort. Here aging, sickness and death are obvious, they become a cause for sense of urgency in beings here and thus make this world noble.

The law of *kamma* cannot give only the good fruits. If one wants to live he has to accept aging, and with death the separation from people and properties one has is inevitable. Having understood presence and absence we will not be hoping too much or be too much pleased with being alive, but we will simply appreciate the chance to carry on with our duties.

In Myanmar during the Six Saṅgha Council some proposed for a position of a chief monk ven. Aasoeyin Sayadaw, others rejected that proposal, saying that he changes his mind too easy. To this statement Sayadawji replied that, 'It is fine by me. In my pure mind what I know to be the best according to my present day experience, I will state it. But if tomorrow I learn that what I said was wrong, I will admit it honestly saying it out loud for the benefit of the listener, neglecting my own dignity.' Sayadaw was not afraid of changes, exemplifying the absence of clinging to the view of self (*attavādupādāna*).

May you be able to live harmoniously during the change from presence to absence with proper attention lead by mindfulness and wisdom, and in due course gain liberation from both presence and absence.

Abbreviations

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|------|-----------------------|
| AN | Āṅguttaranikāya |
| Ud | Udāna |
| UdA | Udāna aṭṭhakathā |
| Ja | Jātaka |
| ThA | Theragāthā aṭṭhakathā |
| DN | Dīghanikāya |
| Dhp | Dhammapada |
| DhpA | Dhammapada aṭṭhakathā |
| MN | Majjhimanikāya |
| Vin | Vinayaṭṭakā |
| SN | Saṃyuttanikāya |

*As long as there is Paṭṭhāna, which understands the world in profundity and in details, we are quite safe.
But when it disappears – the world will lose the awareness about what we are doing or what should be
done in the future.*