

FOREST DESANAS

Volume 1

Ajaan Mahā Boowa Ñāṇasampanno



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Volume 1

*A selection of Dhamma talks on
Buddhist meditation practice, given at
Baan Taad Forest Monastery in 1979*

Ajaan Mahā Boowa Ñāṇasampanno

Translated by

Ajaan Suchart Abhijāto

"The Gift of Dhamma Excels All Other Gifts"

- The Lord Buddha

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*In Memory of
Bhikkhu Christopher
Cittabhāso*

Contents

About the Author	2
The Dhamma Weapon	15
The Guiding Principle	31
Cause of Schism	59
The Dhamma Water	93
Calming the Citta with Paññā	124
The Four Satipaṭṭhānas	138
The Ovādapāṭimokkha	158
Investigation Methods	175
Looking Always at the Heart	195
Dukkha	236
A Glossary of Pāli and Buddhist Terms	262

About the Author

Venerable *Ajahn Mahā Bua* (born August 12, 1913, commonly known in Thai as หลวงตามหาบัว, *Luang Ta Mahā Bua*; alternate spelling *Ajahn Mahā Boowa*) is the common name for *Pra Dharma Visuthimongkol* (Thai: พระธรรมวิสุทธิมงคล), a revered Buddhist monk. "Ajahn" (or "Acharn"), meaning "teacher," is the common honorific for Thai monks, similar to "Bhikkhu" or "Rishi" in other Buddhist traditions. *Ajahn Mahā Bua* is one of the best known Thai Buddhist monks of the late Twentieth and early Twenty-first centuries. He is widely regarded as an *Arahant* - a living Buddhist saint. He was a disciple of the esteemed forest master *Ajahn Mun Bhuridatta*, and is now himself considered a master in the Thai Forest Tradition.

Early years

Venerable *Ajahn Mahā Boowa Ñāṇasampanno* was born in Baan Taad village which is located in the northeastern province of Udon Thani. He was one of 17 children of a family of rice farmers. At age 21, his parents asked him to enter the monkhood for a time,

as is a Thai tradition to show gratitude towards one's parents. He chose to enter Yothanimit monastery and was ordained on May 12, 1934 with Venerable *Chao Khun Dhammachedi* as his preceptor who gave him the *Pāli* name '*Ñāṇasampanno*', which means 'one endowed with wisdom'. He had no intention of remaining a monk for the rest of his life.

After entering the monkhood, he studied the lives of the *Buddha* and his *Arahant* Disciples, and became so impressed that the feelings of faith arose in him, and he decided to seek the same attainments as had the original Enlightened Disciples of the *Buddha*. He sought to understand the ways of practicing the *Dhamma* (*Dharma*) which would lead to *Nibbāna* (*Nirvāṇa*).

He sometimes passed and sometimes failed in his *Pāli* studies. He also studied the *Vinaya*, the monastic rules of correct conduct. After seven years, he succeeded in passing the third level of *Pāli* studies, and achieved the highest level in *Dhamma* and *Vinaya* studies. He then aimed solely at the practice of *Dhamma* in hopes of studying directly with Venerable *Ajahn Mun*, one of the most renowned meditation masters of that time.

Venerable Ajahn Mun

He then went in search of Venerable *Ajahn Mun*, and when he met him he was pleased with his efforts, since it seemed as if Venerable *Ajahn Mun* already knew of his desires, intentions, and doubts. All of the questions in his mind were clarified by *Ajahn Mun*, who showed him that the Paths leading to *Nibbāna* still exist. he said to himself:

"Now, I have come to the real thing. He has made everything clear and I no longer have doubts. It is now up to me to be true or otherwise. I'm determined to be true!"

He learned the methods, including meditation, followed by *Ajahn Mun* based on the principles of Buddhism and the code of Buddhist discipline. He has continued to follow these methods in his own teaching and training of monks and novices. Due to the deep respect and admiration he retains for Venerable *Ācariya Mun* - whom he has likened to a father and mother to his students, he was inspired to write a biography of Venerable *Ajahn Mun* aimed at disseminating his methods of practice as well as documenting his exemplary character for the sake of coming generations. Furthermore, he has written many books on the practice of Buddhist meditation, as well as many recorded teachings on *Dhamma* so

that Buddhists would have a guide in the practice of meditation.

Seclusion and establishing a monastery

In 1950, after the death of venerable *Ajahn Mun*, *Ajahn Mahā Bua* looked for a secluded place. He went to Huey Sai village in Mukdahan province. He was very strict and serious in teaching the monks and novices, both in the austere *dhutaṅga* practices and in meditation. He continued his teaching until these same principles became established amongst his followers.

Learning that his mother was ill, he returned home to look after her. Villagers and relatives requested that he settle permanently in the forest south of the village and no longer wander in the manner of a forest monk. As his mother was very old and that it was appropriate for him to look after her, he accepted the offer. With a donation of 64 acres (26 ha) of land, he began to build his monastery in November 1955. It was given the name Wat Pa Baan Taad.

Wat Pa Baan Taad

Said *Ajahn Mahā Bua*:

"This monastery has always been a place for meditation. Since the beginning it has been a place solely for developing the mind. I haven't let any other work disturb the place. If there are things which must be done, I've made it a rule that they take up no more time than is absolutely necessary. The reason for this is that, in the eyes of the world and the *Dhamma*, this is a meditation temple. We're meditation monks. The work of the meditation monk was handed over to him on the day of his ordination by his Preceptor - in all its completeness. This is his real work, and it was taught in a form suitable for the small amount of time available during the ordination ceremony - five meditation objects to be memorized in forward and reverse order - and after that it's up to each individual to expand on them and develop them to whatever degree of breadth or subtlety he is able to. In the beginning the work of a monk is given simply as: *Kesā* - hair of the head, *Lomā* - hair of the body, *Nakhā* - nails, *Dantā* - teeth, *Taco* - the skin which enwraps the body. This is the true work for those monks who practice according to the principles of *Dhamma* as were taught by the Lord *Buddha*."

The wilderness surrounding the monastery has vanished, as it has now been cleared for cultivation. The forest inside of the monastery is all that remains. Wat Pa Baan Taad preserves this remnant in its

original condition, so that monks, novices, and lay people can use its tranquility for the practice of the *Dhamma* as taught by the Lord *Buddha*.

Rise to fame

Ajahn Mahā Bua has traveled to London to give lectures. He also founded the Help Thai Nation Project, a charitable effort dedicated to the helping the Thai economy. He has been visited and supported by the King and Queen of Thailand.

Say *Ajahn Mahā Bua*'s biographer:

"Ven. *Ajahn Mahā Bua* is well known for the fluency and skill of his *Dhamma* talks, and their direct and dynamic approach. They obviously reflect his own attitude and the way he personally practiced *Dhamma*. This is best exemplified in the *Dhamma* talks he gives to those who go to meditate at Wat Pa Bahn Tahd. Such talks usually take place in the cool of the evening, with lamps lit and the only sound being the insects and cicadas in the surrounding jungle. He often begins the *Dhamma* talk with a few moments of stillness - this is the most preparation he needs - and then quietly begins the *Dhamma* exposition. As the theme naturally develops, the pace

quickness and those listening increasingly feel its strength and depth."

Some Basic Teachings on the '*Citta*'

Mahā Bua sees the essential enduring truth of the sentient being as constituted of the indestructible reality of the *citta* (heart/mind), which is characterized by the attribute of Awareness or Knowingness. This *citta*, which is intrinsically bright, clear and Aware, gets superficially tangled up in *saṃsāra* but ultimately cannot be destroyed by any *saṃsāric* phenomenon. Although *Mahā Bua* is often at pains to emphasise the need for meditation upon the non-Self (*anattā*), he also points out that the *citta*, while getting caught up in the vortex of conditioned phenomena, is not subject to destruction as are those things which are impermanent, suffering, and non-Self (*anicca, dukkha, anattā*). The *citta* is ultimately not beholden to these laws of conditioned existence. The *citta* is bright, radiant and deathless, and is its own independent reality:

'BEING INTRINSICALLY BRIGHT AND CLEAR, the *citta* is always ready to make contact with everything of every nature. Although all conditioned phenomena without exception are governed by the three universal laws of *anicca, dukkha, and anattā*, the *citta's* true

nature is not subject to these laws. The *citta* is conditioned by *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anattā* only because things that are subject to these laws come spinning in to become involved with the *citta* and so cause it to spin along with them. However, though it spins in unison with conditioned phenomena, the *citta* never disintegrates or falls apart. It spins following the influence of those forces which have the power to make it spin, but the true power of the *citta*'s own nature is that it knows and does not die. This deathlessness is a quality that lies beyond disintegration. Being beyond disintegration, it also lies beyond the range of *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anattā* and the universal laws of nature.

The fundamental problem that besets human beings, according to *Mahā* Bua, is that they have taken fake and false things as their true self and lack the necessary power to be their 'own true self'; they allow the wiles and deceits of the mental defilements to generate fear and anxiety in their minds. Fear and anxiety are not inherent within the *citta*; in fact, the *citta* is ultimately beyond all such things and indeed is beyond time and space. But it needs to be cleansed of its inner defilements (the *kilesas*) before that truth can be realised. *Mahā* Bua states:

'Our real problem, our one fundamental problem - which is also the *citta*'s fundamental problem - is that we lack the power needed to be our own true self. Instead, we have always taken counterfeit things to be the essence of who we really are, so that the *citta*'s behavior is never in harmony with its true nature. Rather, it expresses itself through the *kilesas*' cunning deceits, which cause it to feel anxious and frightened of virtually everything. As a result, the *citta* is forever full of worries and fears. And although fear and worry are not intrinsic to the *citta*, they still manage to produce apprehension there. When the *citta* has been cleansed so that it is absolutely pure and free of all involvement, only then will we see a *citta* devoid of all fear. Then, neither fear nor courage appear, only the *citta*'s true nature, existing naturally alone on its own, forever independent of time and space. Only that appears - nothing else. This is the genuine *citta*'.

Mahā Bua goes on to attempt to describe the inner stages and experience of the cleansed *citta*. When its purgation of defilements is complete, it itself does not disappear – only the impermanent, suffering, and the non-Self disappear. The *citta* remains, experientially abiding in its own firm foundation, yet ultimately indescribable:

‘ONCE THE *CITTA* HAS BECOME SO WELL-CLEANSED that it is always bright and clear, then even though the *citta* has not ‘converged’ in *samādhi*, the focal point of its awareness is so exceedingly delicate and refined as to be indescribable. This subtle awareness manifests as a radiance that extends forth in all directions around us. We are unconscious of sights, sounds, odors, tastes, and tactile sensations, despite the fact that the *citta* has not entered *samādhi*. Instead, it is actually experiencing its own firm foundation, the very basis of the *citta* that has been well-cleansed to the point where a mesmerizing, majestic quality of knowing is its most prominent feature.

‘Seeming to exist independent of the physical body, this kind of extremely refined awareness stands out exclusively within the *citta*. Due to the subtle and pronounced nature of the *citta* at this stage, its knowing nature completely predominates. No images or visions appear there at all. It is an awareness that stands out exclusively on its own. This is one aspect of the *citta*.

‘Another aspect is seen when this well-cleansed *citta* enters meditative calm, not thinking or imagining anything. Ceasing all activity, all movement, it simply rests for awhile. All thought and imagination within

the *citta* come to a complete halt. This is called "the *citta* entering a state of total calm." Then, the *citta*'s essential knowing nature is all that remains. Except for this very refined awareness - an awareness that seems to blanket the entire cosmos - absolutely nothing else appears. Distance is not a factor. To be precise, the *citta* is beyond the conditions of time and space, which allows it to blanket everything. Far is like near, for concepts of space do not apply. All that appears is a very refined awareness suffusing everything throughout the entire universe. The whole world seems to be filled by this subtle quality of knowing, as though nothing else exists, though things still exist in the world as they always have. The all-encompassing flow of the *citta* that has been cleansed of the things that cloud and obscure it, this is the *citta*'s true power.

'The *citta* that is absolutely pure is even more difficult to describe. Since it is something that defies definition, I don't know how I could characterize it. It cannot be expressed in the same way that conventional things in general can be, simply because it is not a conventional phenomenon. It is the sole province of those who have transcended all aspects of conventional reality, and thus realize within themselves that non-conventional nature. For this reason, words cannot describe it.

'WHY DO WE SPEAK OF A "CONVENTIONAL" *CITTA* and an "absolutely pure" *citta*? Are they actually two different *cittas*? Not at all. It remains the same *citta*. When it is controlled by conventional realities, such as *kilesas* and *āsava*, that is one condition of the *citta*. But when the faculty of wisdom has scrubbed it clean until this condition has totally disintegrated, the true *citta*, the true *Dhamma*, the one that can stand the test, will not disintegrate and disappear along with it. Only the conditions of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*, which infiltrate the *citta*, actually disappear.

'No matter how subtle the *kilesas* may be, they are still conditioned by *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anattā*, and therefore, must be conventional phenomena. Once these things have completely disintegrated, the true *citta*, the one that has transcended conventional reality, becomes fully apparent. This is called the *citta's* Absolute Freedom, or the *citta's* Absolute Purity. All connections continuing from the *citta's* previous condition have been severed forever. Now utterly pure, the *citta's* essential knowing nature remains alone on its own.

'Since this refined awareness does not have a point or a center, it is impossible to specifically locate its position. There is only that essential knowing, with absolutely nothing infiltrating it. Although it still exists

amid the same *khandhas* with which it used to intermix, it no longer shares any common characteristics with them. It is a world apart. Only then do we know clearly that the body, the *khandhas*, and the *citta* are all distinct and separate realities.

Kammaṭṭhāna

1. *Kammaṭṭhāna* literally means "basis of work" or "place of work". It describes the contemplation of certain meditation themes used by a meditating monk so the forces of defilement (*kilesa*), craving (*tanhā*), and ignorance (*avijjā*) may be uprooted from the mind. Although *kammaṭṭhāna* can be found in many meditation-related subjects, the term is most often used to identify the forest tradition (the *Kammaṭṭhāna* tradition) lineage founded by *Ajahn Sao Kantasilo Mahāthera* and his student *Ajahn Mun Bhuridatta Mahāthera*.

Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia,
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ajahn_Maha_Bua
(Consulted 9 September 2009)

The Dhamma Weapon

June 1st, 1979

The term '*Majjhimā*', or suitability, refers to the application of the *Dhamma* weapon to encounter and overwhelm any kind of *kilesa* that might appear. When the strength of this *Dhamma* weapon matches the strength of the *kilesas*, then we can withstand them. But there is still the possibility of the *kilesas* overwhelming and defeating us. But if we are tough and a lot more forceful than the *kilesas*, then they will steadily diminish. We will come to see the result which will testify to the efficacy of our exertion at this stage, using this particular kind of *Majjhimā* as the means of countering the *kilesas*. We will then use this particular method of practice in the future.

One must steadily and constantly do the work of suppressing and eradicating the *kilesas*. When the *kilesas* steadily weaken, the application of the *Majjhimā Dhamma* will be automatically adjusted to the intensity of the *kilesas*. When the *kilesas* are violent and vehement, then the *Majjhimā Dhamma* must be equally forceful and vigorous. One must really stand on one's ground and fight to the death. One must not retreat one step or back down. One

must not abandon or let go of one's *sati* and *paññā*, which is the foremost and the principal weapon, such as during the time when *dukkhavedanā* or pain appears within the body due to sitting for a long time. There will be a lot of pain in the various parts of the body, which becomes more intense and severe. It will yield no result or benefit if we merely endure this pain. We must use our endurance and perseverance in our contention and in our struggle with *sati* and *paññā*. *Paññā* will have to dig and search, probe and analyse, for the truth of the *dukkhavedanā* or pain which is appearing at that time, by constantly having *sati* controlling and directing the work of *paññā*. Both of these factors must be relentlessly performing their work.

One has to investigate to see where this pain arises. It will be unavoidable that there will be the presumption and assumption that pain arises from any one particular part of the body. For instance, at the knee or round the waist, or at the bottom, or at the thighs around the pelvis, or at any other particular part. Whichever part seems to be most profoundly affected by this pain is where one has to focus one's *sati* and *paññā*. One has to examine and find out what is the cause of this pain. What is it that is being afflicted? Is it the flesh, or is it the skin? Or

the sinews or the bones? One has to examine the flesh, and then compare it with the pain to find out if they are one and the same thing. Are they similar to one another? The flesh has a physical appearance and characteristic, but the pain doesn't. It simply manifests itself. This is the way of differentiating them so that one can see them clearly as they are. This work of differentiating must rely on *sati* to direct and focus *paññā* to probe and examine the nature of pain and the nature of the flesh.

Then one's understanding, perception, and insight of this truth will be consistent and continuous. One must not relent in the application of one's *sati* and *paññā*, as they must always go together in a pair as they investigate all of the *sabhāvadhammas* or phenomena like the pain and the flesh. If we want to isolate a bone for investigation, because there are aches and pains in the bone and we have the understanding that this bone is being afflicted by pain, we must then concentrate our attention in looking at this pain until we can see it very clearly. Then we have to look at the bone itself to see what kind of characteristics it has, for the bones have their distinct characteristics, features, and colours. But this pain has no such feature. It is simply pain, similar to the pain that we have alleged to be arising from the flesh. It is just our

presumption to think that the flesh is being afflicted with pain. Whether it is the pain of the skin, the flesh, or the bones, it always has the same characteristic. But the skin, flesh, and bones, all have different characteristics. How can they be pain? Let's consider when a person is dead. The bones, the flesh, the sinews and the skin still remain. But there is no pain. If they are one and the same thing, why is there no pain in a dead person, in spite of the fact that the skin, the flesh, the sinews, and the bones are still there? If this is the case, how can we consider them to be one and the same thing? This is one aspect of investigation.

The second aspect deals with the *citta*, which is terribly important. We must now isolate the *citta* and look into it. Is the *citta* afflicted with pain? If it is not any single part of the body that is being afflicted with pain, then is it the *citta* that is being so afflicted? We have to look at the *citta* and at the pain, and also at the body to see how they are different from one another. All the *citta* has is just knowingness. Whether pain arises, remains or disappears, this knowingness is still there. Even before this pain arose, this knowingness was still there. If the pain is the *citta* and the *citta* is the pain, then when the pain disappears the *citta* must also disappear. The *citta*,

knowingness, should not remain. If they are one and the same thing, then it would have to be like this.

But what happened here was that when the pain vanished, this knowingness still remained, and before this pain arose, the *citta* also knew. How can they be considered one and the same thing? We have to identify the *saññā* that alleges this thing or that thing is painful, the flesh is painful, the sinews are painful, the bones are painful, the heart is painful. In short, we are painful! When it gets to the point where 'We are painful!', then it can be excruciating. We have to differentiate and analyse so that we can see it clearly as it is. This is one type of *Majjhimā* to be used in combatting the pain that becomes extremely intense after we have sat for a long time, or when we are afflicted with illness.

This is especially so during the last moments when we are about to pass away. Then the pain will launch its full onslaught. It will attack us with maximum force, to the extent where we may not be able to withstand it, but perish right there and then. Between this pain that is so severe that we are unable to withstand it and will have to pass away, and the pain that arises from practice - of these two types of pain - which is more severe? If we are not capable of realising the

true nature of pain, by doing the investigation at this time, how then can we gain insight into the true nature of pain that arises at the time when we are about to pass away, when the pain is at its maximum intensity?

If our work of investigation is in vain at this time, then when we die we will also die in vain. We will never be able to come up with any truth to hold on to as our support. We have to investigate until we gain true realisation and insight into the nature of pain, of the body and all its parts, like the skin, the flesh, the bones, and the sinews. We must investigate with *paññā* until we see that the *citta* is the *citta*, that each separate phenomenon is a separate truth, that pain is just pain, then it is possible for us to separate ourselves from them. Even if the pain doesn't disappear, it will not be able to disturb, agitate, confuse and trouble the heart. We will remain at ease, comfortable, bold and courageous. We will have a shield protecting our heart. Each of these phenomena is real. They do not affect one another. The body is merely the body, the pain is merely the pain, and the *citta* is merely the *citta*. They each are real. This is how I myself was able to perceive them with *sati* and *paññā*. This is another aspect of the *Majjhimā* that we will have to apply in our practice.

When *rāga-taṇhā* or lust becomes very intense, we will have to apply the means that is equally forceful and strong. We have to counter it with its opposites. We have to bring in the *nimitta* of *asubha* or the contemplation of loathsomeness. We have to visualise a body that is very sexy and beautiful in our mind, and then break it down, decompose it, until it becomes bloated, rotten, being devoured by vultures, crows, and dogs. How then can there be any lust or infatuation? This is the way of the *Majjhimā* - this is how we will have to apply it. We have to come up with the tool that is suitable for the different kinds of *kilesas* that exhibit themselves. No matter how forceful and violent, or how subtle they might be, we have to come up with the appropriate tools that will neutralise them. Or else we will never achieve our goal. It is the same way with *asubha*. We have to do it in a way that will catch up with the *kilesas* and see them clearly within our hearts.

We have to counter and overwhelm each different kind of *kilesa* with the appropriate kind of *Majjhimā*. Then we will live in peace and happiness. The *Dhamma* teaching of the Lord *Buddha* which we call the *Majjhimā* is of many different levels or categories. When we have established bases within ourselves,

then the *Majjhimā* that we have utilised will now have to vary to suit the various kinds of *kilesas* that still exist and which are far more subtle, until this *Majjhimā* flows continually, day and night, due to our relentless investigation. When the *kilesas* become more subtle, then *paññā* will also become correspondingly more subtle. The things that are capable of catching up with the *kilesas* are *sati* and *paññā*. No matter how the *kilesas* may manifest themselves; *sati* and *paññā* will always catch up with them, and outwit them.

You have to apply this *sati* and *paññā*, and really investigate, doing it thoroughly. Don't remain idle, doing nothing. Don't be weak or discouraged. Don't project difficulties into the future. Don't think that in the future it will be very hard to do the practice. If we want to think, then we should think that the *kilesas* will always be menacing and trampling over our heart in every form of existence that we will take up. This will go on ceaselessly if we cannot find a way of eliminating them. They will be the ruler of the heart, and subject it to take up birth in the various forms of existence following the *kamma* that we have accumulated in the past. We will be totally useless if we allow the *kilesas* to menace and damage ourselves. If we are going to think about the future,

this is how we should think. It is only the present that is of any importance. We have to pick ourselves up, stand our ground, set up our resolve, and not back down.

The Lord *Buddha* had vouched for the efficacy and the result of all the *Dhamma* that he laid down for us. He was the first one to cultivate this *Dhamma*, and was able to attain the fruits, rising up steadily from the mundane state of existence to the state of illumination, to the state of *Buddho* or the state of purity, by the power of this *Dhamma*. The Lord *Buddha* had tested this *Dhamma* before expounding it to us, so how can this *Dhamma* go off the mark? The *kilesas* can never surpass this *Dhamma*. Every kind of *Dhamma* surpasses and outsmarts every kind of *kilesa*. If we apply the *Dhamma* that is suitable to each different type of *kilesa*, then it is certain that we will overcome and vanquish every kind of *kilesas*. This is the fundamental principle that we have to consider and apply in our practice.

We have to exert ourselves to the utmost and be very diligent and enterprising. We should not see anything to be more valuable than *Dhamma* to the extent where we become obsessed and engrossed in it; or see anything to be more valuable than the state of

deliverance from the *kilesas* and *āśava*, which oppress the heart. This is a crucial point. We should aspire for the happiness that arises from being totally free of all kinds of *kilesas*, as this is the everlasting happiness that is totally independent of time, the happiness that lasts forever. You have to set up your determination to concentrate in your investigation. I teach you, my fellows in the *Dhamma*, wholeheartedly and with pure intention. I have not kept any secret from you. I teach and bring to light the various means and methods in coping, conquering, and overcoming those influences that are harmful and antagonistic to the heart, from my personal and practical experience. I illustrate and point out all the facts and know-how of practice.

You must strive relentlessly in your exertion and set your heart into the practice. *Sati* or mindfulness is terribly important. You must always maintain your *sati*. Don't be careless or unmindful. But when we come together the tendency is for us to be absent-minded and to lose our guard, like the time when we come to have our hot drinks, or while we are walking along the path together, or when we have to work together. We tend to be unmindful, to the extent where we become carried away and become somewhat wild and reckless. Don't let this happen

within the circle of the practitioner who sees the danger of the *vaṭṭa saṃsāra*, the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, and the menace of the *kilesas*. While we are walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, while we are eating or drinking, we must always be seeing the harm of the *kilesas*. Don't be immersed in the pleasure of eating. While standing, walking, sitting, or lying down, don't be immersed in reverie and fantasy, nor be heedless or negligent, for this is not the way of the Lord *Buddha*.

This is not the way for one who is going to be free from *dukkha*. Remember this very well. Wherever you are, be possessed with *sati*. Don't be negligent or heedless. Be possessed with *sati* always. You must really and firmly establish your *sati*. Don't waste your time thinking of or concocting the things that you have done countless times before. All there is in this *vaṭṭa saṃsāra* and this entire world is just our thinking and concoction that agitates and troubles our hearts. Haven't we seen their menace already? Why do we have to cherish them and be immersed in thinking about them? We should learn our lesson well from those things which have been harmful to us. We should avoid and stop that kind of thinking, and try to suppress and eradicate all those things that are harmful to us, namely our thinking and concocting.

Let us think in the way of the *Dhamma*, so that the *Dhamma* can appear. Then all the thinking that goes in the way of *samudaya* will gradually fade away. Then this other thinking can spring forth becoming truth and *Dhamma* that is capable of overcoming the *kilesas* and *āśava*.

The *citta* that steadily attains calm is the result of our practice. Let us not put the blame on our *vasanā* or endowments or gifts. The *kilesas* pay no attention to the *vasanā* of anyone. Regardless of the numbers of the *kilesas*, they all are always harmful to us. We have to look at the *kilesas* as the curse and as the devil. We must not think about those *vasanās* that can help us eradicate the *kilesas*, apart from thinking about our diligent effort and strenuous exertion, having *sati* and *paññā* as our weapon. This is the crucial criterion for the eradication and suppression of the *kilesas*. Don't be concerned with the *vasanās*, for this can only cause us to become weak and discouraged. Then we will not succeed. We have to be tough and strong, we who are the practitioners.

When I heard Tan *Ajaan* Mun relate the way that he had exerted himself, I was moved with sympathy and compassion for him, for he was really earnest and serious, putting his whole life into it. He really sought

for the truth and *Dhamma*, without anyone to teach and guide him. He kept on struggling and ploughing through doggedly by himself with only the aid of the scriptures that were presented in general terms, and was eventually able to succeed and become our wonderful teacher of this era. Before he could become famous and an honour to Buddhism, and be respected and venerated both by those who had gone forth and by the laity, he had to really struggle. He was really earnest and serious, really putting up his life in exchange for what he was looking for. It was this that enabled him to become wonderful and noble, and to be free from all forms of *dukkha*. No form of *samudaya* or conventional reality could delude him any longer, from that very moment on to the end of time.

This is what is meant by '*Nibbāna* is permanent'. The *kilesas* are impermanent, for they are *samudaya*, which have both *sukha* and *dukkha*, gain and loss. They make people happy and sad, and will always do so. When we have eliminated all of them, then it is no longer an issue to say whether the *citta* is permanent or not, or whether *nibbāna* is permanent or not. It is only the *kilesas* that infiltrate the *citta* that make it have its ups and downs, highs and lows, constantly changing and not remaining the same. It keeps changing from *sukha* to *dukkha*, from being luminous

to being dull, from being confused and agitated to being calm. These are all the influences of the *kilesas*. But when the *kilesas* calm down due to our exertion, then the heart also attains calm. If our exertion becomes more intense, then our mind will get calmer. When we can overcome any particular kind of *kilesa*, then that *kilesa* will disappear forever. We will keep on overcoming and getting rid of every kind of *kilesa*, until there isn't a single one left within the heart.

We will then not have to go look for any happiness anywhere else. We can see very clearly that the reason that we cannot find any happiness is because of the *kilesas* which obstruct and oppress us with *dukkha*. We have to shoulder the burden of this *dukkha* constantly - all of the time, in all the various forms of existence right on up to the present one. But when we are totally free from this oppression of the *kilesas* and they have been totally vanquished from the heart, then it is not necessary to ask about the *akālika citta*, the timeless *citta* or the *akālika Dhamma*, the timeless *Dhamma*, or the *Dhammopadipo*, the radiance of *Dhamma* which is constant and unchanging. We don't have to ask about these things, for they will be found within our mind.

You must really strive in achieving this, for it is the most valuable treasure - much more precious than all the other possessions of the world that are highly cherished and valued, with tremendous greed for them, and boundless desire to acquire them. Although one might already have lots of them, one still wants more of them. This is the way of *lobha* or greed. The ambition for power and influence is also the work of the *kilesas*. Greed, or *lobha*, is the work of the *kilesas*. Hatred is the work of the *kilesas*. Delusion is the work of the *kilesas*, as well as the confusion and trouble of both the body and the heart. They are all the work of the *kilesas*. They are not the work of *Dhamma*. Although it might have to go through *dukkha*, the work of *Dhamma* is the work for happiness. This *dukkha* is the investment capital; the *sukha* is the profit that arises therefrom. This is not the *dukkha* that is damaging and menacing without there being any reward, like the *dukkha* created by the *kilesas* to destroy people. This *dukkha* is different.

When we strive in our exertion, if there is *dukkha* then let us face it, so long as the results are steadily forthcoming and the heart becomes more blissful and joyful until we arrive at the state of perfection when all of our burdens will be discarded. The battle that has been raging intensely against the *kilesas* like a

Dhamma Cakka turning around relentlessly and ceaselessly both day and night, while walking, standing, sitting, and lying down, with the exception of the time when we go to sleep will cease immediately when all of our enemies have been totally vanquished. Then the weapon that countered the *kilesas*, or the mode of our practice that has been turning around like a revolving wheel, will also cease immediately. This is because all of the opposition and all of the enemies that we have been contending with, have all totally disappeared. The battle between the *kilesas* and the *citta* has now come to a decisive conclusion. We have won. The conquering of oneself, which is the conquering of the *kilesas* within one's heart, is far more supreme than conquering other people or winning battles a hundred thousand times. We have to accomplish this task.

The Guiding Principle

June 5th, 1979

No race of people living on this earth, without any exception, lives in isolation. People of every country live in groups, forming societies, forming circles of families and friends. It would be correct to say that people are cowardly, and it would not be wrong to say that people have to socialise and to be involved with one another. We, *bhikkhus* who are fearless and resolute should live alone in seclusion. But fundamentally we still have to live in groups and in company. We still have to have contact with our peers, though we spend most of the time wandering around and living in seclusion and solitude. But from time to time, there will be the occasion and necessity to come into contact with our peers and our teacher, to ask some of the questions that we might have arising from our practice, and to listen to further instruction about the truth and *Dhamma*. So in the end, we are also classified as social animals, with the exception that our way is different from that of the other people.

The traditions, customs, rules, and disciplines of the *bhikkhus* and the laity are different from one another. The traditions and the discipline of the *bhikkhus* follow the rules of the *Dhamma-vinaya*, and, therefore, in all our conduct and behaviour we must conform to the principles of the

Dhamma-vinaya. We also have to be mindful of our thoughts, and of which way they are going. We have to be concerned with the morals of it, and whether this thinking is going in the right or the wrong way, for it is still possible that even if we are not going against the *Vinaya*, we could be going against the *Dhamma*. To break the *Vinaya* is a grosser offence, whilst breaking the *Dhamma* is a more subtle violation.

They are all the work of the *kilesas*, and that is why we have to be careful; for we are here for the purpose of overcoming and correcting the *kilesas*. We must not take these thoughts lightly. Our actions of body and speech that we exhibit when we communicate with our peers must be watched and observed. Whether we are living in seclusion or in the company of our fellow *bhikkhus*, we have to be mindful of our conduct and behaviour. We have to be observant of the rules and the discipline which is the *Dhamma-vinaya*. This is our way of life, and we must not abandon it. When we live with others, we have to follow the traditions, the rules, and the disciplines, of the society that we are living in, and this is the society of the *bhikkhu*. The laity have their own laws and customs to govern themselves. They have their own ways and customs which are of a coarser nature, as they are not very strict with their behaviour and conduct. It is not like the way of the *bhikkhu*. Speaking from the principle of the one who has gone forth, the *bhikkhu* must be careful at all

times, and be mindful and observant of all of his behaviour and conduct - every action of body, speech, and heart, and in all postures. We are now living together in a social group made up of varying temperaments and personalities. We bring with us our own old ways and habits. The core of our personality and character is uniquely our own. We have to realise that these are each individual's personal traits and have to be very careful when we exhibit them.

The conduct and behaviour that go contrary to the principles of the *Dhamma-vinaya*, which affect and disturb our fellow *bhikkhus*, are not considered as traits or personality. Every one of us here must therefore be very careful, cautious and vigilant, for this is the way of maintaining peace and harmony amongst ourselves. This is the way of preventing any trouble from arising. It is as if we are all of the same organ. Our practice of the chaste and holy life will flow smoothly and with ease, for there will be no mental hindrances or any problem arising from this way of living together. There will be nothing to menace and trouble the heart, nothing to confuse, agitate, or prevent it from becoming calm as one tries to develop *samādhi*. For this reason, we have to be very careful and vigilant. All of us have to bear this well in mind - that we are now a *bhikkhu*. We must maintain our status of the *bhikkhu*, both in our hearts and in our behaviour and conduct, of speech and bodily action. We have to make

sure that they don't affect and disturb other people. As far as conceit and snobbery are concerned, this is directly the work of the *kilesas*. We have to consider them as harmful to ourselves and our colleagues. We must avoid mindlessly exhibiting and hurting everyone around us, as this is just the way of spreading filth and destroying happiness. This is especially so in the circle of the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu*, a very refined class of people. Our behaviour and conduct must be virtuous and conforms with the principle of the *Dhamma-vinaya*. This moral excellence does not come from any unestablished principle.

We must strictly adhere to the *Dhamma-vinaya* as our guiding principle because it is the most sublime. We will see this clearly when we develop our heart. The more refined the heart becomes, the more will we be impressed with the subtlety of *Dhamma*. But at the same time the *kilesas* will also become correspondingly more subtle, so we must not be complacent and take them lightly. We always have to be vigilant. The happiness that arises from living together is the consequence of each one of us being careful and cautious, mindful of our *kilesas*, and preventing them from exhibiting themselves. It is the nature of the *kilesas* to always agitate us and make us sad and gloomy. At the same time they also affect and disturb others, by creating emotional strain in those people such that they cannot live in peace, for they always have enmity and aversion within themselves. This will

significantly damage the work of mental development. Even when there are no tensions, it is already very hard to practise meditation. This is because in the mind there is a natural process that constantly pushes the mind into thinking and concocting about this and that, causing it to become restless and agitated, to the extent where it is impossible to enter into calm, in spite of the application of maximum effort. This is how the mind normally is. And when there are issues and problems to deal with, then it is like adding fire to it, that will only afflict it with more discomforts and stresses, then spill over to the other members of the community, thus unabling them to live in peace and happiness.

In this way, we just build up a lot of bad *kamma* for ourselves and others. This is not what a practitioner who strives for the eradication of all forms of immorality, should be doing whilst endeavouring to live together in peace and harmony. We have to oversee ourselves, and have self-control and discipline. Our behaviour and conduct must not go in the way of the *kilesas*. This is the principle of living together. When there are no clashes or friction, and when we all follow the principle of rationality, truth, and *Dhamma*, then there will be no room for the ego. We will only uphold what is right based on the principle of *Dhamma* as the determining factor. Even though the mind might not attain calm, at least there will be no *dukkha*, as the *dukkha* will not be able to arise

when we have left no room for it to come out. This is one form of peace and happiness: living together harmoniously among friends and among good people. We should not look at each other with enmity, but we should look at each other in the light of reason. If there is the necessity and due reason for us to become involved and enter into contact with one another, we should allow ample room for *mettā* or goodwill, and make allowances for other people's mistakes. Let bygones be bygones. This is the way of the practitioner. We should not look at others in the light of animosity and enmity. When we see anyone breaking the rules of the *Dhamma-vinaya*, then we must warn and admonish him. We must gladly take and listen to any warnings and admonishments from our fellow *bhikkhus*.

The one who listens does so in the light of *Dhamma*, for the purpose of correcting the wrong that he has committed, so that he can conform to the right way that has been pointed out by his peers. This is the proper way for both parties, both the one who gives the admonishment and the one who takes the warning. The one who admonishes does so in the light of *Dhamma*. He does not do it out of displeasure or dislike, or for the sake of finding fault with another, or to humiliate and embarrass the other person. The one who takes the admonishment also does so in the light of *Dhamma*. He respectfully takes the criticism as if he is being shown a store of great treasures. This is

right and proper for both sides. Living together in harmony is important. If one of the members of the community behaves badly, then it will have an adverse effect on every other member of the community. For this reason, living together means that each one has to be careful and cautious. There should always be forgiveness for one another, befitting our status as the practitioners of *Dhamma* who are filled with *Dhamma* within our hearts, and being principally endowed with *mettā* and *karunā*, love and compassion. For this is the basic constituent of the mind of the practitioner. A practitioner must always cultivate *mettā* towards all living beings: '*Sabbe sattā averā hontu*', and so forth. Furthermore, one also cultivates the *Karaniya Mettā Sutta*, and the other *suttas* dealing with the *brahma-vihāras*, the four sublime abodes. A *bhikkhu* must always cultivate these thoughts. What I have shown here is only an example. It is for you to take it up and develop it in your practice. The cultivation of *mettā* is for happiness and coolness.

Furthermore, you have to cultivate yourselves in the practice of mental development. Don't engross yourselves in the thoughts of animosity and distaste for anyone. You have to consider that we are living together following the way of *Dhamma*. Always be forgiving and magnanimous. A *bhikkhu* is one who can sacrifice everything. A *bhikkhu* is always forgiving. If a

bhikkhu cannot forgive, then nobody else can. This is the crucial principle that the *bhikkhu* should follow. Then when we live together, we will live in peace and harmony, in happiness and coolness. This is the governing principle of a community. It is for this reason that it is not possible for me to accept too many *bhikkhus*. I have thoroughly thought about this. I am not concerned that there might not be enough of the living requisites to go around, for I am looking from the standpoint of supervision. When I have to oversee a lot of people, I will not be able to give adequate attention to everyone. There is also a greater possibility for one of us to cause damage and disturbance to the rest of us. There will then be chaos and trouble for the whole community. This is not good or desirable. But when I can maintain the numbers of you here at the optimum level, then my instructions to you can be to the fullest benefit, and I can give you all the necessary attention. Excess breeds mediocrity. When there are too many of us, then whatever we do will take longer.

For instance, the time that we spend eating will be much longer instead of shorter. We have to spend more time getting things done. By the time we finish our chores, it can be quite late in the day. There will be a lot more work to do just to take care all of us. The more people we have, the more work we have to do. Then there will be less time left for practice, and less benefit. For this

reason, I only accept just enough, because this is just about the right number. If I take any more it will be excessive. Things can go badly if there are too many. The possibility of people making a mess of things is far greater, and there will just be more clumsiness and incompetence. And it will just be a nuisance for me. I have a lot of *mettā* and compassion for my *Dhamma* colleagues. How can I not have any compassion for those who are seeking for *Dhamma*? I also used to be a junior *bhikkhu* who was searching for a teacher. I had to go through many teachers before I finally ran into Tan *Ajaan* Mun. I sympathise and understand your feelings and your predicament, for I have put myself in your place. Otherwise, I would not be able to know how to deal with you. This is because both of our predicaments are of the same nature, for we are in the same boat.

The way things are now, some of you might think that this temple is very strict and very resolute, and very rigorous and scrupulous. This is because you haven't seen how I practised in the past. The laypersons applaud this monastery as being unsurpassed by any other monastery, concerning our strict observance of the rules and the discipline, of orderliness and cleanliness, and of the *bhikkhus* who are obedient, and well-behaved, not showing any signs of transgression and mischief. This is how they sing our praises. But we should not indulge in this

sort of compliment, for I have really been very lax with all of you. And what is the reason for this slackness? It is simply because there are just a lot of you now, and this laxness is the natural consequence of it. When there are more of you, then this laxness increases, and the amount of the gifts and the living requisites also increases correspondingly, as you all can see. But our practice and exertion does not become more rigorous and intensive. There are also a lot more people that come into contact and involvement with the monastery. So the more people there are, the more work there is. But there isn't much that we can do about it, as this is their faith and conviction. They come voluntarily, and nobody can prevent them from doing this. The amount of food that we are getting nowadays is grossly in abundance. This excess of the living requisites, and of the gifts and offerings, can weigh down on the practice of mind development. If one is not careful, one will steadily degenerate, without any doubt. For this reason, the practitioner must always see the harm of these things, and must not become too involved. If he does, he will be buried by them and his *Dhamma* virtue destroyed. He will never progress. We must, therefore, be vigilant.

Meditation practice is extremely vital for mental development. We must be courageous, firm, conscientious, and resolute, not weak or discouraged. Otherwise, we will fail and not achieve

any beneficial results. We have to always remind ourselves that every type of *kilesa* is extremely tenacious. They are far more clever and cunning than we are. If we act foolishly and practise heedlessly and senselessly, then we will never be able to subdue or eliminate any of the *kilesas*, because they will always be more powerful, shrewd and crafty than we are, and that is why they are our master. We might think that we are the masters, but truly, we are not. We are just the *kilesas*' servants without knowing it. All of our thoughts are initiated by the *kilesas*. They direct us to think in a way that will generate a lot of agitation and confusion, brew up hatred and aversion. Love and anger are the *kilesas*' creations. Can we not see that they are perilous and harmful? How can we consider ourselves more clever than them, and capable of outwitting them? We are always following their lead every time that we think. We never realise that hatred is just the work of the *kilesas*. We never realise that anger is also the work of the *kilesas*. The same with love and aversion. We are not aware that they are the strategy of the *kilesas* that push and propel these things into being. But if we know this at every moment, then the *kilesas* can definitely be subdued. This is a very crucial point for the practitioner. We must constantly keep this well in mind.

We have to realise that there is a very great difference in skill and aptitude between ourselves and the *kilesas*. With what can the *kilesas* be conquered? It

is nothing else but our *saddhā*, conviction, *sati*, mindfulness, *paññā*, discernment and *virīya*, our diligent effort, acting as the support. *Sati* is terribly important. *Paññā* is the tool that does the work of analysis and examination, countering and contending with the *kilesas*. *Sati* is the overseer, making sure that we do not lose our guard. And when we have been relentlessly developing and exerting ourselves, then *sati* will become highly developed. It will then become *sampajañña*, constant awareness. This is the outgrowth of mindfulness. After *sampajañña*, it will become *mahāsati*. It is likewise with *pañña*, which starts with difficulty in the beginning. Please don't have the understanding that *paññā* will arise by itself. We have to devise the various ways of thinking, contemplation and analysis that are versatile and many-sided. In whatever way we can eliminate the *kilesas* and subdue and calm them down, that way is *Dhamma*. This is the *paññā-Dhamma*. We must not entirely rely on the scriptures, for otherwise we will turn into worms eating up the paper. All the *Dhamma* that the Lord *Buddha* taught came out of his heart. The *Dhamma* is found within the heart. *Sati-paññā* is also found within the heart. We have to bring them out. We have to produce them. Then we will be able to see into the principle of cause and effect, and use it to contend with the *kilesas* that are extremely cunning and clever. They are always the master in every instant of our thinking and concocting, and during every moment of

contact through the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body, which all converge and become the *Dhammārammaṇa*, mental objects right within the heart. These are all the works of the *kilesas*. The reason why we still cannot see the danger of the *kilesas* is because we are still a lot more foolish than they are. If we are a lot wiser, then when they begin to concoct, we will be aware of them. As soon as they concoct, we will know. We have to strive in this way, and then the result will be as I have just said, without any doubt.

We have to be constantly developing and training our mind. The practice of fasting is a very good way of reducing restlessness and agitation. It is one means of supporting our exertion. The fasting practitioner must be careful every time he fasts. It happened to me before, and I am giving you some precautions. In the beginning stages of fasting, the mind will become consistently cool and calm; the mind is fully possessed with mindfulness and one is hardly ever off-guard. But when one takes some food, then one become unmindful and inattentive, which is something quite normal. When we fast again the result might not be like before. Instead of becoming cool and calm, we become disappointed and saddened. The mind now yearns for the past result and neglects the work at hand, which is the establishing of mindfulness. Thinking of the past has

now replaced it, and therefore, the results are not forthcoming. We have to cut off this yearning and concentrate on developing mindfulness. Whatever has happened in the past, however firm and stable the mind was before, it has already happened. They were the results gained from our exertion, the same kind of exertion that we are now putting forth, which is the establishing of mindfulness. These results cannot come forth by any other means.

We must stay in the present. Don't rake up the past by hankering for the past results. However lofty they might have been, we must now forget them. Don't think of them, for they will just agitate and disturb the heart. We will then not be able to attain calm. Then there will just be regret and frustration, and grumbling and complaining that this is not like before. This is one form of hindrance. For this reason, I am exhorting you not to become involved with thinking about what happened in the past. We must remain in the present and ask ourselves: 'How am I doing? Why is the mind not calm?' We must focus our attention here. If we cannot take hold of the *knowing*, then we must not abandon our *mantra* or *parikamma* object. Wherever we go, we have to stay close to the mind. Keep the mind constantly concentrating on the *mantra*, using it as the meditation subject. Whatever it may be, be it '*Buddho*' or '*aṭṭhi*' or '*kesā*', '*lomā*', '*nakhā*', '*dantā*', or

'*taco*', keep the mind concentrating and holding on to it. Don't let the mind think about other things. If we are not mindful, the *kilesas* will then direct it to think about other things. When we are mindful of the *mantra*, the mind will then become calm. This is the key to a successful practice. In the beginning stages, when we try to establish calm, it is quite difficult. But no matter how hard it is, we must not let it bother us. We must consider our exertion to be free from *dukkha* extremely vital for us and we have to continually exert ourselves.

We have to develop mindfulness until it becomes stable, continuous and persistent. When the time is appropriate for *paññā* to do the work of investigation and analysis, we must then do it using both the internal and the external as the objects of investigation and comparison. *Magga* can be found in both the internal and the external. *Paññā* can be found both internally and externally, if one just develops it so that it actually becomes *paññā* which is also called the *magga*. And what aspect are we going to investigate in the light of *aniccā* or impermanence, for instance? We can take the external as the objects of investigation, and then compare it with the internal. This can be done. Or we can compare the internal with the external, for in fact they are one and the same thing. There is no difference between them concerning *aniccā*, *dukkhā*, and *anattā*, or *asubha*, loathsomeness, or *paṭikkūla*, filth and impurity. They can be found, both internally and externally, in all men

and women, people and animals. We can investigate and analyse in any way that we devise, at any appropriate time. But when we develop calm, we must solely concentrate on calming the mind, using a *mantra* or *ānāpānasati*, mindfulness of breathing as our meditation subject, that suits our temperament and character. The work must be flowing continuously, having *sati* constantly supervising. Then our *knowing* will continuously flow with the work. Once the *knowing* is in perpetual contact with the meditation subject, and the mind doesn't have any chance to wander here and there, the mental stream will then steadily converge into the centre of calm. It now becomes the unique and distinctive feature of the mind. When this feature becomes more apparent, the mind will become calmer. All the thinking and concocting will gradually diminish. The recollection of the *mantra* will also decrease. What takes its place now is this very distinctive *knowing*. Whether we recollect the *mantra* or not, this *knowing* will still remain. This is what is meant by the mind converging into itself and 'becoming itself'. This is the calming of the mind.

You have to really and earnestly concentrate in doing this work. *Dhamma* is the most supreme and wonderful thing, unsurpassed by any other thing. The *kilesas* are ignoble, despicable, filthy and corrupt. When we haven't yet seen and experienced this marvellous *Dhamma*, we have nothing to compare the *kilesas* with. So

we always follow the *kilesas*, always believe them, and let them rock us to sleep. But when we have something to compare it with, then we can see that the *kilesas* are fake. *Dhamma* will then become real, and become the truth. It will then compete with the *kilesas*. We will then gradually let go of the *kilesas*, and see the harm of every kind of *kilesa* at every moment. This is because we now have the *Dhamma* as a comparison and as a competitor. Whether it is the calm or the discerning ability of the heart, whatever level of calm it is and however brilliant and subtle *paññā* may be, all of them are *Dhamma*. These *Dhammas* are the competitors of the *kilesas*. We will get to know immediately the difference between the *Dhamma* and the *kilesas*, concerning the benefits, ease, comforts, and happiness that they can provide. This is how it will be for all practitioners who do not relent in their exertion, and who strive in ridding all the *kilesas* from their heart. They achieve this by the power of the *Dhamma*. The taste of *Dhamma* excels all other tastes. All other tastes are nothing but the taste of the *kilesas*. What else can they be? Whatever flavour it may be, it is usually the flavour of the *kilesas*.

The *Dhamma* always outstrips the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* always surrender to the *Dhamma*. They are not afraid of anything else but the *Dhamma*. They capitulate to the *Dhamma*. So how do we make the *kilesas* surrender and be fearful of the *Dhamma*? We must develop and

train ourselves with the *Dhamma*. We must not relent or back down. We will then experience calm and insight right within the heart. We will also discover the means and techniques used in subduing the *kilesas* right within the heart. Once we have cleared the way of hindrances, then the *Dhamma* will have the opportunity to grow steadily, not dependent on time or place or postures. When the opportunity is there, the *Dhamma* will steadily appear, just like when the *kilesas* emerge. When the conditions are right for them to appear, then they will appear. The more the *kilesas* appear, then the more the *dukkha*. The more the *Dhamma* emerges, then the more the happiness. This is the basis of comparison and competition between the *Dhamma* and the *kilesas* that can be seen clearly within our hearts. The *kilesas* have ruled over our hearts for a long time. Aren't we ever going to learn our lesson about their menace? It is about time that we did so now, as there is now the *Dhamma* that will serve as the competitor to them, and the object of comparison and contrast.

We will then begin to exert in our practice, and keep on driving inwards. At least we should try to make our heart calm, so that we can have peace and happiness. For one who has gone forth, especially if he is a practitioner, if he doesn't have any calm within his heart, he will never have any happiness. Living amongst his peers, he will see that

everything around him is antagonistic to him. Though he might not exhibit this externally, it will be building up within his heart. He will not be able to see how wonderful and noble all of his teachers are because his mind is burning with fire. All of his thoughts are fiery. When the mind doesn't have anything unusual or marvellous within itself, but is fully possessed with the *kilesas*. Then, when he thinks about his peers, his fellows in *Dhamma*, and his teachers, it will all go in the way of the *kilesas*. He will not be able to see their marvel and wonder. He will become dull, weak, discouraged, always retreating, letting the *kilesas* trample upon him, totally tearing him into pieces. Does this befit us who are the practitioners, the followers of the *Tathāgata*, who take up the foremost and most supreme *Dhamma* of the Lord *Buddha*? We are making ourselves vulnerable to the *kilesas*, and letting them trample all over us from the tops of our heads down to the soles of our feet, for countless lives. And we still have not learned our lesson yet! When are we ever going to come up with any wisdom? How can we ever believe in the Lord *Buddha*? It is more correct to say that we take up '*Rāga-tarīhā saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*', lust as our refuge. There is just empty wind when we utter '*Buddhaṃ, Dhammaṃ, Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*', for truly it is all the time '*Rāga, dosa, moha saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*', as we are much closer to them than to the *Dhamma*. We only think about the *Dhamma* occasionally. But the *kilesas* are ever-present, deeply

buried and completely merged with the heart itself. There is no way that the *Dhamma* can infiltrate the heart to make it marvellous and wonderful.

But when the mind has attained calm, we will then see our worth and assets, and see the merit and virtue of the heart, of our colleagues, and of our teacher. The more subtle and lofty the mind becomes, the more we will come to see the marvel and greatness of our teacher. And why is this so? Previously, when our teacher taught us the *Dhamma* instructions in their depth, profundity and subtlety, we could only listen. It never got to our hearts. But when we have experienced the *Dhamma* like the state of calm, we can see clearly that it is exactly as our teacher had explained. It is now a living reality within our hearts. All the various levels of *sati* and *paññā* instructed by our teacher have now also appeared within our hearts. We will see clearly within the heart the results that arise from the investigation of *paññā* that overcomes, uproots, and eliminates the *kilesas*, until the heart becomes purified. The intensity of our conviction, belief, and admiration for our colleagues and our teacher, will become heightened as the mind remains with the way of *Dhamma*. You have to put in the effort yourselves. I try my best to provide all of you with favourable times and opportunities to practise. I try to keep all the extra-curricular activities to the minimum, so that you can really strive in your practice. If you find walking meditation is good for you, then you should keep on walking. If you are

not doing any other kind of work, then you should do a lot of walking meditation. The body can be adversely affected if it is not given the proper work-out and exercise. You should, therefore, do a lot of walking meditation, as a way of working-out.

Sitting for a long time or sitting a lot depends on your ability. This is not something that can be forced upon you. It depends on your own disposition, and what is suitable for you. As far as I myself was concerned, in the beginning stages of practice I found it quite painful after sitting for about 30 minutes. But then I was able to extend it to an hour, an hour and a half, two hours, and three hours and four hours, sitting each time. During each session of sitting, I usually sat for about three or four hours. But when the time came for putting in an all-out effort, then it just happened by itself. There is a time when you come to a critical situation, with which you will have to contend until you come up with the results and come to true realisation and insight. This is when you go into the ring and put your whole life at stake, like sitting all night. I had never anticipated doing this before. But as I began to sit, then the *kilesas* would begin to gather up their forces and really strike at and swoop down on me. I began to wonder what was going on. It seemed like I was being obstinate and unyielding, though it was going in the way of *Dhamma*. I said 'What is happening?' This is the way of the *magga*, contending with my own *kilesas*. I'm not picking a fight with

anyone. If I'm fighting with other people, then this is the work of the *kilesas*. But if I'm doing it for the purpose of conquering myself, then this must be the *magga*, the weapon to fight the *kilesas* with. My mind now begins to turn around incessantly, but when it stops, I then say 'Alright, it's either I realise the truth or death!'

I immediately set up a resolve: 'Today I have to get to see the truth that is manifesting itself right at this time. What is it like? If I don't die, then I have to remain sitting until morning before I will get up from this seat. From this moment until dawn, I will not let anything come to side-track me from this work'. The mind then begins to turn around investigating incessantly. That is how it was when I sat meditating all night long. When you have established a firm foundation from this way of practice, then this becomes a very good way to proceed. You will have no qualms, nor have any fear of the pain that you have investigated before, now that you know how to totally separate the pain from the heart. It can no longer enter the heart and affect it in any way. You have clearly realised the truth of the body. Every part of the body is one form of truth, it is as it is. The pain that appears doesn't know that it is painful. It is one form of process or condition, one form of truth. It exists as it is. It is the mind that alleges that I am painful, that I am experiencing the pain, rounding it all into this 'I'. When the body, the pain, and 'I' are mixed together, the mind then ends up burning itself, because *paññā* cannot catch

up with this delusion. But when *paññā* has analysed and differentiated every part of the body and the nature of pain, and seen them according to the truth, then every part of the body is just the body, the pain is just the pain. They are all just as they are, and as they have been since ancient times. Pain is a condition that arises, remains, and disappears, as it is natural for it to do so. It is the mind that supposes, assumes and presumes. *Saññā* is really the chief culprit here. When you understand this, then the mind will steadily draw inwards. Actually it is *saññā* that is steadily drawing inwards. You will then get to see the truth within your heart. The heart then becomes real, the body is real, and so is the pain. They each are real. Although the pain did not disappear, it will not affect the heart. The heart will remain calm and at ease.

This is an extremely crucial technique, for you have now established a base. You are now bold and courageous, and the mind becomes sublime, elegant, brilliant and luminous. You can now see the indescribable marvel within your heart that you have never experienced before. With this much success, you are quite proud of yourself. You can now fearlessly face up to the pain, as well as coming face to face with death. You will just say, 'Where will this death come from? What form of pain can deceive me? At the time of death, what kind of pain can appear if not this same kind of pain that is appearing at this time?

But I have already understood the truth of the pain that is appearing at this time. For me, death really has no meaning or significance at all. All that is necessary is to get to know the truth. The four elements of earth, water, air, and fire, will just dissolve from this body. They just return to their original state. And how can the mind die? Whilst I think that it passes away, it instead becomes more distinct and remains *knowing*. So what really dies? Do the four elements of earth, water, air, and fire, ever really die? Have they ever been destroyed? Of course not! It never happened! And how can the mind die, when I can see it becoming more distinct and obvious? Is this the one that is going to die? How can it die? I cannot find the cause of it'. It just manifests itself more distinctly and obviously. I become very brave and courageous. This is speaking about the time when it is suitable to put in an all-out effort into the practice. This will come by itself.

May all of you put in your effort and strive in your practice. Don't relent or retreat, and be always and constantly endeavouring and striving. You have to take hold of this supreme treasure, and make it your own possession right within your heart. As far as the *kilesas* which are ruling over your hearts are concerned, they have been here for aeons, their origin untraceable. This is due to your delusion that makes you fall completely under the control of the *kilesas*, allowing them to trample on and damage your heart,

pushing you to take birth in the various forms of existence. Whatever form of birth you take up, it is all due to the influence of the *kilesas*. It is the *kilesas* that lead you to born and die, to suffer pain, trouble and hardship. If you cannot see the harm of the *kilesas*, then what can you see the harm of? There is nothing else that is harmful to you. The external conditions such as the climate, the hot and the cold weather, are all something quite ordinary. They are not as dangerous as the *kilesas* which hurt and oppress you. This is how you have to see the danger of the *kilesas*. Then it will be possible for the heart to live in peace and tranquillity. In practice, there are two essential keys to success. The first one is when you come to the true conviction in the principle of *Dhamma*, when you have established a firm foundation for the heart, and are completely certain that the mind will no longer deteriorate. It can be achieved by sitting all night. This accomplishment will be clearly perceived. You now know definitely that the mind will now not deteriorate. You then move on to eliminate *rāga* or lust by incessantly contemplating on the loathsome nature of the body, which is a bit tricky but you will eventually achieve it. You then move on to the last stage of your practice, to the pinnacle of the heart, to the pinnacle of knowledge, and to the pinnacle of your practice, where you will find that this is also a bit tricky to achieve. If you have not 'cracked' this secret yet, you will not be able to

explain it to the other practitioner. You can only learn it from practical experience.

This is similar to what the scriptures say: That an ordinary person who has not yet realised any of the four stages of enlightenment is not capable of solving the problems of a *sotāpanna*. A *sotāpanna* is not capable of solving the problems of a *sakadāgāmi*. A *sakadāgāmi* is not capable of solving the problems of an *anāgāmi*. An *anāgāmi* is not capable of solving the problems of an *arahant*. An *arahant* is not capable of solving the problems of the Lord *Buddha*. Also, no other *arahant* is capable of solving the problems of the Venerable *Sāriputta* and the Venerable *Mogallāna*, problems that are not about the elimination of the *kilesas*, but are beyond the ability of the other *arahants*. But when I spoke about the tricks needed to solve the problems of the *sotāpanna*, the *sakadāgāmi*, the *anāgāmi*, and the *arahant*, I meant the tricks used in the elimination of the *kilesas*. When you ask someone who has not learned these tricks that you have learned and seen not from written scriptures, but clearly from your practical experience, be it at any level, he will not be able to answer you. Even if he is a very learned scholar of the *Tipiṭaka* or Buddhist Canon, he will be stuck. Therefore, speaking from the practical experience point of view, how can anyone be contemptuous of the *kammaṭṭhāna* practitioner who can ask you questions that you cannot answer?

Consider, for example, at the time of the Lord *Buddha*. There was a well-learned scholar who had accomplished his study of the *tipiṭaka*. He was scornful of the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhus* and treated them with contempt and derision. All of these *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhus* were *arahants*. So when the Lord *Buddha* heard of him and came upon the scene, he asked them some questions. He first asked the scholar, whose name was *Poṭṭhila*, but he was not able to give an answer. He then asked a *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu*, who happened to be an *arahant*. He was able to give an answer immediately. The Lord then asked another question on another level of *Dhamma*. He asked *Poṭṭhila* the scholar. Again he was not able to answer. When he asked the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu*, he answered immediately again. When the Lord *Buddha* asked the scholar some more questions, he was not able to answer any of the questions. When he asked the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu*, he was always able to answer right away. The Lord *Buddha* then said to the scholar, 'You should not be contemptuous of the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu*, because you are similar to a cow-herd, a hired hand. You only get paid a salary to make a living from. But the *arahants*, who are the sons of the *Tathāgata* are similar to the owners of the cattle. They can do anything with the cattle at any time they please, for they are the owners. They are not the hired hands. They are the bosses'. That was how the Lord

Buddha expounded this discourse, as it was recorded in the scriptures.

There are a few tricks in the practice. When those who have already experienced them talk about them, they will all understand. They know what wrong view is. When you have the wrong view, although you may think it is the right view, and tell it to someone who has already attained, he will know. For instance, you may think that you have got rid of *rāga* or lust. When you tell it to someone who has already eliminated lust, he will know if you have really got rid of it or not. The important thing is that you should keep on practising and progressing until you yourself experience these sublime results which cannot be kept hidden from you.

Cause for Schism

June 10th, 1979

All the *Buddhas* attain their enlightenment through the realisation of the *Dhamma* that is inherent in this world. All of them attained the same knowledge and insight, and their teaching was all the same and conforms to the highest ethical and moral principles. They did not teach the *Dhamma* in an aberrant or corrupt manner like the Buddhist followers of today who are indecorous and ostentatious, trying to outdo the Lord *Buddha*. There are many of them, despite the fact that the ideal way of teaching is still extant. But they just don't want to follow it, because they simply want to be famous and distinguished. If one follows the principles of the *Dhamma* teaching, then one will be free of errors, flawless and impeccable. Whether one is a *bhikku* or a layperson, one will be possessed with *sīla* or morality and *Dhamma*. If one just practises following the principles of the *Dhamma* teaching that one has faith in, then how can one ever get into trouble? The cause for schism in various sects is the conduct that goes against the *Dhamma-vinaya*, crushing and trampling on the *Dhamma-vinaya*, which are the truth; thus replacing the *Dhamma* teaching of

the Lord *Buddha* with the *kilesas* by thinking that this is the proper and correct way of doing things. If they are in accord with one's preferences and obsessions, then they must be right. These ways then keep on growing. These are the grosser kind of *kilesas*.

Concerning the more subtle ones that are found within the heart of everyone, including those of us practitioners who have been constantly fooled by their tricks, what are they? They are hatred, anger, and the obsessions with our feelings and emotions that are created by our thinking and concocting, which are influenced by the *kilesas*, with ourselves being totally unaware of them and are totally engrossed and immersed in them. They are all found within the heart of everyone. The Lord *Buddha* expounded that all of them are harmful and dangerous. Love, hatred, anger, animosity, and our obsession for the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and emotions are all harmful. They are influenced and created by the *kilesas* that give rise to delusion and infatuation. The *Dhamma* has already pointed this out, but we are always enticed and hypnotised by them. If we do not fall for them or be captivated by them, how can the heart not find any calm? We have to be vigilant, take care of our thinking and concocting, and curb the

confusion and chaos of the heart that the *kilesas* create by manipulating *saññā* and *sarikhāra* to afflict our hearts with trouble and hardship. This is something that we haven't yet seen the harm of. When the mind has not attained calm, then it is already obvious that it is being afflicted with harm. This damage is the state of confusion and restlessness which prevents the mind from coming to calm.

The reason why the mind cannot be calm is because of the agitating and disturbing influences that reside inside the mind. If the practitioner doesn't reflect on their harm, then he will not be able to find anything worthwhile. The wonderful quality of the mind, which is the state of calm, will not appear. We have to constantly see them as harmful and be very careful and vigilant. If we are not, how can we expect to come across the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*? If they constantly obstruct the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*, how can we ever realise them when every time we think, our thoughts always go in the way of the *kilesas*? Whatever we concoct or turn our mind to various thoughts, it is never about the *Dhamma*, but always about the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsaava*. How then can we ever come across the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*? We as practitioners must think like this. The *kilesas* are always influencing *sarikhāra* and *saññā*. As far as

the sight and sound and the other sense objects are concerned, the *kilesas* only influence them when they come into contact with the sense organs. This happens from time to time. It is the feelings and emotions which arise from sensual contacts that disturb and agitate us that we ceaselessly think about and concoct. Whatever we concoct, it is always the work of the *kilesas*, not the work of *Dhamma*, not the work of *sati* and *paññā*.

If *paññā* investigates and contemplates, then it is the work of *Dhamma*. When *saṅkhāra* thinks with *Dhamma*, analysing and differentiating the element aggregates, reflecting and contemplating with discernment; then it will go in the way of *Dhamma*. Our perception or *saññā* must follow the investigation, like following a painted line. This is what *saññā* has to do. Then it will be in accordance with the *Dhamma*. But as it is, 95% of the time it is the work of the *kilesas*. Even the remaining 5% hardly ever goes in the way of the *Dhamma*. Thus, in the practice of *Dhamma*, we hardly ever come across and clearly perceive the *Dhamma* within our heart, the state of calm that is not really that far away from us at all. As soon as we curb and restrain our emotions with *sati*, the state of calm will appear. If we cannot calm our hearts and free

them from these disturbing and agitating influences, how then are we going to come up with the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*? I have explained this to you countless times - more frequently than the *kilesas* have swarmed over your heart. By now you should be able to bear it in mind and take it up for contemplation and investigation.

The work of overcoming and uprooting the *kilesas* is a herculean task. There is nothing more tenacious than the *kilesas*, and I myself have already experienced this. I really had to put all of my life into it. Looking back at the way I practised, I cannot help but be in awe of the way I struggled, for now I would not be able to put forth that kind of effort. That is how intense it was. My physical condition is no longer favourable for this kind of exertion, and neither do I have the determination. These days, I am just passing my days doing nothing, living an ambitionless existence. There is no ambition, even for the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*, and this is not being contemptuous of them. I am speaking about my state of mind, as there is now a great contrast to before. All I had then was the intent and steadfast determination for the *Dhamma* and for the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*, the state of freedom. When one's aspirations are at this extreme, then everything is geared towards and concentrated on one's goal

which acts like a magnet that attracts every facet of one's exertion, endurance, and perseverance. One's diligent effort, endurance, perseverance, and one's tenacity and aggressiveness will all come by themselves. This is because one's heart is full to the brim with one's determination and aspiration for the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*. Nothing can easily undermine this resolve. One can readily shake the *kilesas* loose, even though one hasn't yet developed one's *sati* and *paññā* to a very high level. One's determination is very strong and powerful.

Regardless of how toilsome and arduous one's exertion is, one just keeps on persevering, and keeps on fighting and struggling with these extremely tenacious *kilesas*. One cannot do it lightly, taking it easy and letting the heart drift aimlessly. One must be firmly grounded with truth and rationality. Having an unshakeable conviction for the *Dhamma* is a crucial basis for the heart. Once one has a firm belief in the *Dhamma*, then one has to follow the instruction of the *Dhamma*. When the *Dhamma* says that we have to resist, we must resist. For instance, when we want to see something, we have to resist this urge. And when we want to listen to the things that go in the wrong way, and which promote the growth of the *kilesas* and are harmful for us, then we must not listen.

Whatever we crave, we have to resist that craving, and this is not only about hearing and seeing. If there is any desire that goes in the way of the *kilesas*, we must resist it. There is pain in resisting the *kilesas*, but let us face this pain. This pain is for the overcoming and eliminating the *kilesas* that have been afflicting us and are embedded within the heart for a very long time. We are fighters, we must resist. If we are going to uproot the perils and poisons within the heart, we must act like a fighter - tough and hardy, enduring and persevering. Once we have established this crucial understanding, then everything will be manageable.

We will not be concerned with the four living requisites which are food, shelter, clothing, and medicines; for our interest now is all focussed on the *Dhamma*, and ultimately on the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*, the state of deliverance. This intense interest is so forceful that it blocks all the other things from distracting the heart. We exist solely for the practice that will lead us to freedom. When we eat, we only eat so that we can nurture our freedom, and when we go to sleep, it is only for the purpose of resting and re-strengthening the body so that we can exert for the freedom inside our hearts. Everything that we do is solely for this purpose. When our determination is this intense, then we

will naturally become very tough and strong. Have the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna* really faded away? Where are they now? They are found right within the heart. They are being concealed by the *kilesas*, making the heart worthless, lacking in moral excellence. This is because the *kilesas* have wiped them all out. Can't we yet see the harm of the *kilesas*? They have wiped out all the goodness and all the admirable and marvellous qualities of our hearts. The attributes that are appearing now are all created by the *kilesas*. We are merely substituting the genuine for the fake qualities. Aren't we ever disgusted with them?

We have to look up to those teachers who are renowned and are revered by many *bhikkhus*, *sāmaṇeras*, and the laity. We have to look at the way they have practised. I have already talked to Tan *Ajaan* Khao, who was terribly intense and resolute in his exertion. He told me that through one's exertion, one can get carried away with oneself without being aware of it, becoming fanatical. One can discipline oneself to the extent where it becomes damaging to oneself. This is due to one's aggressiveness and tenacity. In the application of one's exertion, one must therefore be flexible, enterprising and versatile. This is what he related to me. He was really rigorous and resolute. He also talked about the time that he was staying with his

teacher in Chiang Mai, and also in the various places that he put forth his exertion. It was an uphill struggle for him. His striving was rendered difficult due to his age. When he was ordained as a *bhikkhu*, he was already quite old and already had a family. His teacher also tried very hard, - being aloof, delighting in solitude and seclusion. He just wouldn't allow anybody to come close to him. He was Tan *Ajaan* Mun. When Tan *Ajaan* Mun went to live in Chiang Mai, Tan *Ajaan* Khao tried to follow him, and eventually caught up with him and sought permission to stay with him, and listen to his *Dhamma* teaching. With his strenuous exertion, he put his whole life into it. I have also talked with Tan *Ajaan* Brom, and it was very satisfying. He had already transcended and achieved the ultimate goal when he was living in Chiang Mai. All of these teachers were really resolute and determined.

The chance of coming across the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna* is very slim if one just lives casually. Tan *Ajaan* Kum Dee was also very resolute and strong-willed, but his personality has now completely turned around. He said that before, he was very stubborn and unyielding, but that was due to the intensity of his resolve. He has now changed. That was what he said. One who is going to combat and conquer the *kilesas* must always be strong and forceful, and always

opposing and resisting. One must not see anything better than the *Dhamma* appearing in the mind. Then the mind will be sublime, due to the *Dhamma* that one has cultivated. The mind becomes awful, terrible and totally worthless when it comes under the influence of the *kilesas*. There are many of these *kilesas* that obscure and prevent one from seeing the truth. The *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *rāga*, are like fires that constantly consume the heart. It is hot when one is standing, sitting, or lying down. In all postures one is always afflicted with this heat. One is totally overwhelmed with this annoyance, and one looks at everything in the wrong light. This is because the heart is in the wrong - it is being poisoned and is injurious to itself. One cannot remain calm and cool when one sees one's colleagues. One is vexed and edgy, finding faults with others as a means of venting the *kilesas* that are consuming one's mind. This can actually happen. No matter how transcendent one's teacher might be, one cannot perceive it because the *kilesas* which have completely enveloped the mind are not marvellous. How then can the mind see those wonderful and supreme qualities? It can only see whatever the *kilesas* direct it to see.

We must, therefore, discipline and train ourselves. We really must achieve this. At least we should attain

calm, so that we can clearly see the result from our sitting in meditation. This will at least bring forth *samā dhi*, concentration of the heart that is not beyond the training and disciplining of our hearts. We have been neglecting the mind for too long. In looking for benefit for ourselves, we have to make an assessment of the value of the stream of thoughts that has been constantly flowing for such a long time. What have we come up with from this thinking? We have been constantly following it and have been captivated by it. The more we oblige these thoughts, the more fuel we put on the fire that produces our trouble and hardship. Are we still going to persist in cooperating with these thoughts, to become enchanted and mesmerised by them, while we are wide awake? We have to ponder this. This is called *Dhamma*, the means of coping with the *kilesas*. If we don't develop *sati* and *paññā*, then we will never overcome the *kilesas*. We will only be groping and doing guesswork. When we sit meditating, we only sit as a mere token. And when we experience minor pain and difficulties while the mind hasn't yet attained calm, we will simply give up and go to sleep, which is merely a way of nurturing the *kilesas*. The more strength we gain from this sleeping, then the more the *kilesas* and *rāga-taṇhā* will be enhanced.

We have to make comparisons and make assessments so that we can see things clearly. Then it will be possible for us to struggle with them. Why can't we dig and search and come up with the *Dhamma*, so that we can use it to compete and wrestle with the *kilesas*? When we are inclined to apply reason and *Dhamma* to liberate us from *dukkha*, we will surely achieve this one day. It will happen inevitably to one who likes to contemplate and reason things out for the purpose of liberating himself by using whatever logical arguments that he can come up with. People do not become brilliant from the first day of their birth. We all carry ignorance with us, as we are all born in the midst of the *kilesas* that cause all living beings to be ignorant of the *Dhamma*. To become wise, we have to depend on *Dhamma*, our teacher, and the work of disciplining and training ourselves. Our behaviour and bearing will steadily rise above average as the heart becomes steadily developed due to our exertion. For this reason, the work of development, learning, and hearing, are extremely crucial. We can be really captivated and enchanted by listening to the *Dhamma* of a teacher whose practices and attainments are indisputable. For one who has truly become enlightened, he will not speak with uncertainty and vagueness that will cause doubts to arise in the listener. Whatever he says is always true and valid because he has

already truly experienced them, both the ways of practice that he has cultivated and the corresponding results. So when he talks about them, like the Lord *Buddha* when he expounded and proclaimed the *Dhamma* to the world, how can he be wrong?

The *Dhamma* discourses that can be accounted for number only 84,000, which as I see it is very small indeed. I really agree with what Tan *Ajaan* Mun said about this matter. He said that the *Dhamma* found within the scriptures is comparable to the water filling a jar. The 84,000 *Dhamma* discourses are comparable to the water inside a jar. It is hardly a great number. But the *Dhamma* not found in the texts is similar to the water in the ocean. How wide and how deep is this? And how great is the difference between them? He knows about this because he practised every day of his life and was experiencing and perceiving the *Dhamma* every day. The mind was really impressed with these *Dhammas* and was able to understand their various aspects. The depths and profundity of his *Dhamma* is immeasurable, for his mind was no longer involved or entangled with anything. It was the mind of one who had already attained freedom. He said that it was a great pleasure and very gratifying to experience these *Dhammas*. The mind is like a large fish in the ocean that has plenty of room to

move around as the ocean is very large and extensive and the fish is enormous. For the heart that has attained ultimate purity, how can its *Dhamma* experience be limited to a certain level of profundity and subtlety? There is no bound and limit for this heart. It can freely and easily go anywhere, for there are no longer *kilesas* to entangle and shackle it.

When it is tied up with and constantly surrounded by the *kilesas*, then it is not possible for it to roam about freely. It is totally restrained and prevented by the *kilesas* from going anywhere. The *kilesas* are all over it. One lives and thinks with the *kilesas*. One's thoughts all go in the way of the *kilesas*. Everything is influenced by the *kilesas*, making it impossible for the *Dhamma* to appear. But when the *kilesas* have been totally vanquished and one attains freedom, then it will be just like what Tan *Ajaan* Mun had described. Wherever he sat, the *Dhamma* experience arose continuously. He was convinced that the knowledge and insight that the Lord *Buddha* and the noble disciples who had attained freedom must have been immeasurably extensive and enormous. Their *Dhamma* experiences are like the sky and the oceans that have no bounds or limits. He said this based on his own personal experience. He had complete faith in the enlightenment and wisdom of the Lord *Buddha* and the

noble disciples. He said that he had no doubt at all. What I wrote in his biography was just a brief sketch of the essence of what he said. When I listened to his *Dhamma* talks, I was so captivated. It was very impressive and pleasant to listen to, for it was the '*one who knows*' who spoke. This is what *Dhamma* is like.

When the mind cowers, it really cowers, and when it is gloomy, it is really gloomy. When it is overpowered by the *kilesas*, it can become really gloomy. But as soon as one has eliminated the *kilesas*, the elegance and serenity of the mind will then appear. These qualities will be realised inside the mind. When the *kilesas* steadily diminish, then these mental qualities will steadily appear, because they are an integral part of the mind. The reason why they are not apparent is due to the filth that envelope them. The mind then becomes filthy, corrupted, worthless and undesirable. Is *dukkha* desirable? How then does it manage to overwhelm our hearts? Nobody wants *dukkha*. But we cannot avoid experiencing this *dukkha*, as it is inside our mind, and we are not yet capable of eliminating it with our *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya*. We, therefore, have to endure it. But in any case, we are fighters and must not retreat. We have to be firm and strong, as this is very crucial for us. We have to train ourselves to be earnest. Don't be frivolous and vacillating, like a

post that is stuck in a pile of buffalo dung that keeps falling down. Don't toy with your practice, for then you will never be able to come up with any result. Whatever you do, you have to be serious, really commit yourselves, for you are the practitioners. If you are serious and earnest in what you do, then you will become powerful. When it is time for you to exert yourselves in the work of overcoming and eliminating the *kilesas*, you must be serious and earnest. When you are serious and earnest with your other tasks, it is not only fruitful for them, but it will also be fruitful for the mind and fruitful for the work of eliminating the *kilesas*, because it will also make the mind serious and earnest. This is vital.

I have to talk to you about this out of my concern for you although it is inconvenient for me. I put in my effort to teach you because I have already seen the harm of the *kilesas* and have seen how they trample and damage the heart. Sometimes they trampled all over me right in front of my eyes, as I didn't have the strength to resist them. But when I was able to muster up enough energy, I then attacked them at full force. I was seething with rage and vengeance, but as I was not able to fight them, I was forced to endure them. But I was really enraged and boiling inside. However, when I had accumulated enough *sati* and *paññā*, I then went on the offensive.

When I had established enough *sati*, I was able to make the mind attained calm and free it from the confusion and madness inside. I then felt relaxed and at ease. This is *samādhi*, or the state of calm. Once the mind has attained calm, then it will become restful, comfortable, satiated and not craving for anything. After it withdraws from the state of calm, if you tell it to investigate and contemplate with *paññā*, it will do so. It is unlike the time when the mind is hankering and craving for things. The mind will not investigate with *paññā* and come up with anything worthwhile. It just keeps beating around the bush and turning the investigation into speculation. Whatever it investigates it will turn into speculation. That is why the Lord *Buddha* said that *paññā* that is being supported by *samādhi* is of great result and benefit. *Samādhi* acts as the sustenance for *paññā*. Once the mind has attained calm and investigates with *paññā*, it will be *paññā*. The level of *paññā* will correspond to the level of *samādhi*. This will keep steadily progressing until *paññā* becomes incisive and brilliant.

The more one comes across one's results of practice, then the more one will become motivated. When one becomes wise and discerning, then nothing can slip through one's investigation. This is when one's mental

strength has matured to the ultimate level. There will be no retreat. In the beginning stages, one is submissive and is trampled on by the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* keep on crushing one's head. Regardless of how infuriated and enraged one might be, one has to endure it because one doesn't have any strength, *sati*, and *paññā*, to counter them. So during such time one has to give in to them. This was when my mind hadn't yet established any foundation. The *kilesas* then kept on trampling on and crushing me in all postures, standing, walking, sitting, and lying down. I could not find any peace and happiness. I went through enough of these experiences myself so I am telling you straightforwardly. It happened to me. Even while I was doing nothing, the pressure inside was so intense. I was burning hot within, like a fire burning rice-husks, burning and smouldering deeply within. I wonder how it managed to get to be like this. I kept on observing it, but it remained like that as I didn't have any *sati* and *paññā* to unravel the *kilesas*. I just had to endure. However severe this blaze and *dukkha* was, I had to endure it. No matter how offended I was, I had to put up with it. It was useless for me to become enraged, but I did not relent in striving until I came across the state of calm.

Once I had attained calm, I then went on the offensive. To enter into *samādhi* would be very easy for me. I did

not have to go through the usual routine. I could enter into *samādhī* right away. This is the time when I became very adept with *samādhī*. The mind is now always ready to enter into *samādhī*. The *samādhī* that arises from sitting practice and is totally devoid of any thought is one type of *samādhī*. Another type called *samādhī bhāvanā* is the *samādhī* in which the mind remains calm but still thinks with the mind firm and stable as a rock. That was how firm my *samādhī* has become. By entering into the state of calm frequently, I was able to make my *samādhī* solid and firm. This is the way of nurturing *samādhī*. After withdrawing from *samādhī*, which I use as a way of resting the *khandhas*, I can see very clearly that my *samādhī* is very firm and solid. I'm now ready to go on the offensive drive. If I intensify my effort in the development of *paññā*, it will not take long. But instead, I become attached to *samādhī*. I'm now so skilful I can enter *samādhī* any time that I want to. It takes less than a minute to do it. As soon as I prompt it, the mind will go right into *samādhī* because I have already securely established *samādhī*. So it is very easy and quick to stop all mental activities and enter into *samādhī* right away.

If I developed *paññā*, I would advance very quickly. But I instead became attached to *samādhī*, by mistaking

this *samādhi* as *nibbāna*. I therefore paid no attention to the development of *paññā*. It took Tan Ajaan Mun to shake me out of this delusion. When my mind was free from this delusion, it then became very energetic, ready and well-qualified. With that kind of *samādhi*, how can it not be ready? The *samādhi* of that level is very suitable for the development of *paññā*. Once the mind begins to develop *paññā*, it will do it relentlessly. It will realise the truth that will enable it to destroy all of the *kilesas*. I now become awestricken with the power of *paññā*, for I can now see it clearly in my mind, which further enhances my efforts. All the laziness has totally disappeared. Please don't have the understanding that on the level of *samādhi*, one is not lazy, for one is in not wanting to investigate. One just wants to rest in the state of calm and comfort. This is the lazy kind of *samādhi*. But after Tan Ajaan Mun goaded me to investigate, and I have learned how to investigate, then the diligent effort just came naturally. But for me, the mind tended to go to the extreme. Once it had begun to develop *paññā*, it was not able to go back into *samādhi* because it was no longer interested in *samādhi*. The mind just kept turning around incessantly investigating and struggling with the *kilesas*. Sometimes this went on throughout the night and

I didn't get any sleep, and in the daytime I couldn't sleep either.

When I did the walking practice, I was not able to walk straight, for I kept crashing to the ground. This was due to the lack of sleep, because the mind kept on investigating and fighting with the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava*. As far as surrendering myself to the *kilesas* was concerned, it is out of the question. I would rather die. The only way that I can be defeated is when I die. Giving in by retreating simply cannot happen. It is not possible. It can only happen if my head is cut off. Defeat can only occur if I lose my life. To give up by retreating is just not possible. Once you have attained this level, this will happen. I am just telling you the truth. I am not boasting. I am speaking the truth of my practice, how I developed, how I exerted myself, how I had to wage an uphill struggle and how lazy I was. I was carrying the burden of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava*, and enduring the fire inside my heart, both day and night, standing, sitting, walking, and lying down. This fire had never been separated from my heart.

Once I had trained, disciplined, and developed my heart by earnestly exerting myself, enduring and persevering, my heart was then able to attain a state of calm and

became strengthened. I was then able to drive harder. I could now intensify my effort in my practice of mental development. The calm would gradually increase and became more and more profound until I thought that it was *nibbāna*. I became smug. Once the *knowing* becomes densely concentrated, then there is no thinking. It is as if the world does not exist. What remains is just this sublime and profound *knowing*. I therefore speculated that this is what *nibbāna* would be like. Fortunately, I did not claim it to be *nibbāna*. I just speculated that this would be *nibbāna*. It was only after I had investigated with *paññā* that I was able to discern what this state was. How could it be *nibbāna*? When *paññā* had been thoroughly investigated, I could then see the *kilesas* that were still hidden in the mind. They had merely been resting, merely been temporarily subdued by the power of *samādhi*. But as soon as they emerged, they would be immediately eliminated by *paññā*. *Paññā* doesn't promote the growth of the *kilesas*. It only destroys them. *Paññā* will keep on advancing. This is the way it is with the mind of this level.

When you are dejected, you can be really demoralised. Living with your colleagues you keep blaming yourself for lagging behind in your practice, by thinking that all of your colleagues have totally eliminated the *kilesas*, leaving yourself behind to be

consumed by the fire of the *kilesas*. This was the way I felt when I first went to stay with Tan *Ajaan* Mun. When I looked at all the other *bhikkhus*, they appeared to be serene and peaceful, though their exertion didn't seem to be that intense. But I, for my part, after finishing the morning meal, would go into the forest and practise until it was time to sweep in the afternoon. But I didn't achieve anything. That was because at that time my mind had deteriorated and I was intensifying my effort to bring the mind back to its former higher level. My striving was very strenuous and intense. After having some conversation with my colleagues, I got to know them better. And when I had established some *samādhi*, I also got to know more about myself. I could see this clearly, so could my colleagues. How could they not know? When I talked to my teacher I had to tell him the truth so that he could correct me when I was wrong. For this was the path that I had not yet trodden before.

Once I had gained the strength of *samādhi* and been goaded by Tan *Ajaan* Mun to develop *paññā*, I then really exerted myself. Now the *kilesas* could not remain at rest. I would drag them by the neck and chopped off their heads. I would grab their arms, their legs, and chop them off. Once you get to the level of *paññā*, the mind will investigate continuously. It will start with the investigation of the body, to see it to be

loathsome or *asubha*. This *paññā* that investigates the body is very aggressive and forceful. Once the delusion of the body is shattered, and you have fully understood every aspect of the body, the mind will then become satiated. It will then stop investigating the body. Once you are full, what is the use of taking more food? Or doing the investigation anymore? What, then, does it become attracted to? Now it will mostly become attracted to *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, and *viññāṇa*, with *saññā* the most important target, for it is very insidious. *Saṅkhāra* will just flare on and off, but with *saññā*, it will quietly permeate out to form a mental picture. It can subtly fantasise. You can't help but being amazed by its subtlety. You then keep track of it, and then it cannot surpass the ability of *paññā*.

Once *sati* and *paññā* become automatic, or become *mahāsati* and *mahāpaññā*, then what can slip away from it? Once *sati* and *paññā* investigate incessantly and naturally all the time, except when being forced to stop, then this is called automatic *sati* and *paññā*. Even when you are eating, this *sati* and *paññā* doesn't eat with you. It just keeps on investigating. This is how automatic the investigation has become. At this stage, all the laziness disappears. Sometimes you have to restrain it, or else you can die

from exhaustion. You have to hold it back. Sometimes you overexert yourself until you are ready to drop dead. The entire body becomes dead tired. You cannot even walk another step, because during the night time you didn't have any sleep, and during the day time you just cannot go to sleep. The mind just keeps on investigating continuously. So I had to restrain it with the *Buddho mantra* by repeating '*Buddho*' repeatedly and quickly, not allowing the mind to investigate and force it into calm. I had to drag the mind away from doing the investigation, which is the contention of *paññā* with the *kilesas*. It was not possible to tell whether I was using the sharp end or the blunt end of *paññā*. I was probably using the blunt end as I was so exhausted and tired. But the heart was still hell-bent on struggling with them. It was only after I had rested the mind that I realised what was happening. I forced the mind to take a rest by repeating *Buddho* very quickly and continuously, not allowing it to do any investigation at all. I really had to coerce it to get into *samādhi*, or else it would not get in. I had to really force it, but as it had already been used to coercion, it didn't take long for it to be subdued.

It began to slowly calm down, and eventually it became very still. At that point, it seems like you have now uprooted the thorns. Your strength, energy, and

happiness, seem to arise out of nowhere, and spread throughout the whole body and all over the heart. Yet even when it has rested in this state of calm, you still have to restrain it. I could not let go of the restraint. As soon as I do, it would immediately withdraw from the calm and investigate. I therefore had to keep on restraining it. It became restrengthened. When I felt that it was the right time for it to investigate, I just let it go. It immediately jumped right back to investigate, and became totally involved with it. Now it seemed like it was using the sharp end, for it didn't take long to destroy the *kilesas*. Therefore, *samādhī* is absolutely vital. When it is necessary to take a rest, you cannot afford not to. When the mind becomes extremely weary and dead-tired, it is not right to think that the results of your work can only come through your exertion alone, without thinking about the importance of resting yourself so that you can become restrengthened and able to do more investigation. You should therefore take a rest, go to sleep, take some food, and not be concerned with the time lost from doing this, as it is for the purpose of restrengthening your body, so that you can do more investigation effectively.

It is true with both the mind and the body. In order for them to regain their strength and energy so that they can further attack and destroy the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*,

and *āśava*, it is definitely necessary for them to take a rest. When the mind has rested well in *samādhī* and is rejuvenated, then when *paññā* investigates, it will be like a sharpened knife. This is similar to a tired man trying to chop wood with a dull knife. After he has rested and the knife sharpened, then it doesn't take too much effort to cut the wood in two. It is likewise with *sati* and *paññā* of this level. Once it has regained its strength and energy, and gone out to investigate, it doesn't take long for it to kill the *kilesas*. You will then see the benefit of *samādhī*. This happens on a very subtle level of the heart. The *kilesas* are correspondingly subtle, and so are *sati* and *paññā*. They are all equally subtle. The *sati* and *paññā* of this level are like water that flows very gently. The investigation of the mental objects - *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, and *viññāṇa* - and the investigation of *avijjā* are done by the *paññā* of this subtle level. This investigation cannot be done in a rough manner, like the investigation of the body. The situation will dictate this and you will know it when you get there. It is the same way when you shape a piece of wood. You first use an axe, then you use a plane to shave the wood surface. You cannot thereafter use either a knife or an axe, for it will just ruin the wood surface. It is the same way with the

mind. What level of *paññā* should be used in the investigation will be obvious. You will investigate until you destroy all of the *kilesas* and see the truth. When the investigation is sufficient, then the mind will let go. If it hasn't yet let go, then it is not yet sufficient. Once the mind has thoroughly investigated, then it will let go. For instance, when you investigate the loathsomeness of the body, you just keep on investigating until it is satiated. Then the mind will let go of the lust for the body.

In the investigation of *saññā* and *saṅkhāra*, where do they come from? They come from the mind. They deceive the mind, as they are the instruments of *avijjā*. So how can they not deceive the mind? If *sati* and *paññā* are not capable of catching up with them, then you will still be deceived by them. Therefore, you have to relentlessly analyse and differentiate them from *sati* and *paññā*. When you have investigated this many, many times, the investigation will eventually become satiated. It will first become satiated with the investigation of the body. Then it becomes satiated with the investigation of the *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, and *viññāṇa* and will let go of them. So what, then, is left that it is not yet satiated with? What remain are just the mind and *avijjā* that are entangled with one another. But you do not yet realise this. This is where you get to

see the subtlety of the *kilesas*. When you finally come face to face with *avijjā*, you will see clearly that there is nothing more subtle than *avijjā*. You feel like you are staying in a tiger's cave. When the tiger roars and growls, you think the tiger is entertaining you. *Avijjā* is like a huge tiger, but instead of being fearful you become submissive to it, loving it and are possessive of it. This is due to the subtlety of the *kilesas*. The true and genuine master and ruler of the mind is *avijjā*, but it cannot withstand the power of *satipaṇṇā*. Although the *satipaṇṇā* of this level will first be deceived by the *avijjā*'s subtlety, luminosity, bravery, boldness and the delusion that this is I and mine, it will not be complacent. Though it might be taking care of *avijjā* unknowingly, it is also vigilant and observant. As this *avijjā* is *sammati*, how can the subtle changes of this *sammati* not be evident to *satipaṇṇā* which is constantly watching, perpetually investigating and analysing? How can they slip through? Eventually they will be revealed.

Satipaṇṇā will then use this *avijjā* as the object of its investigation, just like all the other objects. So how can it withstand? It will eventually be broken up. Once *avijjā* is shattered, the mind then becomes satiated, for this is the final fulfilment. The mind is satiated with the investigation of the sights, sounds, smells,

tastes, and touches, and satiated with the investigation of the body, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, and *viññāṇa*. Once it has thoroughly investigated, it becomes full. All that remains in the mind is *avijjā*. All the bridges have been cut off. There is no way for *avijjā* to come out. It cannot now get out by way of *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, and *viññāṇa*. *Satipaṇṇā* now truly understands their nature. The inner bridge has been severed. As far as coming out via the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches is concerned, this is irrelevant. There is no need to talk about these because the mind has already transcended them as it moves in closer and closer. What remains is just *avijjā*. Now it doesn't have any place to hide, so it stands out very clearly, because everything else has now been uncloaked. The truth of the body has already been unveiled. The truth of feelings, be it good, bad or neither, coarse or subtle, has also been exposed. But the most subtle of feelings is still found within *avijjā*. After *satipaṇṇā* has unveiled the truth of *avijjā*, then this most subtle feeling will disappear from the mind. As long as *avijjā* remains, this most subtle feeling will also remain. For this reason, whether it is correct or not, and speaking on my own authority because it is so clear within my heart, I dare to say that all the *arahants* who have already got rid of all the *kilesas* have no feelings in their hearts. I am not speaking about myself who is like a tiny

mouse. How can an *arahant* have feelings within his heart? Whatever kind of feelings it might be, it is not found within the heart of an *arahant*.

Once the mind has become satiated with the investigation, it will stop. Once it is sated, it will no longer deceive itself. It will not be deluded anymore, not even with the state of purity. Once it becomes satiated, it will come to a standstill. This is contentment. It no longer grabs at this or that. There is no craving. This contentment progresses in stages by letting go in stages. Whatever the objects or conditions that it is satiated with, it will let go. It will keep moving further inwards until it finally becomes sated with *avijjā* and lets it go. The mind will now be completely satiated. Then all the problems come to an end, and there is nothing further to do. This is the elimination of all forms of *dukkha*. They will all disappear when *avijjā* is eradicated by the power of *mahāsati*, *mahāpaññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya* which are like the most advanced weapon system. This is the end. From there onwards, it doesn't really matter where you live or what you do. Once the *sammādi* within the heart vanishes, whatever you do will be merely acting. The day and night will no longer be significant. Likewise with the days, months, and years, or Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, or the Year of the Rat, or the Year

of the Ox, and so forth. They are all suppositions. It is alright to play with them when you are not deluded with them. But to play with them when you are deluded is not good.

This is the story of a mind that had to wage an uphill-battle, nearly losing its life, and nearly losing itself to evilness and corruption due to the influence of the *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, and *āsavas*. This is the story of a dogged determination. This achievement is not above your ability. All that you have to do is to be serious and earnest. The *Dhamma* teaching of the Lord *Buddha* is beyond doubt in its ability to subdue the *kilesas*. There isn't a single *kilesa* that is sharper, keener, wiser or cleverer than *satipaṇṇā*, which is the *magga*. That is why it is called *Majjhimā*, which means suitability. It is suitable for the removal of every kind of *kilesa*. This is my favourite definition of *Majjhimā*. There will be a time when you will eliminate all the *dukkha* that arises from your exertion that will eventually come to an end. When all the *dukkha* is vanquished, it will disappear forever. There will be a time when we will put down our burden that we have been shouldering so heavily. There is an end to our exertion. We will then live in bliss. Is there ever an end to the worldly undertaking? Never! Even at the end of your life. When you die you will leave behind your work, your friends, your relatives, your

father and mother, your husband or wife, and your own body. You will die leaving your work incomplete. But there is an end to your exertion, the conquering of the *kilesas*. There is an end to it. When the *kilesas* have been totally vanquished, then this exertion will come to an end.

The Lord *Buddha* called this '*Vusitaṃ brahma cariyam*'. This can be simply translated as 'The end of your task'. The goal of the holy and chaste life is the elimination of the *kilesas*, which has now come to an end, because all of the *kilesas* have been totally eliminated. For those who have fully achieved this goal, their meditation practice from then on will be for the *vihāra Dhamma*, which is the maintenance for a peaceful coexistence between the body and the mind, and is left to each individual disposition and preference. For this practice has nothing to do with the removal of the *kilesas*. As long as the body still goes on, then there is still the necessity of maintaining it, feeding it, and giving it the proper exercise. This is quite natural. Everybody knows how much he has to eat or drink, how much he has to walk, stand, or take a rest, and go to sleep in order to keep the body healthy. It is the same way with those who have already become enlightened. They know how to take care of the body and the mind that still coexist with one another. But the heavy

load that had oppressed the mind for a very long time has now been entirely discarded.

You must strive to achieve this goal yourself, for you are fighters, not cowards. You have to earnestly and seriously fight the *kilesas*, by putting all of your efforts into the meditation practice. You should not be doubtful of the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*. Why must you be doubtful? Every aspect of the *Dhamma* teaching taught by the Lord *Buddha* is for achieving the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*. His teaching doesn't aim at futility. Why are you doubtful? This doubt is the work of the *kilesas* designed to lead you astray. You have to be confident of the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*, and confident of your ability. You must use *chanda*, satisfaction; *virīya*, strenuous effort; *citta*, concentration; and *vimaṃsā*, investigation in your practice. You must not practise blindly, lacking in *satipaṇṇā*. If you do, you will never achieve your goal. You will only amuse the *kilesas*.

The Dhamma Water

June 13th, 1979

In a scorching and burning world, we cannot survive without the *Dhamma* teaching, which is similar to water that puts out fire. Without the *sāsaṇa* or Buddhism, the world would be similar to that of a village or a forest that is being consumed by fire with no water to put it out. There can only be destruction. In a place where there is enough water to put out the fire, that place will be safe and secure. In a place where there is not enough water, that place will be left in a total state of devastation. This is similar to the hearts of the people living in this world which need the teaching, the *Dhamma* water, to quench the fires of *rāga*, *dosa*, and *moha*, lust, hate, and delusion. If we cannot use the *Dhamma* to totally extinguish this fire, at least we should try to diminish it. This is like an illness which needs the proper medicine to cure it. In sickness, some may die and some may be cured and live. It depends on the ability of the doctor whether the disease can be cured or not. If he cannot do it, then the patient will die. If he can, then the patient will survive. It is the same way with our

hearts. If we have the *Dhamma* water, we can then extinguish the fire inside our hearts.

If our hearts are cruel and malicious, and we pay no attention to good and bad, right and wrong, heaven and hell, but only the things that we desire, then our hearts will be on fire. No matter how much we can acquire with our desires, if the heart is constantly burning and the *Dhamma* water cannot reach it, then the heart will always be ablaze. There will be more greed if we allow ourselves to pursue our greed, our *rāga taṇhā*, our lust. We cannot curb our greed by constantly pursuing it through delusion, not paying any attention to right and wrong, but allowing ourselves to be led astray by the influence of the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavas*. Our hearts will then be on fire. Wherever we live, be it in a palace or a mansion, our hearts will always be consumed by fire because there is no water to put it out. This water is *the Dhamma*. So for this reason, the *Dhamma* is absolutely essential for all sentient beings, similar to water that is essential for putting out fire. As soon as the *sāsana* or Buddhism disappears from the world, then the world will be set ablaze. All sentient beings that live in the world will all be scorched by fire. There will not be any happiness. That is why all the sages like the Lord *Buddha* have to teach the *Dhamma* to enlighten people's hearts. Therefore, the

importance of *the Dhamma* is foremost, and nothing can surpass it.

Our body and speech are the servants, while our hearts are the master. They obey the commands of the heart. Therefore, the heart is paramount. According to the *Dhammapada*, the *Buddha's* path of wisdom: '*Mano pubbaṇi gamā dhamma, mano seṭṭhā, mano mayā*', meaning that all phenomena are preceded by the heart. The heart is the most suitable vessel for the *Dhamma*. When the heart has the *Dhamma*, then whatever we do, through body or speech, it will always be auspicious. But if the heart is corrupt, then whatever we do, we will always be consumed by *dukkha*. This *dukkha* is like the wheel of the cart that follows the track of the ox that pulls it. *Dukkha* will always follow those who do bad or evil deeds, while happiness will always follow those who do good deeds. One who has virtue in his heart is one who always carries with them the medicine to cure their illnesses. Wherever he goes, there is always some form of cure for him that will alleviate his affliction.

Therefore, *Dhamma* is not something insignificant, something that we can disregard. We should not think that the *sāsaṇa* is something merely inscribed on palm leaves or found just in the monasteries, that the *sāsaṇa* only belongs to the *bhikkhus* and *sāmaṇeras*, that it only belongs to the Lord *Buddha* and the *arahant* disciples,

that it only belongs to the *Buddha*, *Dhamma*, and *Saṅgha*. All of this is just misunderstanding. Because the *Dhamma*, in truth, is common property for anyone to use as they please. We can use it to quench the fire inside our hearts. *Dhamma* is the natural and common property of the world. One who seeks virtue, righteousness, gracefulness, and coolness, will not be off the mark if they take the *Dhamma* as their compass and guide. Nothing can surpass the *Dhamma* in wisdom. Where does *paññā* come from if not from the *magga*, the noble eightfold path? *Sati* is mindfulness, or constant awareness of the actions of our body, speech, and heart. This is the path, the *magga*. This is *sammā sati*, right mindfulness. Our actions of speech and body that are right and proper are called *sammā vacā* and *sammā kammanta*. They are the factors of the path, the *Dhamma* teaching of the Lord *Buddha* which is perfect and flawless.

We aren't good or bad simply because we're born human. Whatever class of people we belong to cannot be considered either good or bad. Truly, it depends on our conduct of body, speech, and heart, and whether these are conducted in the right or wrong way, the good or bad way. We can only be judged by our actions. Simply being born as a human being doesn't mean that we are good. The only thing good about it is that it is the result of our past actions, and that is a good result.

But as far as the good of the future and present is concerned, this depends on our conduct, and the training of ourselves following the right and proper way of the *Dhamma* teaching of the Lord *Buddha* that can make us grow in a good way gradually until reaching the highest virtue. The *Dhamma* cannot be blamed for not making us good. For it is us who have to develop ourselves to be good. We aren't good and virtuous because we don't develop ourselves with the Lord Buddha's sublime *Dhamma*. How many sentient beings did the Lord *Buddha* lead out of the stream of *saṃsāra* and transform them into supreme human beings, like the *arahants*, the *anāgāmis*, the *sakadāgāmis*, and the *sotāpannas*, who have all purified themselves with the *Dhamma* of the Lord *Buddha* to the utmost of their ability. This is the way that people can be good through the way of *Dhamma*. Without the *Dhamma* teaching, we cannot be good.

Concerning those who have gone forth, these are the practitioners who have taken up the yellow robe and been ordained into the *sāsana* following the tradition established by the Lord *Buddha* and the *arahant* disciples. This yellow robe is dyed with the dye taken from the heartwood of the jackfruit tree, similar to how it was done in the past. This colour is not desired by the world, but it is appropriate and suitable for the life of a *bhikkhu*. We have to realise that we have now taken up the yellow robe and been ordained in the *sāsana*, but the

kilesas themselves have not taken up the yellow robe with us. The *kilesas* are inside our hearts. How can we make ourselves good if we do not get rid of the *kilesas*? The *kilesas* are the evil ones and the enemies of the *Dhamma*. Every kind of *kilesas*, from the coarsest to the most subtle, is antagonistic to the *Dhamma*. In order to remove them, we have to always fight them. Sometimes we have to put our lives at stake. If the *kilesas* do not die, then we will. And if we do not die, then the *kilesas* must die. First, we should at least subdue the *kilesas*, then in the end conquer them and totally annihilate them.

This is for the purpose of making ourselves respectable. From the first day of our going forth, it is only ourselves that have gone forth. The *kilesas* do not ordain with us. To go forth or to be ordained means to abstain from the things that we should abstain from, and to develop the things that we should develop. We are the ones who have gone forth, and we must take up the *Dhamma-vinaya* as our guiding principle. This is especially true with the *Vinaya*, the monastic discipline, the tool to curb and suppress the coarser kinds of *kilesa* which can be clearly seen by all. The *Vinaya* will keep the *kilesas* within the disciplinary bounds. It will restrain and suppress the *kilesas* that manifest themselves through the actions of body and speech

that are initiated by the heart. And the *Dhamma* is used to correct the *kilesas* inside the heart.

Combatting the *kilesas*, it is similar to the way the world wages war. For instance, in a boxing ring, the boxers put their lives at stake when they get ^{into} the ring. They put their whole effort into the fight, and while they are fighting they are not concerned with winning or losing, but only with exerting themselves to their fullest. If they have to lose their life, they are ready to give it up. This is an example for us practitioners to emulate. We must always consider every kind of *kilesa* as our enemy. There are many aspects of *Dhamma*. *Dhamma* is a tool or instrument. It also supports and lifts us. *Satipaṇṇā* is the tool to combat the *kilesas*. It will search and destroy *kilesas* wherever they may be hidden. *Saddhā*, which is faith or conviction, serves as a source of encouragement or support. This is the belief that the *kilesas* can be conquered, that we can defeat them. *Viriya* is another form of support, making us strive with the most diligent of efforts. This is the way to develop ourselves to be good and virtuous. This is the way to make the *bhikkhus* and *sāmaṇeras* good *bhikkhus* and good *sāmaṇeras* according to the *Vinaya* and the *Dhamma*. With the *Vinaya*, they are graceful to behold in what they do and say. With the *Dhamma*, they are cool, peaceful,

calm and graceful, having *satipaññā* to take care of their hearts.

Every form of *kilesa* is harmful to us and must be eliminated. They must be removed or suppressed during every moment of our exertions. The results of our struggling with the *kilesas* in the manner of a follower of the Lord *Buddha* will be attained first at the morality level. Then we will move up to the *ariya* or enlightenment level, beginning with the *sotāpanna*, to the *sakadāgāmi*, to the *anāgāmi*, and finally to the *arahant* level. These will be the fruits of our exertions in suppressing and removing the *kilesas*, stage by stage, according to our ability. These four levels of enlightenment, five including the morality level, are not beyond our ability and efforts, if we use the *Vinaya* and the *Dhamma* as our weapons to suppress and eradicate all of the *kilesas* inside our hearts. No time and place is as important as the place where the *ariya-sacca*, the Four Noble Truths, are found. These four truths are *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha*, and *magga*. And where is *dukkha* found? It is found in the body and the heart. And where is *samudaya* found? It is found in the heart. The cause of bodily illness is not considered *samudaya* because it is not induced by the *kilesas*. There are things that will cause the body to become sick, but they are not as dangerous as the *kilesas* or *samudaya*, the heart's greatest adversary.

That is why the Lord *Buddha* has to expose the nature of *samudaya*, so we can see it clearly for what it is. It is *kāma-taṇhā*, *bhava-taṇhā*, and *vibhava-taṇhā*. The Lord *Buddha* said this in the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, the First Discourse. *Kāma-taṇhā* is craving for sensuality. It is a form of *kilesa*. As far as *bhava-taṇhā*, craving for becoming, and *vibhava-taṇhā*, craving for not-becoming, are concerned, we already know what they are so I shall not discuss them in detail. I will instead discuss with you the root of the Four Noble Truths. Where are these Four Noble Truths? Where can they be found? *Dukkha* is in the heart. This is the most important fact. This *dukkha* is caused by *samudaya* - *samudaya* is its source. *Nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha* - where will this happen? Wherever *dukkha* arises, that is where *nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha* will appear. What gives rise to *nirodha*? What gives rise to the cessation of *dukkha*? It is *magga*, the path, the *majjhimā paṭipadā*, the middle way of practice.

There are eight factors in this path, beginning with *sammādiṭṭhi* and *sammāsaṅkappo*, right view and right thought. These are the two factors of *paññā* or wisdom. In doing any task, we usually choose a person who is wise like our leader. If we have an ignorant person as leader, then they will usually lead our undertaking to failure. Nobody will trust such a person. Both *sammādiṭṭhi*

and *sammāsaṅkappo*, right view and right thought, highlight the wisdom of the *magga*, the path. And where can this *magga* be found? This *magga* is one form of *cetasika dhamma*, mental concomitant, and similarly with *samudaya*, the cause of *dukkha*. This *samudaya* arises from *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, and *viññāṇa*. Where else can *samudaya* come from? When they cause the *kilesas* to arise, this is called *samudaya*, and when they cause the suppression and removal of the *dukkha* and *kilesas*, this is called the *magga*. Thinking in the way of truth and insight - this is called *paññā*. Constant awareness is called *sati* or mindfulness. *Sati* is *magga*, and it arises from the heart. It is the same way with the *kilesas* which also arise from the heart. But the *kilesas* oppress the heart and wear it down. They control and subjugate the heart, and subject it to a lot of affliction and hardship. They constantly place pressure on the heart.

Magga is the cleansing agent that is used to clean all of these *kilesas* so that the heart can elevate itself to the highest level, the state of freedom. *Nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha*, will steadily come about following the strength of the *magga*. When the time comes for the heart to achieve the final and total cessation of *dukkha* due to the strength and ability of the fully developed *magga*, then this will happen in a single instant. This is when the *arahatta-magga*, or the path of *arahantship*, instantly extinguishes all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava* that

converge and hide behind *avijjā*. *Nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha*, will be the outcome. When the *magga* has totally extinguished the *kilesas*, then *nirodha* will come to fruition. When *nirodha*, which is the result of *magga*, emerges, then the task of extinguishing *dukkha* also comes to an end, right within that instant. That is why the Lord *Buddha* said that *dukkha* should be observed, so that we can see it clearly, although we already know it within ourselves, since we are not dead. How can we not know it? But the reason why the Lord *Buddha* told us to study *dukkha* is that although we all have *dukkha*, we never look at it and analyse its nature so that we can know how to overcome and get rid of it.

For this reason the Lord *Buddha* taught his followers a systematic way of investigating *dukkha*. The Lord *Buddha* said that we should study *dukkha* and relinquish *samudaya*, its cause. And how are we going to let go of *samudaya*? Here the Lord *Buddha* said it very briefly, but the meaning itself is extensive. In order to let go of *samudaya*, we have to make diligent efforts, with *satipaṇṇā* leading the investigation. No matter how hard this may be, we have to commit ourselves to the task. This is the way of relinquishing *samudaya*. This is the way of getting rid of all the *samudaya* or *kilesas* from the heart, by the application of the *magga*, the *majjhimā*

paṭipadā, the middle way of practice. *Nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha*, will appear as a consequence. That is to say *dukkha* will disappear. These four noble truths do not happen separately. The way they are being discussed, it seems that they happen one by one. But really they all happen together.

When *dukkha* arises within the heart, the awareness that it has done so also arises at that same instant. The investigation into the cause of *dukkha*, that afflicts and disturbs the heart, also arises at the same time. Speaking of the disturbances of the heart, these are the *ārammaṇa* or mental objects or emotions that the heart has become attached to. For instance, when someone speaks badly of us, if we don't think about it, nothing will happen to our hearts. But when we think about it, we will become angry. This anger is called *samudaya*. When there is anger, how can there not be *dukkha*? It is this anger and ill-will that cause *dukkha* because we take the criticisms seriously. This is *samudaya* that causes *dukkha* to appear. How can one extinguish this *dukkha*? When we ask this question we are implementing the *magga*. This is when *satipaṇṇā* begins to investigate the deception of *saṅkhāra*.

Before, when nobody tells us of other people's criticisms of us, we are not aroused by anger. But

when somebody tells us of this criticism that may have been made some time ago, we become angry and afflicted with *dukkha*. This is one form of *samudaya*. We are speaking of just one form of *samudaya* - anger. But there is also another side of *samudaya* - affection, like *kāma-taṇhā* or craving for sensuality, for instance. They are *samudaya* or *kilesas*, and similarly with dissatisfaction, they cause ill-will, and anger. Now we are investigating *saṅkhāra*, which creates all the deceptions. *Saṅkhāra* is the deceiver, and so is *saññā*, with which we assume and presume. *Satipaṇṇā* or mindfulness and wisdom, must round up all the deceptions, bring them inside, subdue them, and finally eliminate them. *Satipaṇṇā* must prise *saṅkhāra* and *saññā* away from thinking about these anger and affection, and calm them down. This is the way of curbing and eliminating the *kilesas*. Once these *kilesas* have been curbed and eliminated – for instance, when thinking about the criticism of us has been restrained, then the *dukkha* will disappear.

This is because both *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* are mesmerised by these deceptions. When *satipaṇṇā* realises this, then they will stop, and *dukkha* will then vanish. When *saññā* and *saṅkhāra*, which are *kilesas*, have been subdued by *satipaṇṇā*, then *dukkha* will disappear, and *nirodha* will appear

simultaneously. Don't waste your time speculating about the world and the universe. It is a heavy load to shoulder and doesn't do you any good, such as when you imagine about the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*. This is just a waste of time. You should instead investigate, identify and remove the *kilesas* from your hearts. Otherwise, the *kilesas* will always remain inside your hearts to endlessly consume and afflict you all the time. All the *dukkha* arises in the heart. *Samudaya* is like an endlessly long string and the source of *dukkha*. If you don't cut this string with your *satipaṇṇā*, you'll never find any moral excellence and happiness from your going forth. As I have said earlier when we take up the robe, the *kilesas* do not take up the robe with us. We have to fight the *kilesas*, but most of the time we surrender.

There are not many practitioners who are capable of conquering the *kilesas* and attaining the highest fruit of *arahantship*. We have to face this fact and consider it many, many times. There is a great difference between the time of the Lord *Buddha* and our time as far as going forth or ordination is concerned. Nowadays people ordain more as a ritual, which is in great contrast to the days of the Lord *Buddha*, when people went forth for the *Dhamma*. They went forth with a perception of the harm of the things that they had experienced as laymen. They

had experienced so much that they reached the point where they became sick and tired of it. So when they took up the robe, they took it up with *saddhā*, firm conviction, and the desire to be free from *dukkha* and all the oppressive influences. Therefore, there is a great contrast between the *arahant* disciples during the time of the Lord *Buddha* - the way they exerted themselves and the way the *bhikkhus* exert themselves nowadays.

During that time, the teacher who taught the *Dhamma* was the Lord *Buddha* himself. Listening to the *Dhamma* of the Lord *Buddha* is like receiving 100% pure gold. What the Lord *Buddha* taught was the real and genuine truth. The *Dhamma* that the Lord *Buddha* attained was experienced by himself and it was in accordance with the truth. He realised and experienced everything before teaching the *sāvakas*. It was not necessary for the listeners to decide which was right and which was wrong. All they had to do was just to absorb the teachings. After they had listened to the *Dhamma* instruction, they then went away to exert themselves to their utmost ability with diligence and conviction in their practice what they have learnt. In every mode of exertion, their hearts were filled with *chanda*, *virīya*, *citta*, and *vimamsā* - satisfaction, diligent effort, concentration, and reflection. These four *Dhammas* blended into one. How then could

the result that followed not have emerged? And so it happened that some of them attained enlightenment on that mountain, in that forest, on that walking path, in that sitting position, standing up, or lying down. They attained enlightenment because they had earnestnessly committed themselves to their practice.

Both the *Dhamma* teaching and the teacher, the Lord *Buddha* himself, were both real and not dubious. Those who listened to the *Dhamma* had perceived the danger of living in the world of *saṃsāra*, so their hearts were ready vessels for the *Dhamma*. So when the Lord *Buddha* taught the *Dhamma* to them, they were able to fully absorb it and they applied it in their practice until they attained the highest goal. They then became the *Saṅgha* refuge. *Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*. This was the way that people took up the robe in the time of the Lord *Buddha*. You must not think that the *Dhamma* of this time and that time are different, or the *kilesas* of this time and that time are two different kinds of *kilesas*. Truly, the *kilesas* of that time and the *kilesas* of this time are one and the same thing, and it is the same with the *Dhamma*. The *Dhamma* of the past and the *Dhamma* of the present are the same *Dhamma*.

The differences are only in the teaching techniques and the ability of the teachers. The important thing is to find a

teacher who truly knows the *Dhamma*, faithfully teaches the *Dhamma*, and has attained the highest level of enlightenment like the *arahant* disciples of the past. You should study with that teacher. They will give you the full benefit of the *Dhamma* teaching. You will not have to doubt their teaching because what they teach will be the true and genuine *Dhamma*. Where then can the Paths and Fruits be when you are ready for them? So as far as seeking a teacher is concerned, you should look for the best teacher, one who has attained the highest state of purity - the state of *Buddho* or enlightenment. So when you practise to the utmost of your ability and with unshakeable faith in the *Dhamma*, then the result cannot be different from the *sāvakas*'. They must be the same.

People nowadays take up robes as a ritual, but those who took up robes in the past really had the purpose of getting rid of their sensual lust, their *kāma-rāga*. Some of them had grown weary of this lust even before they took up the robe, whilst others grew weary of it afterwards. Some of them even took up the robe without intending to remain so, but due to their underlying tendencies - their *upanissaya*, they eventually came to appreciate the *Dhamma*, took up the practice, and finally attained the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*. In short, they took up the robe to give up their sensual lust or out of weariness of it, and they really practised to attain freedom. Nowadays, most people take up the robe as a mere ritual,

just to accumulate the *kilesas* and sensual lust. For instance, the lust for wealth and status can stir up the sensual lust within our hearts. Some are driven to insanity by their cravings. If a *bhikkhu* takes up the robe for these reasons, can you say that he takes up the robe to get rid of *dukkha* rather than just accumulating *kilesas* and causing disgust amongst the laity? People can easily get tired of this kind of *bhikkhu* because they take up the robe just to accumulate more lust. What is the use of doing this? It is useless. Think about it! I am not exaggerating, for this is the truth. We can all see it. But if you take up the robe following the example of the Lord *Buddha* and the *sāvakas*, then can the highest goal really escape from your practice? Your practice is really vital. So please take it to heart.

Every kind of lust is the product of the *kilesas*. You must always look at them as harmful to the heart, and always fight them. The word *phra* in Thai means *bhikkhu*, it also means noble. Don't be noble just in name, like a person with a noble name but who finds himself in jail. Let us be noble in quality. As a practitioner, you must not be heedless or complacent. In your conversations, don't get carried away, for this is a way of being heedless and negligent, and is contrary to the tradition of the *bhikkhu* and practitioner. You must always be mindful and cautious. Be very mindful in your conversations when

you come together to work or have your refreshment. Watch your heart. As far as having refreshment is concerned, this is merely to keep your body going. But as far as the conflict between the *kilesas* and the *Dhamma* is concerned, you must always keep on fighting. If you ever want to acquire the most supreme and valuable treasure, it's essential that you must always watch out for *saṅkhāra* and *saññā*. As a practitioner, you must beware the chicanery of these two most significant *khandhas*.

As far as the eyes and visible form, the ears and sound etc., are concerned, they are not as incessant as the *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* that are always mesmerised by the thoughts that arise from the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava* that in turn entangle your heart. They continually exhibit themselves. Even when you are doing walking meditation, they draw up images of the *kilesas* right in front of you. *Saññā* recalls the past. It remembers past experiences of visible objects, sounds, tastes, smells, and tactile objects and the accompanying emotions that disturb the heart. It is *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* that create the various feelings and emotions inside the heart. Even while you are doing walking meditation, you can be creating the *kilesas* right there and then. This is because you are continually being deceived by *saññā* and *saṅkhāra*, both day and night. As soon as you wake up, they begin to create the images of the *kilesas*. But you don't know this. Whatever topics

saññā recalls, and *saṅkhāra* thinks of, restlessness, agitation, or stress will follow, because they will only recall and think of issues that poison the heart. So how can the heart not be upset? If you are observant, you will know this. As a practitioner, how can you not know this? You will get to see very clearly how important *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* are. They are constantly creating feelings and emotions to disturb you.

As a practitioner, you must be earnest and serious in your practice. Totally commit yourself! I would really like to listen to my students telling me about the results that arise from their practices, my students who have come to live with me and received my instructions that I have given them to the utmost of my ability. I have not hidden anything or kept anything secret from you concerning the various aspects and levels of the *Dhamma*. In every aspect of the *Dhamma*, be it the practice itself or the results from it, I have completely revealed it to you without hiding anything. What happened to this *Dhamma* that I have taught you? Has it become void, without any result? Is this the reason why you cannot practise and attain the result that I have explained to you? This is really something worth thinking about. The heart of the practitioner must be strong, and resolute. Don't be weak and wavering. This is not good, because it is contrary to the *Dhamma* principles. Weakness is not good for you. When you defy the *Dhamma* principles,

you do it vigorously, but when you follow the *Dhamma* principles, you do it feebly.

As far as *samādhī* and *paññā* are concerned, you must not wait for them. Whenever it is appropriate to use *paññā* you must use it. *Paññā* kills the *kilesas*. *Samādhī* subdues them. They work together in subduing and destroying the *kilesas*. *Paññā* is terribly important. When you are investigating with *paññā*, and it suddenly strays into speculative thoughts and away from the truth, then you must first get back into *samādhī* to subdue the restless *kilesas*. You should use a meditation object that suits you to calm your heart. If you use the in-and-out breath as your meditation object, then you should be solely mindful of your in-and-out breath, and ignore everything else. Don't let anything distract you from your concentration. The heart likes to think a lot. The chief culprit here are the *kilesas* that push *saṅkhāra* to think, and *saññā* to speculate. They are a lot more restless than monkeys, making the heart behave like a monkey. For example, when you investigate the body with *paññā*, but you can't see the *asubha* or loathsomeness of the body, or *aniccāṃ*, *dukkhāṃ*, and *anattā* of the body, then it's because the *kilesas* have taken over.

The heart is now hungry for other thoughts. So you must immediately curb it by using *samādhī*. Be earnest, really commit yourselves! After the heart has gained calm, then

you should investigate again. You must astutely direct your investigation if you want it to be fruitful. Then you are really investigating with *paññā*. This is only possible when the heart is calm. You must always observe your investigation. When you practise mental development, you cannot avoid observing - you have to observe. You cannot rely solely on the techniques taught by your teacher. You have to also devise your own techniques. Otherwise you will not gain any wisdom. Any time when it is suitable to investigate, then you must investigate. You can investigate the *aniccā*, *dukkhā*, and *anattā* of the body, or you can investigate the loathsomeness of the body, or any other way you like that accords with the truth and causes dispassion of the body to arise. They are the truth, but when the heart's view goes contrary to the *Dhamma*, then it is not willing to accept this truth.

What is your body like? Where does it come from? You must dig into it and differentiate it to see its true nature. You say that it is 'I' or 'You' or 'They' or 'Them', or that it is people, or an animal. Where does this body get its form? You must dig into its origins, which are the four elements of earth, water, air and fire. The body is mostly composed with the earth element, namely the hair of the head, the hair of the body, the nails, the teeth, the skin, the sinews, and the bones, and so forth. You can see them clearly with your own eyes. They

are the earth element. Saliva, for instance, is the water element. The air element is the air that we breathe in. The fire element is the heat that digests your food. These are the four elements. But when the heart takes possession of this body, it then erroneously perceives it to be 'I' or 'They', or people or animals. This body is 'I' and it is 'mine'. The eyes, the arms, the legs and all the other body parts are all mine. Your heart generates these perceptions automatically. The same with animals. They don't have to be told because it's nature's way.

The *kilesas* are one aspect of nature. They do not need to be taught. These four elements combine to become the body and then become possessed by the heart. How long will they remain combined? From the time of conception, maybe ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years or more. From time immemorial you have been deceived by the *kilesas* to think that the body is I, is a human being, is an animal, is you, or is me, although it is just the formation of the four elements of earth, water, air, and fire. But the *kilesas* deceive you to think otherwise. When the body dies, where does it go? Do you still call it a human being or an animal? The earth element will return to earth, the water element will return to water, the air element will return to air, and the fire element will return to fire. They all return to their respective element. Can you still call this

body a human being or an animal? Of course not! They are just elements, and truly so. But when they combine to form the body, why do you then give them a different name, although they are still the elements? You must investigate the truth with *paññā*. It is only the heart that can make this body move around. This body is just the elements. When it dies, it just returns to the elements.

But you keep calling it I or mine from the day of your birth to the present. You have been deceived by the *kilesas*! Do you still want to be deceived by them? You will be deceived by them until you die if you don't see its true nature. If your *paññā* cannot catch up with the *kilesas*, then you will always think in terms of I and mine, and of animals and human beings. Even after the body has gone back to its respective elements, the *upādāna* or attachment to this view will always remain embedded within your heart. When it takes up a new body it will consider the body to be I and mine again. This will go on forever without ever coming to an end. This is the way to investigate with *paññā*. In order to clearly see the truth, you must investigate again and again until it is permanently impressed within your heart. Your attachment will disappear naturally when you have really seen the truth. You can't force the attachment to disappear. Only *paññā* can do this. When *paññā* has seen the truth,

then the attachment will disappear.

Whichever part of the truth you've seen, then that part will be free. That is why you are taught to investigate, because once you have investigated and come to understand the truth, then you will let go of them, because they are all fake - they are not the truth. You are defying the truth, and are constantly living with false truth in all of your postures, standing, sitting, walking, and lying down, both day and night. You don't know this, so you must investigate. Speaking about *paṭikkūla*, or the filthiness of the body, it is full of excrement. This excrement comes out through the hair of the head, the nails, the teeth, or the pores of the body. They are all over the body. There is nothing there that you can call pretty or beautiful. This body is merely wrapped with a very thin skin membrane. Is it really impossible for *sati* and *paññā* to penetrate this thin membrane if you really want to? What is the purpose of *satipaññā*? It is for digging out the truth, especially that of the five *khandhas* or aggregates.

You cannot eat *paññā*. It's only used for the investigation of the various parts of the body that the master of deception has taken hold of. When you have seen it clearly, then the *upādāna* or attachment will vanish. This *upādāna* is much heavier than a solid mountain. When you have seen clearly, you will let go of your attachment, and the heart will become loftier. It will continue to elevate until it

finally arrives at the state of freedom or purity. Be earnest. Really commit yourselves to your practice. You have to have standards and goals. Don't be lackadaisical. Don't see other places as more important than the place where you'll find the truth. This should be your main criteria. Wherever you are, you should think of this criteria. It's your battleground. It's where the *kilesas* are found.

The Lord *Buddha* taught the *Dhamma* clearly. His teaching was well taught in every respect, capable of leading the practitioner gradually away from *dukkha*, eventually achieving the complete freedom from *dukkha*, without any doubts. So how can you have any doubts? The *kilesas* do not have a teacher, so how is it that they can become your teacher? The Lord *Buddha* tirelessly taught us the *Dhamma*. How then can the *Dhamma* not prevail over the *kilesas*? Your practice can conquer the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* have no teacher, but you have a teacher who has taught you very well. Why can't you then beat the *kilesas*, which have not been to school at all? You have always been on the losing side. This is no good. Normally, in the beginning you have to struggle very hard. This is because the *kilesas* have always been very powerful. They have always dominated your heart. So when you subdue them, you must use maximum effort, sometimes even putting your life at stake. When it is time to give up your life for the noble truth, then you must do it. Make the results appear and the light

shine forth in your heart! When you see the truth that really impresses your heart, then you cannot help but utter 'Fantastic! Now I know the truth of *dukkha*, the truth of *samudaya*, and the truth of attachment!' They cannot escape from *paññā*.

Be serious and earnest. Teachers that can really teach the *Dhamma* are very hard to find nowadays. There are many practising *bhikkhus*, but very few of them have discovered or come across the noble truth from their practical experience. And what is the reason? It is materialism and nothing else. This is the main culprit. It can really destroy people. The more materialism develops, the more will the heart degenerate. Although a banknote is merely a piece of paper, it is enough to burn a *bhikkhu's* heart. We all know that it is just a piece of paper. If you use it to roll a cigarette, it doesn't even taste good. But you are deluded by it. The heart will readily grab the fake things because it itself is full of fake things. So when two phony things come together, it is very easy for them to combine, because there is no truth in the heart. But when you have developed your heart through your practice and have, stage by stage, established the noble truth inside your heart, you'll then discard the fake things and the heart will change from being phony to being genuine. In the beginning, the practice is very hard, but you have to endure it. You have endured *dukkha* for

aeons in the past. In this life the *dukkha* is also pervasive. When the heart constantly builds up worries and anxieties, how can you avoid *dukkha*? These *khandhas* are the tool of the *kilesas* that enable the *kilesas* to constantly exhibit themselves. As soon as *kilesas* appear, *dukkha* also simultaneously appears. So how can you not experience *dukkha*? If you can't see the danger of the *kilesas*, you'll never see the *Dhamma*.

I have instructed you to the utmost of my ability and really want you to practise. I don't want to see zero results. When doing walking or sitting meditation, there is just sleepiness. How then can there be any result? So what are you going to do? Today it is like this. Tomorrow you'll do the same thing and get the same result. No new result to surprise the heart. You'll then become discouraged. The teaching that your teacher has given you will be meaningless because the *kilesas* win. They make no exception for any class of people. They dominate and influence your heart and make you suffer. You have taken up the robe for the purpose of eliminating the *kilesas* through your own diligent efforts and strenuous exertions. Why can't you do it? When you have eliminated some of the *kilesas*, you'll see the benefits of your efforts. When the heart has calmed down from the restlessness and agitation from your

meditation practice, you'll see how valuable your practice is. You'll then move forward.

If you keep using *satipaññā*, it will mature. When you investigate the body and the other *khandhas*, the truth will gradually appear. *Paññā* will arise from your investigation. When you have seen the benefits of *paññā*, you'll want to investigate more and more until *paññā* becomes automatic. As the *kilesas* steadily diminish, your diligent effort will steadily increase until reaching full capacity. Then you'll always want to go into battle. To fight the *kilesas* will be your main preoccupation. Your laziness will disappear because it is the product of the *kilesas*. The more the *kilesas* diminish, the more intense will be your conviction and efforts. The more the *kilesas* disappear, the more the *Dhamma* will appear. When all the *kilesas* are totally eliminated, you'll then see that all the *dukkha* that used to consume your heart have all disappeared. The heart then becomes totally empty. Nothing can disturb or afflict it anymore, because you have totally relinquished your attachment with *paññā*. When *paññā* has investigated to the point of clearly seeing the noble truth, it will let go of everything. Then the heart becomes empty, devoid of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava* that used to poison the heart in the past. This emptiness is the absolute *Dhamma*.

All that is left behind are the *khandhas* that still remain functional, just like the lizard's tail that still wriggles and wriggles after it has been cut off the creature's body. These *khandhas* will remain functional until death when they finally cease. They are insignificant and don't know that they are so. For instance, the body doesn't know that it is a body. Neither do *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, or *viññāṇa*. They appear and then disappear. *Saññā* recollects then disappears. *Viññāṇa* becomes aware of the sensual objects and then disappears, because *avijjā*, the main culprit, is no longer there to direct them. The *khandhas* then become the instrument of the *Dhamma*. Before, they were the instrument of the *kilesas*. But after the emptiness or absolute *Dhamma* has appeared in the heart, then the *khandhas* are used to benefit the world, like the Lord *Buddha* and the *sāvakas* who used the five *khandhas* to teach the *Dhamma* to the world. When all the *kilesas* have been eliminated, then all the *khandhas* will become the instrument of the *Dhamma* until death following the law of *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā*. They are *sammati* or conventional reality, and must follow the law of *sammati*. The *khandhas* are *sammati*, so are *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā*. They must go their natural way.

The one who has attained purity doesn't have any problems. He is free from worry. '*Nibbanam paramam sukham*' – *Nibbāna* is the supreme bliss. Where do you find it? When

the *kilesas* have all disappeared from the heart, that's where you'll find it. What else are you going to seek? You have always been afflicted with *dukkha* because of the *kilesas*. But after the *kilesas* have all disappeared, where are you going to find any *dukkha*? And where are you going to look for *nibbāna*? If you're still deluded, you will still seek it. But after you have become enlightened, you won't look for it any more. '*Nibbanam paramam sukham*' is eternal. The Lord *Buddha* said that *nibbāna* is permanent. When the heart has attained absolute contentment, and has let go of all *sammatti*, it won't be upset by any problems, because it is totally devoid of them. What problems can there be? Living or dying poses no problem because they are part of nature. This heart has transcended all the problems of the world.

Calming the Citta with Paññā

June 22nd, 1979

All of you who come here for instruction, please be earnest and resolute in your practice. I'll do my best to give you the instructions. Sometimes I cover everything that I know, and sometimes I only touch on a few points. But I have never hidden anything from you. I have told you all that I know regarding my practice and how difficult it was. I revealed it to you so you can use it as an example. It's not for showing off. When fighting the *kilesas* you have to be aggressive, or else you will not even scratch the surface of them. There are times when you can practise lightly, but there are also times when you have to commit your total effort. Such a time will come and it will happen within your hearts, and you will know it, if you practice with discernment and sound judgment. You'll know when you arrive at a situation that forbids you from retreating, that you must only go forward. You'll either lose your life or realise the truth. I myself have experienced this. I've never thought that I would become your teacher. Looking back at my stupidity and the restlessness of my *citta*, I never thought that I would be in this position. But the *citta* is not above training. It can be trained.

When the *citta* becomes very restless, you have to be forceful. You have to reduce your food consumption and intensify your exertion. You have to discipline yourself in every respect.

When the body weighs heavily on the *citta*, you have to fast. This is the way of training yourself. Even when the body is not oppressive to the *citta*, but it's still restless, then you must intensify your investigation to search and destroy the *kilesas*. When you are forced to totally commit yourself, then you will come to experience the result of your wisdom and mindfulness. I have a coarse temperament. I could not practise lightly but had to practise very aggressively in order to achieve result. That is why I can attest to you that in times of stress, when you're driven into a corner, you can surpass it, you'll not remain stupid. During such a time, you'll be forced to think of a way out. When you do, then wisdom will arise. It is the same when you're surrounded by the *kilesas*, you'll be forced to figure a way of escape. You'll have to utilise *satipaññā* to get you out of the mess. The *kilesas* will then retreat, leaving you in a state of calm.

At such a time you'll gain confidence in your wisdom and mindfulness that is capable of destroying the *kilesas*. You'll never forget the result that arises from this strenuous exertion because it will be impressed in your hearts. This is why I want you all to use *paññā*. You shouldn't wait until you have established *samādhi* before using *paññā*. When you are developing calm, you have to commit your total effort. The *kilesas* are in the *citta*, and so is *satipaññā*. So there is no reason why *satipaññā* cannot get rid of the *kilesas* in order for you to calm down. If you are resolute, then the state of calm cannot slip from your grasp, and the *citta* will definitely calm

down. You must not let the *citta* lead you astray, but rather you must use your mindfulness to direct it into calm. When you want to be calm, you have to closely watch the *citta* because the *citta* is the one that prevents itself from calming down by thinking endlessly; that in turn creates mental pictures to fool you. There is not a single moment in which the *citta* does not conceive these mental images. To see where the *citta* is leading you to, you have to watch it closely. No matter how fast the *citta* becomes, mindfulness will be just as fast, because the *citta* can't escape from mindfulness. You will then get the *citta* to calm down. This is the way of calming the *citta*. In the beginning stages of practice, calming the *citta* can be quite difficult, but you should not let it obstruct your practice.

When you're about to pass away, the pain will be very severe, especially if you haven't developed any *Dhamma* in your heart. You won't have any mindfulness and wisdom to protect you, and you'll be entirely engulfed by pain. But if you have the *Dhamma*, you'll be strong and firm to face up to this final moment. The *kilesas* are strong, so you cannot be weak. You must be strong too. Usually it is the *kilesas* that are always strong, and you're always weak. You can't be weak but must be equally strong. When you've established some calm, you should investigate and develop *paññā*. Sometimes, you can also use *paññā* to calm down the *citta* - this is called '*Paññā* develops *samādhi*'. Because the development of *samādhi* isn't restricted to only being mindful of your meditation object. The calm that arises by *paññā* will make you very courageous,

much more so than from concentrating on a meditation object. I really want you to experience this. What I have told you is from my own practical experiences and I have not added anything to it. This is exactly how it was. I am showing you the results that I've experienced within my own heart. It is the truth that is now within my heart, and I am telling you just this truth and nothing more. Be really earnest, and really commit yourself to the practice.

Don't speculate about the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*. Just observe and focus your attention on the one who is confused, because this is the one who obstructs the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* from you. It's your thoughts, imagination, and delusion which are the thorns that are obstructing you from attaining the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*. You have to calm the *citta*. Once the *citta* calms down, then happiness will arise and become the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*'s living proof. After you have emerged from this state of calm, then you should investigate. You must investigate the body - look at it clearly. It is always with you. Why can't you see the truth of this body? It's merely a piece of skin that wraps around the skeleton, that you mistake for a human being, a person, and for being beautiful and permanent. You are deceived by your own delusion, because the body is *aniccaṃ*, *dukkhaṃ*, and *anattā*. It's a living cemetery. It's the same with everybody who lives in this world. You have to investigate to see this truth, then you'll see the *Dhamma*. To think that this body is permanent is really the delusion created by the *kilesas*. If you believe the *Dhamma*, then you must not believe the *kilesas*. You have to investigate and analyse in

order to remove the delusion created by the *kilesas*. Then you'll see that this body is not I or mine, not *niccāṃ*, not *sukkhāṃ*, not *attā*, not permanent, happiness, or a self. It's truly *aniccāṃ*, *dukkhāṃ*, and *anattā* - impermanent, suffering, and not-self. Get to see it clearly. Investigate earnestly.

You have to have calm as a practitioner, and especially so as a *bhikkhu*. You'll really waste your human birth if you can't realise from your *Dhamma* practice peace of mind, freedom from suffering and *nibbāna*. It'll really be a shame. So don't speculate about the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna* because this is just the *kilesa*'s diversion. You should follow the *Dhamma* which teaches you to look at the heart because the *kilesas* are in the heart, and the means of eliminating the *kilesas* are also in the heart. Where are the Four Noble Truths? Where is *dukkha*? The *dukkha* of the body and the *dukkha* of the heart are inside yourselves. You are their creator. Why then can't you see the truth of *dukkha*? And what is it that causes this *dukkha* to arise and consume your heart? What else can it be if not the *kilesas* which the Lord *Buddha* called *samudaya* - the cause of *dukkha*? It's in your heart. Who'll detect this *samudaya* if not *satipaṇṇā*? You'll see the *kilesas* and the cause of *dukkha* within your heart with *satipaṇṇā*. You must not speculate, but must delve into your heart because that's where the truth is. When it is time to use *satipaṇṇā*, you must use it. You can do it, otherwise the Lord *Buddha* would not have taught you to do so.

Some of the *sāvakas* had to struggle just like you're doing now. You can see this from the scriptures. For instance, the Venerable

Culapanthaka who could not memorise some chants for four months. So his brother got very disappointed with him. When they were invited to go for *dāna* with the Lord *Buddha*, his brother did not invite him, because he considered him very stupid. Because of this, the Venerable *Culapanthaka* became very depressed and took the opportunity to investigate the *Dhamma* using his *satipaññā*, and attained enlightenment right on that very day. When the Lord *Buddha* noted that not all the *bhikkhus* had come yet, he told someone to go and fetch the missing *bhikkhu*. The Venerable *Culapanthaka*, in addition to his enlightenment, had also attained the supernatural power of being capable of creating a thousand images of himself. So when the person to fetch him arrived at the monastery, he met many *Culapanthakas*, and did not know which one to invite. He returned to tell the Lord *Buddha* about this. The Lord *Buddha* told him to grab the first *Culapanthaka* that he saw by the robe. When he did this, all the other *Culapanthakas* disappeared.

The Lord *Buddha* already knew that the Venerable *Culapanthaka* had attained enlightenment because his brother disciplined him by not inviting him to go for *dāna* with the other *bhikkhus*. His brother did this for a reason, and the Lord *Buddha* did not reprimand him for it. His brother was already an *arahant*. You can see how difficult it was for them, but when they strived, they could eventually attain enlightenment. You're human beings like them. Although you might not possess any supernatural power, you at least have the power to subdue and destroy the *kilesas*. You must really commit yourselves - be really resolute and earnest. The *magga*, *phala*,

and *nibbāna* are right here within your heart, but you just let the *kilesas* trample all over you. Not to be able to enjoy the taste of the *Dhamma* is really a shame for a practitioner. You tend to let yourselves be dragged away by the *kilesas* all the time. So you should be very strict with yourselves.

And what is *magga*? It's *sīla*, *samādhī*, and *paññā*. You're already keeping *sīla*, so there's no need to talk about it other than *samādhī* and *paññā*. What prevents the heart from being calm? You know that it is because of the *kilesas* luring you away from your meditation practice. You must therefore apply *satipaññā* to calm the *citta* or use a mantra. But if using a mantra does not calm the *citta*, then you must use *satipaññā* to investigate what the *citta* is thinking about. It has been thinking from the first day of your lives up until today, but what good has this ever done you? You have been continually deceived by the delusion created by the *kilesas* within your minds. Aren't you tired of this? You get tired of many things, but why don't you ever get tired of being fooled by the *kilesas*? If you're really desirous of enlightenment, then you must use *satipaññā*. You have to ask yourselves what you are thinking about, because this is the way of using *satipaññā*. At this moment, if you're going to think, you must think of the *Dhamma*. You have to be really earnest in order to achieve results. *Satipaññā* will remove all the delusions that have blinded the *citta*, and gradually bring about *nirodha* through the development of the *magga*. Once the *magga* is fully

developed, then all the *kilesas*, from the coarsest to the most subtle, will disappear.

You can develop *satipaññā* to defeat the *kilesas*. Then the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna* will appear in your hearts. After the *kilesas* have been vanquished, then there is no need to ask where *nibbāna* is. The *arahants* themselves never ask about *nibbāna* because the word *nibbāna* is just a signpost pointing the way to *nibbāna*. For example, if you were to put up the name of this monastery at the entrance, it would not make any difference to you, because you already know that this is Wat Pah Baan Taad. But to those who have not come here before, it would make a difference. When they first arrived, they would ask 'What monastery is this?' After seeing the sign they would say 'Oh, this is Wat Pah Baan Taad.' Those who live in the monastery don't need the sign. Similarly with those who already know the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*. They don't have to read about them because they already know within their hearts. The important thing is to remove all the *kilesas*. Then there won't be any question.

What are *sammati* and *vimutti*? What is the real truth? The term '*nibbāna*' is *sammati*. What is it that is given the name *nibbāna*, if not the purified *citta*? What else could it be? You have to purify your *citta*, and after you have done that, you will have no doubt. After you die, where will you be? If you've attained *nibbāna*, this will not be an issue. It will only be an issue for those who still have the *kilesas*. Wherever they are, they will always be devoured by the *kilesas*. It is not *nibbāna* that afflicts the world but the *kilesas*. As practitioners,

you must be resolute and earnest. Totally commit yourselves to eradicating all the *kilesas* from your hearts. There has never been a single *arahant* so out of his mind to ask what the state of purity is or what *nibbāna* is. All that's necessary is to have your *citta* purified. Every question will then be answered. The question regarding the time and place of the Lord *Buddha*'s and all the other *Buddhas*' entry into *parinibbāna* will be answered in the purified *citta*. Looking from a purified *citta* you will understand because it's the same truth. They merge perfectly together. All questions will disappear the instant you attain the state of purity. Wherever you are, you will always be with the *Buddha*, *Dhamma*, and *Saṅgha*, right within your heart. Once the *Buddha*, *Dhamma*, and *Saṅgha* have arisen in your hearts, they will become the *Dhammapadipo* - the Light of *Dhamma*. They all become the One *Dhamma*. As far as the *Buddha*, *Dhamma*, and *Saṅgha* are concerned, this is merely a conventional way of describing these three aspects of the One *Dhamma*. But after they've appeared in your hearts, they will become the One *Dhamma*.

I translate *Majjhimā*, the Middle Way as suitability. This is the suitable practice for the eradication of the *kilesas*. If the *kilesas* are forceful, then the *majjhimā* must also be forceful. When the *kilesas* become more subtle, then the *majjhimā* must also become more subtle. When the *majjhimā* overwhelms the *kilesas*, it will then destroy all the *kilesas*, and will retire from active duty, because the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā* or the Middle Way which is the means of eliminating the *kilesas*, is *sammatti*. The *kilesas* are also *sammatti*. They are the binding

sammati, whilst the *majjhimā* is the unbinding *sammati*. The Four Noble Truths - *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha*, and *magga*, are also *sammati*. *Nirodha* is the cessation of *dukkha*. Once *dukkha* has ceased, what else is there to do? At the final moment when *dukkha* completely disappears, you'll know that it has forever ceased. Why practise anymore? You've already achieved your goal. The one who knows the cessation of the *kilesas*, is not the Noble Truths. The cessation of the *kilesas* is what you're actually after. But the one who has attained this state makes no comment at all. He doesn't say that he takes or gives, for he has now arrived at the absolute suitability, the natural state of *majjhimā*, being in the middle of love and hate, just right, proper, and appropriate, being contented, not hungry, nothing is too much or too little. It's not affected by praises or criticisms because it's fully contented.

Concerning the four *maggas*, the four *phalas*, and *nibbāna*, if you haven't practised, you'll always be in doubt. But after you've practised and become enlightened you'll not be in doubt at all. At the final moment, when the *citta* completely gets rid of *avijjā*, it happens in a single instant. At that instant, the *magga* merges with the *phala*. And immediately after that, it's mistakenly described in the scriptures as the *arahatta phala*, the fruit of *arahantship*, when in fact it's *nibbāna*. Because when the *magga* and *phala* are still in action, it can't be *nibbāna*, because it's still *sammati*. It's similar to walking up the steps of the *sālā* or building, where you place one foot on the *sālā* floor whilst the other foot is still on the step. You haven't yet accomplished your goal. But when the other foot is lifted from the step and placed on

the *sāḷā* floor, then right at that instant you've achieved your goal, which is similar to achieving *nibbāna* although the scriptures describe it as the fruit of *arahantship*. When you get there it won't be an issue. The Lord *Buddha* had to clarify this point because had he not done so the *sāvakas* who had attained *nibbāna* would have asked him anyway. 'Why didn't you mention this point?' That was the reason why the Lord *Buddha* divided these attainments into nine stages: the four paths, the four fruits, and *nibbāna*, in order to be precise and prevent any confusion amongst all the *arahant savakas* who must pass through these nine stages.

After you've attained the ultimate goal, all relationships will then disappear. When the path merges with the fruit, there's still a relationship. That's why the Lord *Buddha* emphasised that *nirodha* must be completely realised. *Nirodha* is the cessation of *dukkha*. In my own words, it means that you should strive for the total cessation of *dukkha*. But you usually interpret it to mean different from what it's intended to. Instead of exerting for the removal of the *kilesas*, you become embroiled with how to achieve *nirodha*. As soon as you've got rid of the *kilesas*, *nirodha* will appear. The truth and theory are two different things, two different worlds. The truth is absolute, whilst the theory can change and mustn't be used to measure the truth. For instance, when you hear about the heavenly abodes, or the paths, the fruits, and *nibbāna*, you can't help but speculate, because your *citta* hasn't actually attained them yet. You can only commit them to memory. Although the *citta* may be able to remember by heart what *nibbāna* is, the *citta* itself hasn't yet realised *nibbāna*, for it's still fully

possessed with the *kilesas*. This is what is meant by memory. Please remember this well.

But when the *citta* has passed these various stages of attainments by practice, they'll then become real. They are the truth. Your questions and doubts will be eliminated. For example, if someone tells you about London, England, all that you can do then is to speculate and imagine in your minds. But when you yourselves actually go to London, then what you've imagined in your minds will totally disappear, and be replaced by what you see. What you've imagined is false and will be replaced by what you actually see. What's left impressed in your minds will be the truth. It's the same with the four paths, four fruits, and *nibbāna*. You remember them, but are always doubtful. But when you've realised them, all your doubts will be eliminated. The truth and memory are two different things. They are worlds apart. For this reason, no matter how many *arahants* there might be, even if there were a million or more, there would not be any doubts or contradictions amongst them. Similarly with those who have gone to London, there would not be any contradictions amongst them, because they all have seen exactly the same thing. Before, you would have questioned: 'What are the *maggas*; what are the *phalas*; what are the paths and fruits of the *sotāpanna*, or the *sakadāgāmi*, or the *anāgāmi*, or the *arahant*?' But as soon as you've practised and passed through these stages, then you'll know what they are. After you've reached *nibbāna*, there'll be no more contradictions because all the *sammatis* have disappeared. Doubts and questions are *sammatis*.

After you've seen the truth, all the doubts and questions will disappear. The Lord *Buddha* called this *vimutti*, which means Freedom.

You've been shouldering the futile burden of memory and speculation for a long time. Why don't you shoulder the truth for a change? See what it's like, how heavy it is. Shouldering the burden of memory and speculation is a very heavy load, but you don't realise this. You should carry the load of truth to see whether it is heavy or not, and to see the difference between them! You've learned many truths from the scriptures. Now you should learn the truth from your practice. If they're not different, why would the Lord *Buddha* have taught you to practise? The Lord *Buddha* taught you to develop *pariyatti*, *paṭipatti*, and *paṭivedha* which means studying the scriptures, practice, and then attain the results. *Pariyatti* is the studying of the Middle Way. You can study from the scriptures, or from your preceptor on the day of your ordination when he teaches you the five parts of the body - *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā*, *taco*, hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, and skin. You must then apply them in your practice by continually investigating these body parts to see them all the time. This is *paṭipatti* or practice. When you've achieved this, it's *paṭivedha*, the gradual realisation of the truth. *Paṭivedha* or the results from practice don't usually appear all at once but appear gradually. When you've uprooted all of the *kilesas*, you'll then achieve the full *paṭivedha* or result. All of your burdens will be shed. The problems caused by the *kilesas* will all come to an end and you'll forever live in peace. The victory of the world is different from the victory of the *Dhamma*. The

Lord *Buddha* said that no matter how many people you might have killed in battle, even if it were millions, it wouldn't bring you true peace and happiness. To destroy all the *kilesas* within your hearts is most supreme. To conquer yourselves is the greatest victory. Don't you want this kind of victory?

Therefore, all of you who come to live here, and there are many of you, must watch your *kilesas*. You have to be especially mindful of the *kilesa* that thinks very highly of itself. This is very important. You should not display your *kilesas*, but should instead display the *Dhamma* if you want to live together peacefully. You should always follow the *Dhamma* teaching that exhort you to always have *mettā* or loving-kindness for your colleagues, regardless of whether they're good or not, accomplished or not. You should always treat them well. If they have achieved something, then you should praise them. Then you'll all live in peace, harmony and happiness. All of you come from different places, and have different temperaments. So you have to blend together to become one body.

The Four Satipaṭṭhānas

June 27th, 1979

For the Lord *Buddha* and the *sāvakas*, the *Dhamma* is most important. They weren't interested in building temples and monasteries, but were solely interested in their *Dhamma* practices. After they became enlightened, they were only interested in propagating the *Dhamma* teaching to the world, like Tan *Ajaan* Mun, for example. Did he build any monasteries? All he ever did was to develop his *citta* to his utmost ability. After he became enlightened, he then tirelessly taught the *Dhamma*. You should take him as your role model. People all over Thailand and abroad have great esteem for him. After you've attained enlightenment, your ability to teach the world the *Dhamma* will be immeasurable. Think about it! This will only happen after the *Dhamma* becomes established inside the heart. The heart is, therefore, of paramount importance. After enlightenment, it will have extraordinary powers. Has there ever been a temple or a shrine that can teach the world the *Dhamma* and make people good? Have you ever seen any shrine capable of doing this?

I'm not speaking in contempt. I'm just saying this based on facts and common sense. I'm not saying that shrines should not be built. In places where it is appropriate, I wouldn't object at all. But in places where it's not suitable, like in forest monasteries, then it shouldn't be built because it will only hurt those places. This monastery, for example, is the place for the development of the heart. After you've achieved this goal, imagine the benefits you'll give the world. I've carefully considered this point. Therefore, all of you who come here from the various parts of the country and the world, please be earnest and take this to heart. I always have compassion for you. That's why I have never let go of my responsibilities in teaching you. Although I may not always have the time to teach the laity, I always find the time to teach you. After you become enlightened you can then help the world by propagating the *Dhamma*, which will happen naturally.

When you have the treasure of the *Dhamma*, then you can share it. But to share something you don't have is pure delusion. To teach the *Dhamma* when you haven't yet become enlightened is counterproductive. You'll do more harm than good. The Lord *Buddha* and the *sāvakas* didn't do it this

way. They became enlightened first before they taught the *Dhamma*. If they hadn't yet realised the *Dhamma*, what could they teach? There's no truth in empty wind, no substance with which to attract people's attention, and no basis for others to depend on. But when we have established the *Dhamma* within our hearts, our teachings will become very invaluable. This is the benefit of developing the *citta*. So please become more determined - be serious and earnest in your practice. Don't speculate about the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna* to be in various places other than in the body and the *citta*, for they are found right in these two places which make up the five *khandhas*. Take this to heart.

When the forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects contact the heart they will entrap it with love and hate. It's therefore imperative to investigate them with *paññā* until the heart has understood their true nature and let go of them and retreated inward. *Paññā* will constantly feed the heart with the right information to prevent the heart from being confused, anxious or worried. When it's time to develop *samādhi*, it'll be easily achieved. The heart will be cool and calm. You must solve your problems with *paññā* when it's appropriate to do so. Don't be idle. *Paññā* is extremely important, whilst *sati* is the

workhorse that directs your practice and keeps you mindful and attentive, and enables *paññā* to investigate at its fullest. When you've seen the results of your investigations with *paññā*, you'll become encouraged to intensify your investigation further. This is similar to a businessman who has made a profit, he will be encouraged to work harder. But if he keeps losing, then he'll become discouraged and lazy. It is the same way with the development of the heart. When you've gained some results and progressed, you'll be encouraged to intensify your efforts.

Don't remain idle like a tree stump, lacking appreciation for the *Dhamma*. Don't get involved with worldly matters because they are all devised by the *kilesas* to oppress, depress and delude the *citta*, causing it to be totally ignorant of the truth and *Dhamma*. When you walk or sit in meditation you only do it with your body, not with your *citta* because it's involved with worldly matters, with the forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects, with the past, and with the future, which cause it to be restless and agitated. How then can you profit from your practice? When you're not profiting but losing you'll become discouraged and lazy. This laziness is created by you and it's you who has to pay for it with

dukkha that devours your hearts in every form of existence. This is the fruit of laziness, so you must see its harm. You must use your *satipaññā* to devise a way to overcome your laziness. This is the way of a wise man. Developing yourself is much more important than developing anything else. Whether it is hard or easy, it's not beyond your abilities.

The Lord *Buddha* taught the 84,000 *Dhamma* discourses to suit our temperaments and abilities. They can be summarised into three categories namely, *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*. So they aren't really that many, and involve just the body and the *citta*. Why can't you develop them? When you do walking meditation or *caṅkama*, you should have continuous mindfulness. It is the same way when you do sitting meditation or *samādhi*. You're your own master when you practise diligently. You mustn't think that mastering yourself is a thorn, and doing what you like is a good thing, for this is the *kilesas* whispering to your heart to lead you astray. If you see practising diligently as your adversary and see the *kilesas* as your friends then you might as well be dead because you'll repeatedly be born and die, again and again.

Therefore, you must really be earnest. Really commit yourself. The practice environment in this monastery is fairly suitable, though not quite like that in the time of the Lord *Buddha* when they were mainly forests and mountains. But there are quite enough forested areas here. I am trying my best to help you in all respects because I really consider your welfare. I can tell people who come to this monastery, regardless of their social status, not to disturb your practices. I'm not afraid of anybody. I'm only afraid of contradicting the *Dhamma*. I have more respect for the *Dhamma* than for anyone else. When it's time to speak the truth, I will do so. I can tell them not to disturb you, because you're meditating. 'Don't bother them!' I will tell them. 'They're practising. If they see you coming they'll have to move somewhere else. You'll disturb them.' I will also tell them when it is the proper time to see you. If they're disappointed or dismayed, that's not my concern, because speaking the truth should be the norm. There is nothing wrong with that. If it's wrong, it's because they're thinking wrongly. They don't know that it's essential to have privacy during practice.

If sitting meditation is hard on your body or if you're not engaged in any physical activity, then you should do a lot of walking meditation instead. At the same

time, you should also develop your mindfulness because your practice depends significantly on it. In your investigation, you should consider your body as well as other people's bodies, both male and female, to see their true nature, because this is the way of developing *satipaṇṇā*, mindfulness and wisdom. *Magga* can be developed by investigating internal and external objects, because *samudaya*, the cause of *dukkha*, is created by clinging to both of them. Attachment to forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects, which are outside the heart, is a form of *samudaya* that arises when you become attached to this or that person, this or that thing. You must, therefore, develop *satipaṇṇā* to eliminate this attachment because *satipaṇṇā* is the *magga*, the path to the cessation of *dukkha*. You can investigate anybody's body, male or female because they can all be the object of your investigation. You must investigate by using the *Dhamma* teaching as your guide, for instance, investigating to see the loathsome nature or *asubha* of the body, to see its filthiness or *paṭikūla*, to see it as a cemetery, and to see it as *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā* because they are the truth. You can investigate either your body or someone else's body.

You must always fight the *kilesas* because they've always been your enemy and are inside your hearts. Most of the time it's the *kilesas* that have the upper hand and you don't even know this. How can you not know when you're knocked out by your opponent? If you do, you'll be spurred into developing your *satipaṇṇā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* to fight and eventually destroy all the *kilesas*. This is the way of a fighter. If you fight like mad with all your might, you'll eventually win. If you don't fight, you'll never achieve any result from your sitting or walking meditation, such as calm or insight to encourage you to strive harder. When it's time to be tough, you must be tough. When it's time to go easy, you go easy. When the *kilesas* are aggressive, you must also be equally aggressive. If you should die, so be it! I, myself had been in this situation. I am not speaking without anything to back up what I say. When it's time to let it all out, I really let it all out. When this happens, I can assure you that you'll achieve results and destroy the *kilesas*. You have to investigate using your own devices because each practitioner has a different temperament and abilities. But let me warn you that the *kilesas* always like to be weak, and the *Dhamma* always likes to be resolute and strong, and can overcome weakness. Wisdom can overcome ignorance. It is the *kilesas* that make you ignorant, but the *kilesas* themselves are not ignorant. In fact they're

very clever. Therefore, you must develop *satipaṇṇā* to gradually eliminate ignorance from your hearts. The splendour of the heart will then gradually appear.

The treasure of the *Dhamma* is vital for the world's well-being, without it the world would be burning hot. Wealth alone can't make you happy, peaceful and cool. For this reason, the *sāsaṇa* or the Lord *Buddha's* teaching is extremely essential. The *sāsaṇa's* critics accuse it of being a narcotic and an addiction. If you've never practised or benefited from the *sāsaṇa*, you'll probably not be able to answer their accusations. They criticise the *bhikkhus* for doing nothing. But they never find fault with the pots and pans for not ploughing the rice fields, because they are cooking utensils not ploughs and perform different functions. A battery charger is for charging batteries. The *sāsaṇa* is for charging your courage and uplifting your spirits. This is the purpose of the *sāsaṇa*. If a sick person doesn't seek help from a physician, how can he get well? He can only become a corpse. Think about it! Patients need physicians and medicine. If they think relying on physicians and medicine is harmful or addictive, then they will surely die. It's the same with people who are afflicted with the *kilesas*. They are mentally ill. They can't tell right from wrong, good from bad. They need the *sāsaṇa* to tell them, and cure them of their illness.

Greed, hate, and delusion are mankind's deadliest threat. If left unchecked, they will tear the world apart. If you use the *sāsaṇa* to subdue and eliminate them what harm can this do? How can the *sāsaṇa* be harmful or addictive when it makes people good and the world peaceful? How can medicine and physicians be harmful and addictive to patients? Narcotic drugs will destroy you, but the *sāsaṇa*, physicians and medicine won't. Only the dead don't have to rely on anything, but the living still do. They have to rely on medical professionals for their physical well-being and the *sāsaṇa* or the *Dhamma* teaching for their mental health. Cars need roads to get to their destinations. Patients need physicians and medicine to get well, whether this is an addiction or not is irrelevant. To accuse the *sāsaṇa* of being a narcotic drug is just dirt that comes out of dirty mouths and dirty minds. Common sense will tell you that when you're sick, you need physicians and medicine to make you well.

It's the same with the *citta*. When it's still afflicted with the *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, and *āsavas*, then it has to rely on the *Dhamma* teaching to show it how to remove them. When it has finally removed them, it'll transcend both good and evil and won't need the *Dhamma* teaching anymore. It's like walking up the stairway

to this *sālā* or building. As soon as you reach it, the stairway becomes irrelevant. You don't cling to the stairway. The *sāsana* doesn't teach you to cling. When you're cured from your illness, you won't need your doctor and medicine anymore. It's the same with the *citta*, when it has fully developed, it will no longer need the *sāsana* and will let go of it naturally. Right now you must exert yourself to the full. Use your *satipaṇṇā* to help the *citta* eliminate the *kilesas*. It's the *kilesas* that are the addiction! But the critics don't say this. If the *Dhamma* helps you remove the *kilesas*, how can it be harmful? It's the *kilesas* themselves that are harmful and have been for aeons and countless existences. But you don't know this. It's very hard to find someone who's really sick of the *kilesas* to the point of ditching them. They've attached themselves to the heart and are completely hidden from view. Why doesn't anybody criticise them for doing this? It's only fair that the *kilesas* should also be criticised. You should think sensibly and fairly.

Mindfulness is extremely important, and you mustn't be without it. You should devise different techniques to entice the *citta* to practise. Then your mindfulness will become continuous. For example, you can try a different mantra or a new method of practice. Then you're really developing your *satipaṇṇā*. I also

practised in this way. You have to apply *satipaṇṇā* in your investigation of the body, your own body and other people's bodies until you see clearly the body's true nature. In the Four *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, or the Four Foundations of Mindfulness Discourse, the Lord *Buddha* said that you should alternately investigate the internal and external body and then compare them. This is the way of developing the *magga* or the path and the correct way of investigation. It's the same way with the investigation of the inner and the external *vedanā* or feelings. Actually, the external *vedanā* here isn't about other people's feelings but about the bodily or physical feelings, whilst the internal *vedanā* is about the mental feelings. I've gained this insight from my practice and I'm profoundly convinced of this, but I do not deny that the external *vedanā* can also refer to other people's feelings.

But this is very far from the four *satipaṭṭhānas* that are in yourselves. If the internal and external *vedanās* are not in the body and the *citta*, where else could they be? Then the four *satipaṭṭhāna* would not be complete. But truly, the four *satipaṭṭhāna* are complete in each individual, and you'll see them vividly and clearly if you investigate them. *Dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha*, and *magga* are also in the body and *citta*. When you're absolutely convinced that

they're in yourselves, it doesn't hurt if you compare them with those of other people. You can investigate anyway you like, but your findings mustn't contradict the truth or the *Dhamma*. The Lord *Buddha* taught you to be wise, not stupid. What's essential here is for you to practice until the *kilesas* disappear from your hearts by the power of your *satipaṇṇā*. This happened with my investigation of *asubha* or the loathsomeness of the body. When I got myself really involved with this investigation, I became so disillusioned with the body that I burst into tears. I said to myself: 'So this is how to see the *asubha* of the body!' When *satipaṇṇā* probed into the body, it would slowly decompose and disappear like pointing a torch at it.

You should investigate until you see this *asubha* image clearly in your mind. Don't imagine or speculate. When you've seen the truth of *asubha*, you'll ditch the perception of beauty right away because you can see that it's just *paṭikkūla* or filthy, and it's made up of the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. How then can you be deluded? You've now seen the truth of *asubha*, and realise that it was your imagination all along that obliterated the Lord *Buddha's Dhamma*. You can now see how powerful and clever the *kilesas* really are in deceiving

you to mistake loathsomeness for beauty. According to the Lord *Buddha*, the body is *aniccam* or impermanent, constantly changing, and it's just the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. But the *kilesas* manage to convince you that it's permanent, it's a human being, an animal, you or I. According to the Lord *Buddha*, the body is *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, but the *kilesas* wipe it all out by convincing you that it's otherwise, just like the critics of the *sāsana* who wipe the *sāsana* out by labelling it harmful and addictive.

The Lord *Buddha* said that the body is *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā*, but you see it otherwise. When you believe the *kilesas* you'll wipe out the *Dhamma* teaching. *Asubha* can be seen very clearly, but you don't see it. You see beauty in the body instead. But after you've seen the truth of the body, how can you go on contradicting it, and perpetually shoulder the burden of this contradiction? You'll definitely let go of the perception of beauty after you've seen the truth of *asubha* and seen the harm of your attachment that results from your investigation based on the *Dhamma* teaching. When your perceptions don't contradict the *Dhamma* teaching, you'll see the truth. The heart will let go of this wrong perception and

become empty, peaceful, and at ease. You'll then investigate for more truths.

You must investigate the *asubha* of the body, as well as all the organs of the body, such as the muscles and sinews that hold the bones together, and the skin that wraps the entire body. This skin is like a shroud, a garment in which a corpse is wrapped. How can it be beautiful? You must investigate until you see the truth. Then you'll let go of your misperception naturally. No matter how dark this perception may be, it's just like the darkness of the night. After you've turned on the light, the darkness will disappear. It's the same with *satipaññā*. Whatever object it investigates, that object will become illuminated. No other light in the world can be brighter than the light of *paññā*. The light of the sun can't pass through opaque objects, but the light of *paññā* can penetrate through every object. One who has this light of *paññā* is called *Lokavidū*, the knower of the cosmos. All the truths that you've realised with *paññā* and are firmly established within your heart are similar in nature; they are all *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā*.

You should choose the method of investigation that suits your temperament. If you enjoy investigating the *asubha* of the body, then you should concentrate on this investigation until you truly see the loathsome and filthy sides of the body. You'll definitely see the truth and discard your

delusion if you're not lazy and don't let the *kilesas* lull you to sleep. The reason why you're still attached to this body is because you're still deluded and think that the body is I and mine, that the body is an animal or a human being. You then become attached to the body and brush aside the *Dhamma* teaching. But after you've investigated with *paññā* and realised the truth of the body, then your delusion and attachment will disappear. You'll leave the body alone. Then you'll be *anālayo* or devoid of any sorrow because you've completely severed your attachment to the body. You'll become blissful, light and at ease, and feel like a businessman who has made a lot of money and become very rich.

Next, you must investigate *vedanā* or feelings. The Lord *Buddha* said that they're merely feelings that appear and disappear. They can be good, bad, or neither good nor bad feelings of either the body or the mind. How can there be a human being, an animal, you or I in them? After you've investigated them using *paññā*, you'll see that they are merely mental objects or phenomena. As far as *saññā* or perception is concerned, it's the most subtle of the five *khandhas*. It'll quietly create mental images to fool you. On the other hand, *saṅkhāra* or the thought process will stir before it begins to think. You can distinctly feel this stirring. But with *saññā* there's no stirring at all. It'll create images to deceive you long before you realise it. The *citta* is

continually deluded by these five *khandhas*. They deceive it with *sammati* or relative truths that are created by *saññā* and *saṅkhāra*. With the power of *paññā*, you'll discover that you've been deluded all along. When you probe the *citta* with *paññā*, you'll see the mental images appear and then disappear and you'll realise that they are all created by the five *khandhas* and you have unknowingly become deluded by them. These images are not real. The *citta* is deceived by the five *khandhas*. It has taken whatever the five *khandhas* conjured up as the objects of its pleasure and sorrow for aeons. Regarding *viññāṇa* or cognisance, it flicks on and off. It flicks on to acknowledge the sense data and ideas as they occur, and flicks off when they disappear, similar to a lightning flash, or the light of the firefly.

When you've developed *satipaññā* by continuously investigating the activities of the *kilesas*, you'll become distrustful of the five *khandas* and want to know their true nature. You'll then earnestly investigate them and will eventually realise the truth. Then you'll know that they are merely physical and mental phenomena. Actually, whether you realise this or not they still are what they are. But due to your delusion and desires, you mistake them to be something else. These desires are *samudaya*, the cause of *dukkha*, and originate from the *citta*. Now, as *satipaññā* advances with its probe, the scope of the investigation becomes narrower as *satipaññā* understands more and

more, and eventually converges on the *citta*. Whatever now appears, you'll know that it comes out of the *citta*, not from *saññā* or *saṅkhāra* because *satipaññā* is now capable of differentiating them. As soon as the *citta* produces them they will immediately disappear, just like the light of a firefly. Once *satipaññā* has caught up with the *citta*, it can't go on creating them. When *satipaññā* is always watching, they can only appear and disappear.

Satipaññā will now deploy its all-out efforts in waging the final battle. All that is left now is *avijjā*. Both *avijjā* and the *citta* have become one and the same thing as they are blended together. If you're possessive of the *citta*, you'll also be possessive of *avijjā*. If you cherish the *citta*, you'll also cherish *avijjā*. If you're attached to the *citta*, you'll also be attached to *avijjā*. If you blindly believe the *citta*, you'll also blindly believe *avijjā*. For both the *citta* and *avijjā* are together. *Satipaññā* will now keep on advancing with its probe because it's the only thing it can do. Retreating is not possible. When the investigation has been consummated, *paññā* will then drop its atomic bomb on its target and completely demolish it. Then the seed of births and existences, *avijjā*, will be completely destroyed and you'll see clearly that there is no more birth and death for you. The Lord *Buddha* said that this is the end of the holy life, *vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ*. As soon as the *citta* has been freed, the knowledge that freedom has

been realised will appear simultaneously. This is where the *bhikkhu's* endeavour comes to an end, not anywhere else, but right here.

After *satipaṇṇā* has crushed *avijjā*, all of its enemies will also be destroyed. *Satipaṇṇā* which has been investigating relentlessly, will now itself stop investigating because it has nothing more to do and no problem to solve. There aren't any *kilesas* left to be eliminated. After the master of the *vaṭṭa cakka*, the ceaseless cycle of birth and death, has been destroyed, then everything else comes to an end. The result obtained from your strenuous exertion will surpass everything else. Your misperceptions will all be removed. You'll perceive the present clearly. Whether you live or die, you'll have no more problems with the past, present, and future. It's no problem how you may die. After you've attained to the level where there are no more problems, then everything else ceases to be a problem. So there is no problem for an *arahant* when he passes away. An *arahant* can pass away in any posture, either standing, sitting, walking, or lying down. He can pass away in any position of his choosing, just like what Tan *Ajaan* Mun had said in his biography. And what's the reason for this? It's because the *dukkhavedanā*, which is *sammati*, can't enter the *citta* to cause anymore trouble. So why couldn't an *arahant* pass away in any position that he sees fit, when he has already transcended *sammati*? *Dukkha*

vedanā is *sammati*, and remains in the body. It can't enter the *citta* of an *arahant* to cause any trouble. So there is no reason why an *arahant*, for his last act, can't pass away in any position that he finds appropriate.

The Ovādapāṭimokkha

July 12th, 1979

The teaching of all the *Buddhas* as encapsulated in the *Ovādapāṭimokkha* can be summarised into three main topics. One, *Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ*, to avoid doing any kind of evil. Two, *Kusalassūpasampadā*, to develop wholesome or meritorious actions, which really means the development of wisdom. *Kusala* means skilfulness, mastery, or wisdom. Three, *Sacittapariyodapanam*, to purify the *citta* until it becomes bright and pure. *Etam buddhāna sāsanaṃ*, this is the teaching of all of the *Buddhas*. These three endeavours form the basis of the Lord *Buddha's* teaching. He then elaborated further: *Anūpavādo*, to abstain from criticising others. *Anūpaghāto*, to refrain from hurting others. *Pātimokkhe ca saṃvaro*, to adhere strictly to the monastic discipline. *Mattaññutā ca bhattasmim*, knowing the right measure of dispensing with the four living requisites, such as eating moderately. The Lord *Buddha* said that we should know moderation and the right measure, which means knowing what is suitable or appropriate. *Pantañca sayanāsanam*, to seek and dwell in seclusion and solitude. *Adhicitte ca āyogo*, to develop the *citta* until it becomes sublime. *Etam buddhāna sāsanaṃ*, this is the teaching of all the *Buddhas*. These are the verses that are recited at the end of the *bhikkhus'* fortnightly meeting to review the *Pāṭimokkha*, the monastic discipline.

You have to be resolute with the *Dhamma* teaching. Don't merely skim over it or after having read it and committed it to memory, then claim it as your own possession, because it's not yet your genuine possession. It's only a memory of the *Dhamma* teaching that you have to correctly apply in your practice. It can't be considered your true possession yet. The Lord *Buddha* called this *pariyatti* or theoretical understanding. However much you might have studied, it's still *pariyatti*, theoretical study. *Paṭipatti* is the practice of *Dhamma* for the removal of the *kilesas*, and the development of moral excellence. This *Dhamma* is the *magga* or path to the cessation of suffering and stress, which fundamentally consists of *sīla*, *samādhī*, and *paññā*. You've got to do this yourselves. *Paṭivedha* is the gradual and complete realisation of the four noble truths. It's the result gained from practising *Dhamma*. First, you've to study either from the scriptures or from your teachers, especially from your *upajjhāya* or preceptor who taught you at your ordination the five *kammaṭṭhānas*: *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā*, *taco*. These five *kammaṭṭhānas* are considered to be your most important tools for uprooting births and existences, for the destruction of the *vaṭṭa saṃsāra*, and for the removal of the *kilesas* and *taṇhās* from your hearts.

You have to uproot the *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, and *āsavas* with these *kammaṭṭhānas* because they like to hide behind *kesā*, the hair of the head, *lomā*, the hair of the body, *nakhā*, the nails, *dantā*, the teeth, *taco*, the skin, *aṭṭhi*, the bones, and the rest of the thirty two parts of the body.

You have to study them to see their true natures. Then the *kilesas* won't be able to hide behind them because *paññā* will gradually expose them. Wherever you are, you mustn't lose sight of this undertaking which is highly sophisticated and subtle. It should be done continuously, not periodically like working for the government or seasonally like farming that starts in the morning and finishes in the evening. This is how the world does its work. You mustn't use this worldly method in your *Dhamma* practice to develop moral excellence and eliminate the *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, and *āsavas*, because it's ineffective. The world's undertaking has time frames, schedules, and seasons, for example, the civil servants and factory workers work from nine to five, whilst farming is done seasonally.

But your practice is delicate, comprehensive, intensive and strenuous, but not wearisome. It's a delicate piece of work because the *kilesas* are very subtle. For this reason, you have to probe and investigate continually both day and night, sitting, walking, and lying down, except when sleeping, and it must always be foremost in your mind, having *sati* always directing it. You must practise all the time, using any *kammaṭṭhāna* of your choice to eradicate the *kilesas*. For example, you should mindfully investigate the hair of the body, the hair of the head, the nails, the teeth, the skin, the flesh, the bones, or any other parts of the body with your resourceful and versatile *paññā* probing and analysing. You mustn't do it blindly, nor speculate aimlessly. When you haven't developed any *paññā*

yet, then you must first rely on *sati* to calm your *citta* by curbing your thought process using any *samādhī* method that I have previously explained. This will help consolidate the strength of the *citta*. After the flows of your thoughts retreat and converge inside the *citta*, the *citta* will become strengthened. Normally the *citta* likes to drift and scatter its thoughts aimlessly. There isn't a single moment when the *citta* is free from thinking aimlessly, except when it's sound asleep. When it's not, then it will be dreaming instead, which is another way of thinking aimlessly.

If you're intent on bringing to fruition the complete cessation of suffering and stress in your hearts, then you must strive in developing the *magga* or the path factors such as *sati*, *samādhī*, *paññā* and *virīya*. The objects of your investigation, like *kesā*, *lomā*, for instance, are also the *magga* and can be found everywhere if you just look at them objectively. Without *sati*, the *citta* will drift aimlessly and become weakened. It will then definitely gravitate toward the ever-present lures of the *kilesas*. For this reason it is necessary to use force and discipline to free your *citta* from the *kilesas*' and *āsavas*' enticements, which are like magnets that attract your *citta* to fall under their spells and influence, that drive you to be born, to die, to suffer, and to become deluded. The *kilesas* and *āsavas* are the main culprits. You mustn't think that it is anything else. You must therefore summon all of your efforts to develop your *sati* until it becomes *sampajañña* or continuous mindfulness. Being always mindful of and attentive to what you're doing, and doing it purposefully is *sati*, or the correct way of practice. This is right exertion, and it is also the *magga*.

This exertion is completely different from all other exertions. If you truly intend to be free from *dukkha*, you'll not be concerned with the time. If your determination is full to the brim, you'll always be exerting, enduring and persevering. No matter how difficult it gets, you'll not waver, but will always be tough and resolute. This is due to the unyielding strength of your resolve, acting like a magnet that galvanises your diligent efforts and energy. You'll become stronger and more resolute. You mustn't be fond of or engage in worldly activities that you've already experienced from the first day of your birth. You should by now lose all interest and curiosity. If you still enjoy them, you'll still cling to them. As far as practitioners are concerned, the world is the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* are *sammatti* that ceaselessly oppress the heart, and never stop to rest like other workers.

To develop the *Dhamma* you must therefore rely on the continuous application of your diligent efforts. You have to strive and exert yourselves to the utmost. *Chanda*, one of the factors of the *iddhipāda* or the key to success, is crucial to your accomplishments. With the *iddhipāda* you can achieve any objective. By definition *chanda* means to delight in the exertion for freedom from suffering and stress. *Viriya* means to strive relentlessly in all postures of exertion. You must constantly watch your thoughts to see which direction they are heading. They almost always head in the *kilesas*' direction. If there is *sati*, then the *kilesas* will retreat. But if you don't have any mindfulness, then the *kilesas* will attack you. *Citta* means being attentive. This is the *citta* of the

iddhipāda. You mustn't let yourselves and mindfulness be far away from your exertion, for this will lead you to your objective, which is freedom from *dukkha*. You've to tirelessly attend to your exertion because it's part of your practice. *Vimaṃsā* means *paññā*, which is an indispensable tool for the destruction of the *kilesas*, and for making the heart sublime, magnificent, courageous, bright, skilful and discerning.

The *citta* must always be possessed with *satipaññā* to supervise it, because the *citta* itself can't tell good from bad, right from wrong. It has to rely on *satipaññā* to tell it, and to keep it safe and secure. If it's not protected by *satipaññā*, then it will definitely follow the *kilesas*. If you don't have any *satipaññā*, then you must be insane, because *satipaññā* is extremely vital to your sanity and tells you what's right or wrong, good or bad. A deranged person usually wanders aimlessly along the streets, pays no heed to what is right and wrong, and drifts following his whims and fancies because he doesn't have any *satipaññā* to supervise his actions, and to tell him whether they are right or wrong. He isn't rational because he doesn't have any *satipaññā*. If you're totally devoid of *satipaññā*, then you're crazy because your heart merely knows, but it can't tell right from wrong.

Your actions will be directed by the all-pervasive and powerful *kilesas* whether you're sitting, standing or lying down, and wherever you go. It doesn't bother you how filthy you may be because you can't tell the difference between filthiness

and cleanliness. You can't distinguish, you merely know, but you don't know good from bad, cleanliness from filthiness, right from wrong, and what's proper from what's not proper, like sitting in the middle of the intersection and causing a traffic snarl. Your heart is completely under the influence of the *kilesas*. You don't have any *satipaññā* to help you discriminate between things. If you have enough *satipaññā* like normal people do, then you're not crazy, but this normal level of *satipaññā* is not enough to eliminate the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsavā*, as you would like to. You have to rely on a higher level of *satipaññā* that is developed by your *Dhamma* practice. Then you'll be able to destroy the *kilesas*, and establish calm.

To keep the *citta* concentrated on your meditation subject and not drift away to other thoughts, you must always have *sati* directing it. The *citta* will then attain calm. It'll only gain calm with *sati*. When it's time to investigate, you must do it with the resourceful and ingenious *paññā*. For example, investigating your own body and other people's bodies, and then comparing them. This is the correct way of developing the *magga*. Then you'll always see the noble truths because they're everywhere, especially the truths of *dukkha* and *samudaya* that pile over the hearts of every sentient being. Are *dukkha* and *samudaya* worth desiring? *Samudaya* is the creator of *dukkha*. How can you find any happiness from them? For this reason, you have to counter them with another noble truth, which is hostile to them and is the weapon to destroy them. This

noble truth is the *magga*, the application of diligent effort and strenuous exertion.

You have to investigate with *paññā* so that you can see clearly the noble truths. What is there in your body? You have to investigate according to the truth, and must not contradict the *Dhamma* teaching. If you do, you'll be under the influence of the *kilesas*. You have to examine the top, the middle, the bottom, and each side. The top is the head, and the bottom is the feet. Look into this heap of noble truth which is your body or the *rūpakkhanda*. You must also look inside. What is there inside this body? There are pieces of bones connected together by the sinews, wrapped by the skin and cushioned in between by the flesh. Externally, it is covered by a very thin sheet of skin, and that's all there is to it. However, you can't see this yet because you're so deluded. You should be very ashamed of your *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, and *āsavas*. You shouldn't really be deluded with this thin layer of skin, but you are, because the power of the *kilesas* far exceeds the *Dhamma* that is needed to defeat them.

You haven't yet developed the *Dhamma* or *satipaṇṇā* to be effective enough to destroy the *kilesas*. For this reason, the *kilesas* can still infiltrate your investigation. Though you might try to investigate this body to see it as *asubha*, or repulsive, as *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā*, the *kilesas* can still prevent you from seeing it as such. All you can see is a human being, I, and mine. You see this heap of filthiness or *paṭikkūla*, this living

cemetery as a living person, attractive, and delightful. This is how you see this body, every piece, every organ. This is how you contradict the *Dhamma* and are beguiled by the *kilesas*. It's, therefore, absolutely vital to develop *satipaṇṇā* to direct your investigation. You have to investigate over and over again until you see the truth. You have to see the truth of *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā*, and *taco*. When you truly see it, you'll be overcome by your disillusion. This has happened to me. When I got to see it clearly, I was so deeply moved by it that tears started rolling down my cheeks. I couldn't help thinking: 'Why? Why? Why didn't I see this body like this before? I have been investigating this body from the first day of my going forth, for the purpose of seeing the truth of this body following the teaching of the Lord *Buddha*. But why didn't I see this before, and why today? It's as if this body just appeared today although it has always been with me for all these years. But why didn't I get to see it until today?'

I was really impressed by this realisation. Whenever I looked at any particular part of the body, *pañṇā* would spread over me like ink spreading over blotting paper. This is how *pañṇā* will probe, then the truth will appear, and I became profoundly moved. *Pañṇā* examines every aspect and every organ of the body, both the top and the bottom part, as they are all the same, impermanent and repulsive. So, how could I not be impressed? When I visualised the body gradually decomposing, I could see this very clearly. It gradually decomposes and dissolves. What will it look like when it's dead? I had to keep on visualising until the body began to decompose and dissolve, leaving behind just the

skeleton. I became more impressed whilst the *citta* became very light, as if it was about to fly. During the time that I was investigating, my heart became deeply moved. That's the way you'll see the body. I saw it that way.

But you won't see the body the same way every time you investigate it. You'll see it differently each time. But it's still definitely seeing the truth of the body. You also won't be moved with the same intensity, because each realisation differs from one another. The emotional impact, therefore, has to differ accordingly, depending on the nature of your investigation. This is the way you should investigate with *paññā*. You have to keep a tight rein on your investigation, not allowing it to stray from your object of investigation. You can investigate the body as a body internally, externally, and both internally and externally. For example, you can investigate any particular part of the body, such as head-hair, body-hair, nail, teeth, or skin. This is contemplating the body as a body. You can investigate another person's body, and then compare it with your body. The Lord *Buddha* had clearly elucidated in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* or the discourse on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, that you should investigate both the internal and the external body for the removal of the *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, *āsavas*, *avijjā*, and *upādāna*. This is the task of the *bhikkhu*. This is how you should investigate.

You shouldn't be concerned or worried about anything. Just think that you're alone with a heap of bones that you carry wherever you go, whether you're walking, sitting, sleeping, or

discharging excrement. You're entirely consumed by your concern and worry for this body, because it's its nature to do so. The more you become attached to it, considering it to be I and mine, the more heavy will your worry become to the point where you'll not be able to put forth your exertion. Whatever you do, you'll become very tired and weary, weak and exhausted, devoid of any mental strength. This is how to lose to the *kilesas*. To become enlightened, the Lord *Buddha* and the *sāvakas* had to traverse the road of the four noble truths, the road of *dukkha* and *samudaya*. Let's face it, *dukkha* is *dukkha*. Wherever *dukkha* appears, that's where you have to probe. You have to examine this *dukkha* and the object that is undergoing *dukkha*. Separate them apart to see their true nature, because according to the natural principle, *dukkhavedanā* is a mental phenomenon. It isn't the flesh, the body, or the skin, the body-hair, the head-hair, the nails, or the teeth, which are physical phenomena.

Even when *dukkha* is completely engulfing the body, the body doesn't know that it's being afflicted with *dukkha*. It doesn't know anything. The *dukkha* that appears also doesn't know *dukkha* or any particular part of the body. None of them know anything. They merely appear because it's their nature to do so. You should investigate with *paññā* to see them as they are, then you'll be able to tell them apart. You should look at *dukkha* until you realise its true nature. What gives rise to this *dukkha*, and where does this *dukkha* appear? You should examine with *paññā* the object that's being afflicted with *dukkha*. You must not retreat, but must really concentrate on

your investigation of the bones that are being afflicted with *dukkha*, and are about to burst apart with you feeling a lot of pain. What is really being afflicted with *dukkha*? Is the bone really being afflicted with *dukkha*? In a dead person, is there any *dukkha*? When the bones are being burnt, do they show any signs of pain, show any signs of anxiety, or show any signs that they are being afflicted with *dukkha*? Of course not!

The skin, flesh and bones are similar in nature and don't know what they are. It's the *citta* that interprets and defines them and then becomes deluded with its own interpretation and definition, by thinking that they're *dukkha*, that they're me and mine. Once *dukkha* and the body become entwined, the *citta* will be duped into shouldering a lot of *dukkha*. If you investigate with *paññā*, you'll see very clearly that *dukkha* is just a phenomenon or *sabhāva-dhamma*, and the body is also a phenomenon. All of your interpretations and definitions are the work of *saññā* that's being manipulated by the *kilesas* that use *saññā* to conjure up the notions that this or that object is afflicted with *dukkha*, that they are this and that. You have to keep on investigating. Is the *citta* *dukkha*? Are they the same thing?

You must now separate the *citta* from *dukkha*. The *citta* merely knows. It's not *dukkha*. *Dukkha* is just *dukkha*. Bones are just bones. *Dukkha* is real, so is the *citta*, the one who knows *dukkha*. After you've analysed up until the point of seeing the truth clearly, then the *dukkha* and the *citta* will separate. Then the *dukkha*

won't be magnified and get out of hand. No matter how painful the body might be, it won't afflict the *citta*, because the *citta* now thoroughly understands the nature of *dukkha*, the nature of the body, and the nature of the *citta* itself, due to the investigative power of *paññā* that enables the *citta* to see them as they are. You can now live in peace and in comfort. This is the way when one investigates with *paññā*.

When you get into a crisis, *paññā* will step in. You can't remain ignorant and helpless. When you're up against the wall, you'll have to rely on yourself to develop *satipaññā* to get you to safety. This has already happened to me. I'm telling you this from my own experience and not from speculation. I said to myself: 'You're not forever ignorant or stupid. When you're in a crisis, you can become wise and smart, because you'll be forced to develop *paññā* to deal with the crisis, like when you're driven into a corner by *dukkha*.' Every part of my body seemed to burst apart. That was how severe the *dukkha* was. But I kept on investigating with *satipaññā* until I understood the nature of *dukkha*, the nature of the body, and the nature of the *citta*. Then the *dukkha* wouldn't intensify. Even if it does, like when you're about to die, it would merely be the *dukkha* of the body. The *citta* wouldn't be affected in anyway; it would remain calm and collected. You'll see this very clearly.

So how can you have any qualms about *dukkha* or death. Because *dukkha*, death and the *citta*, the one who knows *sukha* and *dukkha* are all real. *Paññā* is also

real, they all are real, so they won't disturb each another. At the time of death when the *dukkha* becomes very severe and you can't stand it anymore, then you should just let it happen. You've been investigating birth, ageing, illness, and death from the very first day of your practice. So when death beckons, you shouldn't run away from it if you practice for enlightenment. After you've become enlightened, you won't become deluded again. What could you be deluded about, when they're all real? You wouldn't be bold or fearful either. What is there to be bold about? What is there to fear? They are all *sammatti* or conventional reality. But if you're not enlightened, you'll still be fearful and bold. When it's time for you to be bold, you'll be bold, for this is the nature of *paññā* or *magga*, to be fearless in facing up to *dukkhavedanā* or pain. You'll keep on fighting relentlessly until you die. When you traverse the path for the cessation of *dukkha* and stress, you have to be bold. But after you've achieved your goal, after you've become enlightened then there won't be any fear or boldness left, because you've arrived at the realm of normality, where everything is perfect, peaceful and natural, and where nothing can cause it to increase or decrease, because it's the absolute reality.

This is the way of investigating with *paññā*. You have to be resourceful, and versatile. It will be helpful if you can come up with different techniques every now and then. When you continually investigate, *satipaññā* will be very powerful, and you'll be able to probe the entire body, as well as the entire world of *samsāra*. You'll investigate everything, internally and the externally until you become

enlightened. Then you'll become a *lokavidū*, a knower of the world, one who has truly realised his true nature, as well as the true nature of the world, the true nature of *saṃsāra*, and the true nature of *sammāti*. What then is there to be deluded about? Such is the power of *paññā*. You should therefore vigorously develop this enterprising *paññā*, and must not remain complacent. You're now living in a secluded and quiet environment. I have tried my best to provide you with as much time as possible for your practice, so that you can concentrate your *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya* on rescuing the heart, which is constantly calling for help, from all the oppressive *kilesas*.

Whether you're standing, sitting, walking, or lying down, your hearts are constantly being oppressed and subjugated by the *kilesas*. You must, therefore, help your hearts with your *virīya*, *sati*, *paññā* and *saddhā*, in acquiring freedom, or at least to alleviate some of your *dukkha*. To alleviate *dukkha*, you have to curtail *samudaya*, the creator of *dukkha*. If *samudaya* is not curtailed, then your *dukkha* won't be alleviated. Therefore, *samudaya* is the chief culprit. In the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* or the First Discourse, the Lord *Buddha* pointed out the three aspects of *samudaya* namely, craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, and craving for not-becoming. They are in your hearts and not in the scriptures. The real craving for sensuality or *kāma-taṇhā* is not in the scriptures, but in your hearts. The scriptures just list the names of *kāma-taṇhā*, *kilesas*, and the *Dhamma*. You have to rely on the *Dhamma* to guide you in your practice because it's the only correct way. You should first study and commit them to

memory, and then apply them in your practice of mental development.

You have to strive and exert yourselves to the utmost at all times, day and night. If you're not engaged in any physical activity, and your body becomes very lethargic, then you should do a lot of walking meditation to exercise your body. If you do a lot of sitting meditation, it can be very painful to the various parts of your body, and the utilisation of your body postures is not in balance. This is not good for your health. You should equally stand, walk, sit, and lie down. After you've got out of the sitting position, you should then do walking meditation until you get really tired before changing into another posture. This is the proper way of practising mental development. It's also healthy for your body, and makes your body function smoothly. During the three month period of *vassa* or the rains retreat, you should intensify your practice. Don't be concerned with anything. Your food and living requisites have been plentifully supplied by the laity. You take up the *dhutaṅga* or austere practices in order to consume and receive a small amount to speed up your meditation practice. But you end up getting more than you normally do. Look at the number of times that you have to empty your bowls on your almsround!

That's the lay devotees' way of making merit by generously supporting this monastery. But you shouldn't take the lay supporters for granted or get intimate with them. You should always be intimate with the *Dhamma* and take the *Dhamma* as your refuge. As far as being hungry or full, having plenty or not is concerned, this is just the nature of this world that is full of

aniccam, *dukkham*, and *anattā*. Nothing in this world is certain, but you shouldn't be concerned. You should consistently concentrate on your practice. This is the correct way. As far as the *dhutaṅga* practice of not accepting any food after *piṇḍapāta* or almsround is concerned, I have practised this ever since I began my teaching career to serve as an example for my students to follow. You should really exert yourselves. Don't waste your time wondering about other people's business. You should only look at your heart that is constantly craving and producing a lot of *samudaya*. You should take control and discipline your hearts with the various techniques of practice and *paññā*. It can be tedious if you keep meditating with the same meditation subject. You should try different techniques of *satipaññā* to turn your *citta* around. It's not good when your practice becomes dull. You should use *paññā* to come up with new initiatives and ideas that will attract your interest. I myself have done this before.

Investigation Methods

July 18th, 1979

It's not unusual for a *Dhamma* practitioner, who traverses the path to the cessation of *dukkha*, to encounter problems that arise from practice, with the only exception of a *khippābhiññā*, one who becomes enlightened quickly. But for you ordinary practitioners, there will be problems to solve. You'll have to muster all of your mental resources to solve them. Your mind will be spinning like a *Dhamma cakka* or wheel of *Dhamma*. When you're developing *paññā*, this is the way it will be. In developing *samādhi*, you'll have to use *sati* to control and subdue the *citta*. When there is no *sati* to control it, the *citta* will ceaselessly think and conjure up images to deceive you, although they are just shadows. The producer of these images is inside the *citta*, but the shadows are projected outward to fool you to become obsessed with them. This will happen to every practitioner. If you don't know this fact, then your *citta* will never calm down. You should, therefore, always watch your *citta* with *sati*; then when it begins to conjure, you'll feel that there is something emerging. But you usually won't know this because it only emerges when you're not mindful. You'll only realise it after it has already conjured up these images. By then you'll already become deluded with them. They are merely shadows.

All of your conceptualising is created by *sarikhāra* that keeps on conjuring up thoughts and images without end. You then

become deluded and obsessed with them by creating more thoughts and images. You might think that you're sitting meditating, but actually you're being obsessed with your thoughts because you're not watching your *citta* where your thoughts and images are created. *Sati* is not watching, so how can the *citta* find any calm. You should always keep this in mind. This is the way it really is, it has already happened to me, so I really know it. If it hadn't, how could I tell you? When you're developing calm, you must focus your mindfulness at the *citta* where your agitated and restless thoughts are being generated. *Sati* is a mental factor that functions as a watcher. You should develop it to watch the *citta* where all your thoughts and mental images are created. You must not speculate or theorise, you must experience it. Just concentrate your awareness right at the *citta* to see what the *citta* is generating.

If you use a *mantra* as your concentrating device, then you should be solely aware of your *mantra* whilst keeping on reciting the *mantra*. This kind of *sarikhāra* or mental concoction is not *samudaya*, but *magga*, because it doesn't make you restless or agitated, but it makes you calm. It'll curb your thoughts and imaginings that make you restless and agitated. *Dhamma* doesn't make you restless and agitated, but your thoughts on worldly matters will. This kind of *sarikhāra* or mental concoction is *samudaya*. No matter how much it concocts, it'll never stop or be contented. It will keep on thinking and deceiving you, both day and night, without any beneficial result. If you're seeking benefit, you should develop your *sati* to be firmly embedded in your mind, by concentrating

your attention at your *mantra* if you choose it as a device to calm your mind. After you have developed some calm, you should begin investigating with *paññā* the thirty-two parts of the body or *rūpa*, or investigating the feelings or *vedanā* (that can be *sukha*, *dukkha*, or neutral), of the heart and of the body. Keep on investigating with the methods that work for you until you become enlightened.

When the *citta* calms down, the *kilesas* will all gather inside, and all cravings will temporarily disappear. This state of calm will serve as your base camp where you'll rest, recuperate and plan your next move. Without calm you'll always be restless, agitated and disturbed by what you see, hear or think. This is the way of feeding your heart with the poisons of *dukkha*, worries and anxieties. After you've rested enough and emerge from this state of calm, you should then investigate with *paññā* the external body, either the body of a man, a woman, or an animal, and compare it with your body. They are similar in nature: they are filthy or *paṭikkūla*; they are repulsive or *asubha*; they are impermanent or *aniccam*, and they get old, get sick and die. This is true with every body. The *citta* should ceaselessly investigate with *paññā*. *Sati*, which is indispensable like household medicine, must be everpresent. *Sati* must accompany every task, like the development of calm or *samatha*, and the development of insight or *vipassanā*. If *sati* is not directing your investigation then it will turn into speculation or *saññā*.

In the beginning stages, your investigation will generally be

saññā or speculation, because you haven't yet experienced the result of your investigation. To achieve results you have to rely on *sati* to continually direct your investigation until you see the true nature of the object under investigation. Only then will *saññā* turn into *paññā*, and eventually become entirely *paññā*. *Saññā* will then disappear. From then on your practice will be smooth sailing. It's rather difficult in the beginning stage of your practice, either in developing calm or *paññā*. But you shouldn't let this difficulty block your path. The reason why you can't exert at full capacity is because of your fear of difficulty. You're weak and lazy, and won't make any progress. Your heart is filled with interest for mundane matters, that by now you should see as harmful. You've engaged with these worldly activities from your childhood days and should see the damage done to you by thinking of them now.

You're now striving to emancipate yourselves from the *kilesas* with your *Dhamma* practice. You should therefore concentrate all of your efforts into this task. Your exertion will be futile if there is no *sati* directing it. *Sati* is indispensable for both walking and sitting meditation. You must always have *sati* when you meditate for calm or *paññā*. *Sati* must always oversee your meditation practice. If you haven't achieved any result yet, it's because you have very little or no *sati* at all. What's the reason for this lack of *sati*? It's because you're not putting enough effort into continually developing *sati* to grow to its full potential. Similarly with developing *paññā*, in the beginning stages it's an uphill struggle, because you haven't yet

seen what *paññā* can do. When you do, you'll be so hooked and absorbed in your investigation that it can turn into *uddhacca* or restlessness, one of the higher fetters or *saṃyojana*, because you got carried away. *Uddhacca* is the *citta*'s obsession with its investigation. This *uddhacca* is not the *uddhacca* of the five mental hindrances that an ordinary, unenlightened person experiences, or the consequence of thinking about the affairs of the world; rather, it is the result of relentlessly investigating with *paññā* to reveal the *ti-lakkhaṇa* or the three characteristics inherent in all conditioned phenomena.

Sati and *paññā* when fully developed will be everpresent and relentless with their investigation from the very first moment that you arise from your sleep. I had never speculated that it would be like this until it actually happened to me. From the first to the last moment of my waking hours, I was never off-guard or absentminded. Listen to that! This is how *sati* and *paññā* can become, functioning automatically all the time. How then can you ever be off-guard? For you have now attained the level of automatic *sati* and *paññā*. During the time of the Lord *Buddha*, this is called *mahāsatī* and *mahāpaññā*. Tan *Ajaan* Mun had always exhorted his students to develop their *sati* and *paññā* to become *mahāsatī* and *mahāpaññā*. He would say: 'How else can you compete with the deception of the *kilesas* that have accumulated in your heart for aeons and countless existences? Your heart is entirely filled with these very powerful *kilesas*, leaving no room for the *Dhamma* at all. If your *sati* and *paññā* isn't up to par how then can you subdue and vanquish the *kilesas*? To eliminate the *kilesas* completely, it's,

therefore, vital to develop *sati* and *paññā* to become more powerful than the *kilesas*.'

Tan *Ajaan* Mun would always forcefully exhort his students, for he was a man of fortitude and determination, bold and courageous, nimble and efficient. He would teach in a straightforward, honest and sincere manner and was always smarter than the *kilesas*. Whatever kind of trick the *kilesas* might have up their sleeves, he would always know how to outdo them with his wit and skill. As practitioners, you must, therefore, follow his example if you're going to take possession of your *citta*'s greatest and most supreme treasure. But right now, your *citta* is completely surrounded by the *kilesas* that prevent you from seeing what the real *citta* is. All you can see is just the *kilesas*. All your thoughts and perceptions are shaped by the *kilesas*. Not a single moment are they shaped by the *Dhamma*. When you're overwhelmed by the *kilesas*, then all the mental phenomena will be led by the *kilesas*, because you haven't yet developed any *sati* and *paññā*. To beat the *kilesas*, it's therefore imperative for you to seriously and earnestly develop *sati* and *paññā* to overwhelm them.

When you continually nurture your *sati*, it will gradually grow to its full potential. As far as *paññā* is concerned, you mustn't think that it will grow by itself, without doing any investigation, regardless of what level of *samādhi* you might have accomplished. There are many practitioners who believe wrongly that *paññā* will appear automatically following the

realisation of *samādhi* as suggested by some texts. How can this be possible? What I have clearly experienced in my practice was otherwise; how then can I be deceived by this belief? Do you know how many years I was addicted to *samādhi*? It got to the point where Tan *Ajaan* Mun had to forcefully drive me out of my *samādhi* addiction. I had to start traversing the path of *paññā*, by probing and investigating with the firm and steady support of *samādhi* that provides the *citta* with everpresent contentment and satisfaction, because it was very strong and firm, the highest level of *samādhi*. But did *paññā* arise automatically from this level of *samādhi*? No, it never happened!

I had become so skilful in establishing *samādhi* and stopping all my thoughts that it took me just a few minutes to do it. After the *citta* had entered calm, all that remained was this knowingness that I became addicted to and thought it to be *nibbāna*. I didn't know that there were all sorts of *kilesas* still hidden within it, and never thought of it, because I didn't have any *paññā*. But when I began to investigate with *paññā*, I started to see them and wanted to remove them. I would then keep on investigating until all the *kilesas* were eliminated. I could now see the benefits of *paññā* as it kept on advancing. The more results I achieved, the more I became motivated to investigate. Eventually, I would blame my *samādhi* addiction for preventing me from advancing in my practice. You should keep in mind that regardless of the *samādhi* level you might have attained, it won't automatically generate *paññā*. If you don't investigate, *paññā* will never appear. If *paññā* were to arise by

itself, then it should have happened to me because I had already developed the highest level of *samādhī*. But *paññā* didn't appear. If you develop *samādhī*, you'll only get *samādhī*. If you want to develop insight, you'll have to investigate. You'll then acquire insight or *vipassanā*, which means clear understanding of the inner nature of all phenomena.

You mustn't be complacent and remain idle. You should investigate as soon as you've withdrawn from calm. Each level of calm will support each corresponding level of *paññā*. This is the correct way to practise, and it will save you a lot of time. You won't have to worry about whether you're doing it correctly or not because you have me to guide you. All you have to do is follow my advice. Your practice will be easy, because you've no doubt in your mind. I've no doubt in my teaching because I have clearly experienced both the path and the fruit, like when I told you about *sati* and *paññā* relentlessly and ceaselessly investigating to remove the *kilesas* with assorted investigation methods to suit the different kinds of *kilesas*. From the time I woke up to the time I went to sleep, there wasn't a single moment when I was off my guard. I kept investigating until I went to sleep. This had actually happened to me! However, you shouldn't duplicate it though. This is not the way to practise. You should use it as a guideline. It doesn't have to be identical, but you must more or less adhere to my instruction. What I've told you here is a true story of my uphill struggle in developing my *sati* and *paññā* to their full potential so they can continually investigate to eliminate the *kilesas* without ever being

off-guard. It will be like this when *sati* and *paññā* are fully developed.

You've got to work really hard in your quest for enlightenment and the paranormal that are hidden in your *citta* for them to become marvellous and wonderful. But right now it's worthless and filthy, because it's being completely covered with the worthless and filthy *kilesas*. It's, therefore, imperative to wash them away with your diligent effort. You should apply all of your *paññā* resources available to you, and not solely wait for your teacher's advice. By devising your own investigation methods, your *paññā* resources will never be depleted. Your teacher can only show you how to do it, but you have to adapt it to fit your practice. Then it will be your true and genuine possession. To develop your *paññā* resources, you have to investigate the body's loathsome nature or *asubha*. You have to reveal this repulsive nature by going on a *kammaṭṭhāna* sightseeing trip, investigating repeatedly your body from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet, and then back up and down again and again. You should also investigate the skin that wraps around the body. What is being wrapped by this skin? It's a bunch of filth or *paṭikkūla*. The skin itself is also filthy. Only the surface of the skin that's good enough to look at. Then, there is sweat and grime that you have to constantly wash off. You've to continually investigate the body if you want to advance speedily in your practice, because the body is one of your major battlegrounds. *Kāyagatāsati* or the development of mindfulness of the body is absolutely necessary as long as the *citta* still clings to the body.

You've got to keep on investigating with *paññā* until you clearly see the true nature of the body.

When you're establishing calm, you shouldn't be concerned with *paññā*. You shouldn't do any thinking at all, but should only be mindful of your meditation subject or theme. You mustn't let the development of calm and *paññā* to get in each other's way. After the *citta* has calmed down, rested and emerged from calm, it's time to investigate with *paññā*, without being concerned with *samādhi*. This is the correct way of practice. You should do one task at a time, like directing water to flow through just one channel, because it'll be very efficient. If you're concerned with *paññā* while doing *samādhi* and vice versa, then you'll be distracted and inefficient. You won't make any progress in your practice if you're not earnest and resolute. When you do walking or sitting meditation to develop calm, you shouldn't be thinking about anything else but your meditation subject. You shouldn't think about the world. The world will not disappear. All there is to this world is just birth and death that piles on top of one another, and has always been so. The affairs of this world are about birth and death, about dissolution and separation. It'll always be like this, so why should you have any concern?

The body that you take for a walk, stand up, put to sleep, discharge excrement from, and constantly feed, is changing all the time. It was an infant. Now it has grown up. What's this growth really about? It's about *aniccam*, *dukkham*,

and *anattā* which accompany this growth. There aren't any benefits from the growth of the body, but there are benefits from the growth of your *sati* and *paññā*? If your *sati* and *paññā* don't grow, you'll never know how to free yourselves from *dukkha*. You'll cling to and die with the body. You'll go on endlessly taking up birth, ageing, illness, death, and *dukkha*. If you want to destroy this cycle of rebirths, you'll have to earnestly investigate the nature of the body. If you have to endure *dukkha* from your practice, let it be. Nobody born into this world can experience only happiness. From birth to death you'll experience happiness and suffering, whether you're rich or poor, clever or foolish. This body makes no exception for anyone, because *dukkha* is inherent in every body. You've experienced *dukkha* before, so you shouldn't be discouraged by the *dukkha* that arises from your exertion. This kind of *dukkha* is for the supreme result. It's the *dukkha* of an *ariya* or Noble One. It's the *dukkha* for the elimination of the *kilesas*, for freedom from *dukkha*, and for the destruction of the cycle of rebirths.

No matter how severe this *dukkha* might be, you're willing to face it. All you need to have are your *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya* battling this *dukkha*. You mustn't just endure *dukkha* without doing any investigation, for this will be of no benefit. However much *dukkha* appears, *paññā* must probe into *dukkha* to see *dukkha* as it truly is. That it's just a phenomenon. And to see clearly that the body and the *citta* or knowingness are also phenomena. *Saññā* or supposition arises and ceases. It supposes the body to

be I, and to be mine; it supposes this feeling to be *sukha*, and that feeling to be *dukkha*. These are all deceptions. When you've thoroughly investigated and seen it truly, the body will then be just body, *vedanā* just *vedanā*, and the *citta* just *citta*. You will then have achieved the establishment of the four *satipaṭṭhāna* or four foundations of mindfulness. You can also call the four *satipaṭṭhāna* the four noble truths or the four *ariya-sacca*.

Be serious and really exert yourselves. Don't relent or become discouraged. I have great concern for all you. That's why I have to constantly teach you. Otherwise your *citta* will become slack and dull. You have to arouse your *citta* and develop it with the *Dhamma* in your practice. If you're drowsy, wash your face or find some other ways to overcome your sleepiness, like the ways the practitioners during the time of the Lord *Buddha* did. What's the purpose of inscribing what they did in the scriptures, if it's not for the purpose of teaching you? If you sit meditating and become drowsy, then you should get up and do walking meditation instead. If you're still sleepy, then you should follow the examples of the noble disciples or *sāvakas*. One of them walked into the water. After he was knee-deep in the water and still couldn't get rid of his sleepiness, he'd go deeper. And if he was still sleepy, he would soak some grass with water and put it on his head before he could get rid of his drowsiness. He would then investigate until realising full enlightenment. Listen to that! I think he's already highly attained. But this sleepiness makes no exception of anyone, highly attained or not.

That's why he had to devise with his *sati* and *paññā* practical methods to free him from *dukkha*, and to overcome his drowsiness by walking into the water or place soaking grass on his head. He must be highly attained because he didn't relent in his exertion. The body, however, felt drowsy and wanted to take a rest.

Now consider the case of the Venerable *Sona*, who exerted himself with walking meditation until his feet became blistered. Because he was so relentlessly and ceaselessly engrossed in investigating with his *sati* and *paññā* that he completely lost track of time. This wasn't a proper way to practise being overly obsessed with his investigation. This is *uddhacca* or restlessness, being so preoccupied with his investigation that it made him forget to take time off to rest in *samādhi*. Had he alternated his investigation with resting in *samādhi*, this would then be the correct way to practise. Like a workman who becomes tired and hungry after a hard day's work, he then takes a rest and feeds himself. The next day he will work some more. It's the same with the *citta*. After it has investigated until it becomes exhausted, it has to rest in *samādhi* or calm, where all activities of the *citta* are halted, leaving the *citta* with just the knowingness and tranquillity. After it has fully rested, the *citta* will be strengthened and after withdrawing from calm it'll investigate with *paññā* again. *Paññā* is similar to a knife that has been resharpened and the workman who has regained his strength from eating and resting. It'll now have the strength and sharpness to swiftly destroy the *kilesas*. The Lord

Buddha said that *paññā* developed with the support of *samādhi* is very powerful.

A cook who has all the cooking ingredients ready can cook up any dish he likes. But if he doesn't cook, then these ingredients will remain ingredients. Vegetables will remain vegetables, chillis will remain chillis, and meat will remain meat. How can they become stew? *Samādhi* will also remain *samādhi*. It'll not become *paññā* automatically if it's not use to support the *citta*'s investigation. *Samādhi* can only strengthen the *citta* and make it powerful. After the *citta* has established *samādhi*, it will be contented and strong, and will be ready to investigate efficiently. *Samādhi* can't destroy the *kilesas*. It can only temporarily subdue the *kilesas*. But *samādhi* is an indispensable support for the development of *paññā* because the *citta* that has become contented from *samādhi* can investigate efficiently and won't turn into speculation or *saññā-ārammaṇa*. When you've eaten your food and rested, you can then work to your fullest capacity. What's it like for you to work when you're hungry? You'll be inefficient, and your temper can arise very easily. When you investigate without the support of *samādhi*, your investigation will go astray, will turn into speculation and won't produce any result. *Samādhi* is, therefore, an indispensable support for the development of *paññā*.

The Lord *Buddha* said that the *paññā* that has been developed with the support of *samādhi* is very powerful. The *citta* that has been developed by *paññā* will definitely be freed from the *kilesas*.

It's only *paññā* that can destroy all the *kilesas*; *samādhī* can't. But it plays a very vital supporting role. *Sīla*, *samādhī* and *paññā* are like staircases. You need *sīla* to get you to *samādhī*, you need *samādhī* to get you to *paññā*, and you need *paññā* to eliminate all the *kilesas*. To be freed from all the *kilesas* is the greatest reward. It's the consequence of your fearless exertion and your willingness to sacrifice your life for it. This is the goal that you should aspire to. All the *dukkha* that you experience in your practice are nourishments that nurture and develop your heart, and deliver *nibbāna* to you while you're still alive. You have to be resolute and earnest with your practice. In developing the *citta*, you've to follow the Lord *Buddha*'s teaching. You've to be strict with yourselves. Anything that opposes the *Dhamma* should be considered to be the *kilesas*. You have to resist them until they're all destroyed.

When you've attained absolute perfection, there won't be any resistance left. After you've purified the *citta*, there will be nothing to resist you. You'll see that what had been opposing you were just the *kilesas*. When your *citta* becomes pure, there will be nothing to oppose you. You'll have nothing to push or pull you because you've realised the ultimate freedom from the world. To you, the world doesn't exist although you're still living in the world with the body that you're no longer attached to. In your *citta*, there is just this indescribable knowingness, and only you know very well what it actually is. This knowingness is free from all attachments. Nothing can hurt, oppress or manipulate it. It exists independently and naturally. What is there to pull and

push it? It's only the *kilesas* that constantly push and pull. You have to eliminate them forcefully. You must not retreat. If you want to be free from *dukkha*, you mustn't be deterred by the *dukkha* that arises from your exertion to destroy every kind of *kilesa* that goes against the *Dhamma*. You have to oppose the *kilesas* because the *kilesas* oppose the *Dhamma*. This is where you have to fight and face the *dukkha*. This is the *dukkha* for victory. It's right here. You must not look elsewhere, in this place or at that time. They are only the places and the times of your exertion. But the *kilesas* that you want to eradicate are inside your *citta*. This is where you've got to fight.

The Lord *Buddha* taught you to live in the forest because it's a suitable place for your exertion. But you don't follow his teaching and overlook the *kilesas* that are oppressing and hurting your *citta*. This is wrong. You've to be serious and earnest with your practice. After the *citta* is freed from all the *kilesas*, it'll be like floating in space, free from the earth's gravitational pull. Floating in the space of the *citta* and the space of the *Dhamma* is living in this world free from all attachments between the body and the *citta*, unlike before when you've to shoulder the burden of your body. This attachment or *upādāna* can really cling and becomes a very heavy burden for taking the body as I and mine. But after you've investigated and truly realised the body's true nature, you'll let go of the body. You mustn't contradict the *Dhamma* teaching because you'll be following the *kilesas*. No matter how hard and difficult your practice might be, you've got to keep on exerting. You mustn't retreat. *Dhamma* goes this way, so must you. You have to resist the *kilesas*.

Dhamma teaches you not to have affection, so you mustn't have affection. If you've any fondness, you have to remove it. You've got to find out its cause and eliminate it. The same with hate. The *Dhamma* doesn't teach you to hate. When the *citta* has reached the middle or natural way, it'll see that both affection and hatred devour the *citta* like the parasitic vines that devour the tree that they grow and depend on for their nourishment. The nature of the *kilesas* is to consume. They will sap the *citta* and afflict it with a lot of *dukkha*. You've got to get rid of them all, then you'll realise perfect bliss. Then it won't matter whether you live or die. Death is just a conventional reality or *sammati*, and living is just a string of sense experiences of visible objects, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile sensations that have existed in this world for aeons. They were here long before you were born, and will still be here long after you're gone. What can you expect out of them? There's nothing in this world that is really fantastic. If there was anything in this world apart from the *Dhamma* that was wonderful , then many people would have already become fantastic and wonderful.

But it's not so, because wherever I go, I can only see mountains of *dukkha*. I can see this very clearly just by observing. The oppression of the *kilesas* is very severe. They drag you away from the *Dhamma*, incite you to defy the *Dhamma*, and force you to follow them. If you're weak then you'll always follow them. Their attraction is very strong. That's why you've got to build up a lot of strength and develop *sati* and *paññā* to fight them. Whenever they drag you, you must resist with all your

might. It can then be said that you're opposing them. If you always follow them, then it can't be said that you're fighting against them because you're being dragged by the nose. You have to keep on opposing them. When they become weakened, the *Dhamma* will become stronger. When the *kilesas* seem to have disappeared, you'll have to search for them with the automatic *sati* and *paññā* or *mahāsati* and *mahāpaññā*. When you find them you'll fight and destroy them, and search for more. That's why the *citta* at this stage is always busy because the *kilesas* of this level are so subtle they have to be searched for which is work for the *citta*. When it finds the *kilesas* it has to fight and destroy them which is also work for the *citta*. The *citta*'s work will come to an end only when all the *kilesas* are totally eliminated. This is the work of the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu* or meditating monk.

You've got to keep on investigating until you become fully enlightened. Then your work will be accomplished. This is *vusitaṃ brahma cariyam*, you've now accomplished your task, there's nothing more for you to do because all of your attachments have been removed from the *citta*. Before this you're attached to everything, from visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile sensations to the *citta* itself. This is how powerful the *kilesas* are and how far they will become attached. After you've investigated and removed your attachment to all the visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile sensations, you're then left with your attachment to the *citta*. This attachment or *kilesa* is *avijjā* that coexists with the *citta*. You become inadvertently attached to it because you

don't know that this is *avijjā*. Even *sati* and *paññā* of this level can at first be outwitted. You can imagine how subtle this *kilesa* is! That's why this *avijjā* has been anointed the ruler of the three realms of existence. You now have to investigate until it's completely eliminated. Then there'll be no attachment left. The *citta* will no longer be attached to the *citta*. If there is still attachment to the *citta*, it isn't yet freedom. You're not yet free from *avijjā*. But when *avijjā* has been completely destroyed, then all of your attachments will disappear. You'll then enter into the space of the *citta* where you'll never become attached again.

You have to destroy all the *kilesas* before you can enter the space of the *citta* which is comparable to the outer space where it's totally devoid of any attracting force. When you do, you'll truly understand the nature of the *citta*. When there's nothing left inside the *citta*, then there'll be no attachment to the *citta*. The *kilesa* that causes this attachment is called *avijjā*. It causes the *citta* to become attached to itself and become egoistic. After *avijjā* has been destroyed then the ego will disappear. There'll be nothing left to attach to. The *citta* will become like outer space devoid of any attracting force. It will live in this world devoid of any attachment for all living beings and the five *khandhas* like the body, feelings, perceptions, thoughts and sense awareness that appear and disappear as it is their nature to do. They don't know what they are. The body doesn't know that it's the body. It's the *citta* who calls it the body and becomes attached to it. The same with feelings, perceptions, thoughts and sense awareness. After the *citta*'s delusion has been removed it'll realise that everything is *aniccāṃ*, *dukkhāṃ*,

and *anattā* and realise that it had been deluded all along. When it sees this truth, it'll let go of them and will become empty like outer space, existing in solitude. This is the solitary existence of this indescribable knowingness. Nobody can describe it correctly. But the one who experiences it knows what it is and knows it's impossible to describe it. You've got to practise hard. This *svākkhāta* or well-taught *Dhamma* is genuine and fresh. It's the middle way of practice, *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*, that's very suitable for the eradication of all kinds of *kilesas*, at all times.

Looking Always at the Heart

July 23rd, 1979

The diseases of the heart are chronic. They can easily flame up and it is very hard to curb them. So as we gradually correct and remedy these diseases, we should at least try to get some calm in the process, so that the *citta* can be cool and peaceful. This is good and proper for us as *bhikkhus*. If we cannot find any calm in our hearts, then we will be like the laypeople, and there will only be restlessness and agitation inside the heart. We must therefore focus our attention on the truth and *Dhamma* of the Lord *Buddha*. In every text, the Lord *Buddha* told us to take care of and restrain the *citta* and the sense organs. When the sense organs come into contact with the sense objects, one should not delight in them, like forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects.

Listen! The Lord *Buddha* said that we should not take delight in them. We must take this to heart. The *Dhamma* has been well taught, and what it teaches has no mistake in it. It teaches that we should not take delight in forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects when they come into contact with the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body. And how can we practise so

that we don't take delight in these things? We need to have discipline and control, and investigation to prevent the *citta* from taking delight in or having aversion for them. Or else we cannot be called practitioners. We must constantly concentrate on taking care of the *citta*, for this is the duty of the practitioner - one who takes care of his heart. Apart from taking care of the *citta*, one must also nourish it. This nourishment is the calming of the *citta* or the calming of the heart, providing the heart with coolness and peace. Then we must also investigate with *paññā*, for the purpose of uprooting those harmful things inside the heart. This is the way of giving nourishment to the heart by our diligent effort in our various modes of exertion.

I was a young *bhikkhu* once, and was possessed with all sorts of *kilesas*. This I have never forgotten. I don't remember much about the *dukkha* that I experienced as a layperson, but I remember very well the *dukkha* that arose in my heart as a *bhikkhu*, and this experience of *dukkha* taught me a very good lesson. When I was studying the texts, all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava* never seemed to appear or become apparent, but when I began to practise all of these *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava* came up from nowhere. They really gave me a strong fight and I had to struggle with them with all that I had. During the days of my practice, I could never gain any

ease and comfort while doing nothing. This is part of my temperament. Whatever I do I really commit myself to, and the determination that I had for *Dhamma* was not just mere determination. I was determined for the *Dhamma* of deliverance from *dukkha*, and this determination was firmly embedded inside my heart. Before I took up the practice of the *Sāsana Dhamma*, I was already convinced that it is possible to attain the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*. There was no doubt in this because I had a strong belief in the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*, though I was not totally certain of my conviction.

But when I went to Tan *Ajaan* Mun and heard his *Dhamma*, I was then totally convinced and believed in the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna* - totally one hundred per cent, was the belief. All my doubts about the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna* had been dispelled because Tan *Ajaan* Mun had shown them to me in every respect. And so my determination was total, without having anything to bring it down. So as it was like that, my exertion and diligent effort were at their maximum. So when I took up the practice, I really concentrated on my work of *bhāvanā* so that I could get to see the marvels of the *citta* again. I had experienced this only three times in all the time that I had spent studying the

texts, and I was really determined to master and take hold of this *citta*. I would not retreat, but struggled, coped and combatted the *kilesas* that had been ruling over the heart for so long. I had to do it to the utmost of my ability by putting my life at stake. Therefore, my exertion had to be very intense and I had to experience a lot of *dukkha* and hardship.

The *dukkha* that arises from one's exertion is similar to the *dukkha* that a boxer experiences in the ring. He doesn't pay much attention to it because he is being very careful and on his guard, and is totally committed in his effort in knocking down his opponent. So he is hardly bothered by this *dukkha*. It was the same way with me - I forgot all about this *dukkha*, the *dukkha* that arose from my exertion, and did not even think about it. This was because my exertion was so intense that I was constantly fighting and fighting. And it cannot be beyond your ability, so please listen well and take this to heart. All of us have the *kilesas* in us, and we have been carrying them with us for countless lives. It is my conviction that as long as the *citta* is still possessed with *avijjā* inside it, it will always continue on to take up new births, and then die again and again. I believe in this conviction firmly,

and nobody in the whole universe, in the entire three worlds, could ever come and contravene this belief, because I strongly believe that when one dies then one also takes up birth. This is what I believe, and I have found verification of it as I have practised and attained the more subtle *Dhamma*. I could see the cause and the source of birth, ageing, sickness and death, and what is the cause?

It is the same old cause that functioned in the past, and this is *Avijjā paccayā saṅkhārā* – Ignorance causes the arising of *saṅkhārā*. It cannot be anything else but this. We have all experienced *dukkha*, so we should not see anything good in this world but just the *Buddha*, *Dhamma*, and *Saṅgha*, or in short, just the *Dhamma*. It is only the *Dhamma*, the teaching of the Lord *Buddha* that can uplift us from *dukkha* through our exertion in applying this *Dhamma*, using it to help and uplift ourselves. Please don't ever imagine that you can find any marvel or rarity from anything in this world, to the extent where you totally forget about your exertion, the truth, and *Dhamma*, and turning this truth and *Dhamma*, which is the most supreme, into something useless or worthless, by seeing those things that have no worth or value as the real essence. This is a misperception, and is the understanding which follows the commands of the *kilesas*, which we have

always followed in the past without ourselves being aware of it.

Dhamma must always be opposing the *kilesas* because the *kilesas* always oppose *Dhamma*. For this reason we must accumulate and develop *satipaṇṇā* so that we have enough of it to combat the *kilesas*. *Satipaṇṇā* is the means or tool with which to combat the *kilesas*. Not a single type of *kilesa* can surpass *sati*, *pañṇā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya*, diligent effort. You must be firm and tough because you are a man and a *bhikkhu*. Be earnest and resolute. Don't be weak or discouraged. Both discouragement and weakness are the *kilesas*. They are not the *Dhamma*. This is not the way of *Dhamma* and this way of thinking is not in line with *Dhamma*. This kind of thinking is on the side of *samudaya*, which will cause more *kilesas* to afflict us with more *dukkha*, thus creating more discouragement in us. The result that we seek will never appear, and it will be contrary to our purpose and intention, and our determination for *Dhamma*. The *kilesas* are always permeating and hiding within us, so we cannot be off-guard. This is because as soon as we are off-guard they will hit us. Remember this point well because the *kilesas* are always waiting. As soon as *satipaṇṇā* is off-guard, then the *kilesas* will emerge. As soon as we are off-guard, then *saṅkhāra* will begin to

concoct.

As far as *saññā* is concerned, it is a lot more subtle than *saṅkhāra*, as far as I can observe this *khandha*. When *saṅkhāra* concocts, it stirs suddenly, but *saññā* doesn't stir at all. As one establishes the *khandhas* to become still and quiet, and one begins to observe to see which *khandha* will arise first, *saññā* *khandha* will slowly permeate out like ink permeating across a piece of blotting paper. It slowly flows out until it creates a picture - a mental image, and then it will cause *saṅkhāra* to begin to concoct the various stories following the image that has been created. All of these pictures or images that are created by *saññā*, all come out by themselves. *Saññā* draws up the images by itself, and then *saṅkhāra* takes hold of these images and begins to concoct the various concepts and stories about them. This is how it will happen when we are off our guard.

If it is hard, we should endure it. We should not be concerned about this difficulty. As practitioners we should never be bothered by the hardships that arise from our exertion. The Lord *Buddha* went before us, and he experienced all sorts of hardships and difficulties. So when he taught the world the *Dhamma*, he selected and refined the teaching and came up with the

majjhimā paṭipadā, the MiddleWay of Practice. This is the shortest and most direct way. Please follow this path, no matter how difficult or easy it may be, for this is the shortest and most direct way to go. Let us not be concerned with the hardship for if we tread the roundabout ways, we may eventually get lost and not reach our destination. We must stick to this path. We must make our hearts brave and courageous. Be tactful and versatile, and watch out for the *kilesas*, for they will whisper to us right inside the *citta*. Please don't ever think that the *kilesas* are anywhere else but right inside the *citta*. In the scriptures there are only to be found the names of the *kilesas*, or the names of *Dhamma*, or the names of greed, hatred, and delusion, or the names of *rāga-taṇhā*, be it in the Book of the Discourses, or the Discipline, or the *Abhidhamma*. They only contain the names of *Dhamma*, and the names of all sorts of *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsaṃsa* that manifest themselves inside the hearts of all sentient beings.

The Lord *Buddha* expounded and pointed to the heart, but a few years after he had passed away, the *Dhamma* was collected and put into the scriptures so that it could be used as a signpost pointing out the way. We then study these texts and become attached to them by taking up the knowledge that we have committed into memory as our own knowledge. One thinks that

one is wise and discerning, although the *kilesas* are constantly consuming one's heart, and burning it worse than an erupting volcano. Such is the way when we commit things into memory. It can only increase the *kilesas* by letting us think that now we know the truth, and that we are very wise from doing a lot of studying. But this is the wrong way of learning. The correct way is to learn about the names of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava*, and the technique and method of coping and correcting and getting rid of these *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava*. Then we must take up this learning and apply it inside our hearts, for this is where all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśavas* are.

Where are *rāga* - lustful desire, *dosa* - hatred and anger, if they are not found within the heart? They are found in the heart, and this is where they exhibit or manifest themselves. Where are cravings and ambitions? The texts or the scriptures never exhibit the greed, hatred, and delusion for us to see, but all of these things actually exhibit themselves right within our hearts. They are right here, so we must turn around and hit them right at this point. The *kilesas* are found here. Don't look in the scriptures, for that is merely a compass pointing towards the heart. I am not speaking in contempt. There are both the internal and external *Dhammas*. The texts are merely the external *Dhamma*

which serves as a compass or a signpost pointing back towards the heart so that we can practise and develop this heart. That is really the message of the texts. Don't turn into worms eating up the paper. Let's do it at this point because this is where the Lord *Buddha* attained his Enlightenment.

Be courageous and joyful. In your practice you must always use *sati* and *paññā* - mindfulness and wisdom, because they are the most important weapons. In your exertion *sati* is the foremost. It is the primary weapon. Even in the beginning stages of practice, you must depend on *sati* as your primary weapon and when you begin to investigate with *paññā*, you must also depend on *sati*. That is why *sati* is always vital. That is why the Lord *Buddha* said that *sati* is always needed in every circumstance. The Lord *Buddha* said all circumstances - there is no exception at all. Whatever you do, whether it is the internal or external work, you must always have mindfulness. You really must try to develop your *sati*. Don't be interested in or pay attention to other things. Don't ever have the idea that forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects, or other people, are harmful to us. They are merely the creations or concoctions of the heart that create images and concepts to fool ourselves, bother and disturb our heart. The one who really stirs up trouble is

the heart itself. It is the heart that creates all sorts of troubling affairs.

You must always look at this point. When you have continuously observed and watched this point, then you will eventually come to realise that all the troubles that have been created come out from this point, this you will find out for yourselves in the heart. Once the heart comes to calm, then all the troubles also disappear. During that time the world is not apparent, although the world is there, but the heart doesn't give it a thought. Because at this time the heart or knowingness or awareness remains just with itself, and it doesn't concoct any concepts about anything. It is likewise with the five *khandhas* that are found within ourselves. Once the *citta* does not form any concepts about them, then they become just like any other objects that we can see with our eyes. They are like the four elements - the earth, water, air, and fire. These things form no concepts of themselves. It is we who form these concepts and give them names or labels like calling them earth, water, air, and fire. That thing is a mountain, a tree, a man, or a woman. We just keep on forming concepts without end. This is the way of building up insanity because there is no mindfulness. But when the *citta* doesn't form any concepts, and is very cautious and watching itself very carefully, then it is as if there is nothing there.

Then we can really have fun in analysing and investigating the main cause that creates all the problems inside the heart. But if the *citta* still cherishes the various concepts and thoughts about this and that, then this is really the work of the *kilesas* pushing us outward. The *kilesas* fool us and lead us to go out and be involved with the external things, rather than being concerned with the internal things. They fool us and lead us to go and chase after shadows. The real *kilesas* are found within the heart but we never have the chance to capture them. That is why we must concentrate all our effort right at this point. If we cannot yet pinpoint the spot where the *citta* is concocting the various concepts, then we must depend on our meditation object to take us there. Be solely aware of just the meditation object and nothing else. It can be '*Buddho*', '*Buddho*', '*Buddho*', or anything else, but the point is to only be concentrated on that particular object. Constantly focus your attention just on this meditation object, so that eventually your awareness will become continuous. Then the flow of the *citta* that goes out to the various objects will now begin to be drawn back, as it cannot withstand the power of discipline and control. This flow of the *citta* will steadily return back to the *citta* itself which will then calm down. One will gain coolness, and one will be able to see this very clearly. This is one aspect of

practice, and it is the same way with the investigation of the body.

Every piece and part of this body is *asubha* and *paṭikkūla* - loathsome and filthy. This is the truth. Our perception and view that runs contrary to *Dhamma*, the seeing that this body is 'I' and 'Mine', as people and animals, this is precisely the *kilesas*. You must, therefore, try to investigate and analyse this body, in both aspects of *paṭikkūla*, or filthiness, and the *dhātu* or elements. And what are the elements? They are the earth, water, air, and fire, and *mano* - the knowing element which is the heart. You should also investigate that. As far as people are concerned, after they have been born and die, does the body have any value or worth once it becomes a corpse? Is there any value in a dead person? There is none. It cannot even compare with a fish. When a fish dies, one can take it to the market, and similarly with all the other kinds of animals. Every piece and part of them becomes useful after they die because it can be sold in the market. But with people, once they die, their bodies are not useful at all. In order to be useful, we must, therefore, do what we can now whilst we are still living, especially we who are *bhikkhus*, because we are of a special breed. Our duty and work is to cultivate and develop ourselves so that we can release

ourselves from the *kilesas* and *āśava*. And we have full support from the laypeople without them coming here to bother us at all. You must therefore exert to your fullest. Be resolute and earnest.

In your investigation of death, you must investigate so that you can really get to see the truth of it. In this whole world of *saṃsāra*, every person, every man, every woman, every animal, must all die. Wherever they may be, there is always a cemetery. Even right here where we are sitting there is a cemetery, for there are all sorts of little animals or organisms that die all over the place. It is just that we never think about it in that way. We don't think of it as a cemetery. We just call it a *sālā* or assembly hall. In our bodies there can be found many organisms living inside us, like the germs for instance - they are one form of animal. And inside this body there is nothing that one can call attractive or beautiful. You must investigate and analyse to see according to the truth of the Lord *Buddha*. The *kilesas* tend to see it as something beautiful, as people, as animals, as 'I', as 'mine', and this attachment to this view, our *upādāna*, is much more tenaciously fixed than a nail driven into a piece of wood. It cannot be easily dislodged. This is because of the influence of the *kilesas* or our misperception of things. We must, therefore, uproot and correct this misperception which is

truly the work of the *kilesas* with the *Dhamma* of the Lord *Buddha*, using *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya* - diligent effort. We must get to see it clearly. We have to establish our perception so that we really see this body passing away because death is the undeniable truth.

So why can't the *citta* accept this truth? What is the cause or the reason for it? And it is the same way with *paṭikkūla* or filthiness - it is all over this body, and it is also the truth. It is really that way, so why cannot the *citta* see it like that? What is the reason? You must therefore probe and examine until you can really see it as such. You must open it up and reveal it with your *sati* and *paññā*. This work and undertaking is your work, and nobody can help you do this work. Your teacher can merely point out the various means and techniques of doing it. In doing this work, you must do it yourself. *Attāhi attano nātho* – you are your own refuge. When you have heard the instruction from your teacher and learned the various techniques, then you must use and apply these techniques in your practice. The benefit that you gain while listening to the discourse of your teacher, is that either you will gain calm, or you will learn the various techniques and methods of practice. But other than that you must help yourselves. This is essential. You should really get into it.

I really have great concern for all of you, and that is why I always have to give you instruction. Although it can be hard on me, I try to struggle along. We are living in a Buddhist country which is the most suitable environment for us to strive for the elimination of *dukkha* by the means of our exertion and this is our sole duty as *bhikkhus*. I try my best to prevent other people from coming to disturb your exertion in your practice, because the most vital factor for a practitioner who is striving for the realisation and penetration of truth is in his exertion that is, in his walking *caṅkama* and sitting in *samādhi bhāvanā*, having mindfulness as the most important tool in that exertion. This is more vital than anything else. I do not see any other work in the world that is more weighty than the work that we are doing, such that I could be led into doing anything else, like building projects that might interrupt the exertion and ruin this most important work. I only do this extracurricular work when it is extremely necessary. But if it is not really necessary, I would not do it or allow anyone else to do it.

I want you to do this work. That is, you should concentrate all of your effort that you have spent in doing other things, on the work of overcoming and uprooting the *kilesas*. When we have many *kilesas* in ourselves, then we experience a lot of *dukkha*, and this *dukkha* is caused by nothing else but the *kilesas*

right within our hearts. Please really take this to heart, and do keep in mind that the intensity of your *dukkha* is proportional to the intensity of the *kilesas*. There is nothing else that can cause the heart trouble and hardship but just the *kilesas*. Please listen well and take this to heart and really see the menace of the *kilesas*. Then you will be able to exert to your fullest. It is the only way to catch up with the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava*, which have been so powerful and domineering for such a long time, and have been so for countless aeons.

So are we still willing to go on being born and dying, again and again? In these three worlds of existence, who is the one who stands out as the most extraordinary? There is nobody else but the Lord *Buddha* - he was the first. For he had truly discerned and realised the peril of the *kilesas*. Apart from him, nobody could perceive this. No one could perceive the danger of *lobha*, *dosa*, and *moha*, greed, hatred, and delusion, or *rāga-taṇhā*, lustful desire. Everybody was obsessed with and deceived by them, and had to wander in the cycle of births and deaths over and over again without being able to find anything definite or certain. The only thing that was certain was their *kamma*. But again, what they had done - that is, what kind of *kamma* they had made could not be of any

guarantee either, because they did not know what they had done or kept an account of their deeds.

The Lord *Buddha* saw the danger of greed, hatred, and delusion, and he exerted to the utmost of his ability, putting his life at stake and striving and struggling against the *kilesas*, until finally attaining victory and becoming the world's greatest Teacher. He attained the pure heart, and this is the knowledge and realisation of the Lord *Buddha*, which differs from the knowledge and realisation found in the three worlds of existence. No one else could have attained this knowledge that can be used to cope with, suppress, or defeat the *kilesas*, and all those things which are harmful to the heart, as the Lord *Buddha* did. He then taught us how to achieve it. We have all set up our determination to come here to listen to the *Dhamma* of the Lord *Buddha* so that we can take it up and practise it, and it is only we who can practise it to the utmost of our ability.

You must therefore commit yourselves to this work. I would really like to see you experience the calm that will arise from your meditation practice. Furthermore, I would also like to see you use *paññā* in your investigation, following what I have

explained to you concerning the internal and external objects, or the investigation of the body. But if you are inclined to investigate the external objects, then you must set them up in front of your mind. Whether it is the form of a man or a woman, you must take the form that is the most detrimental or harmful to your chastity. In the beginning, if you are not certain of yourself, then you should not set up this form too close to you, but instead put it at quite a distance. You must establish this form and make it break down, decompose, go rotten, and disperse. Establish it with the vultures and dogs scavenging and devouring this body. Set up as many forms or bodies as you like. Establish all of them so that they appear loathsome, filthy, and as a living cemetery. Then you must turn this inwards into your own body, and then compare your own body with those bodies. You have to investigate this again and again and again.

You have to coerce the *citta* to traverse this path. You must not let it go out to perceive all the attractive and pretty things, for is it really pretty, beautiful, or attractive? Of course not, there is no such thing! This is merely looking for trouble. The *kilesas* create trouble for us and we tend to believe in them. Where is this charm and beauty? All there

is is just a collection of filth. We must look into this filth so that we can see it very clearly, following the way that the Lord *Buddha* described it to us. You should really investigate it. Then you should bring it closer and closer, at the time when having investigated you notice that the *citta* has become bold and courageous. Move it closer and closer towards you, so that you can see it very clearly. Next, you must form the image of beauty, and spread the image of *asubha*, or loathsomeness, all over it, similar to the way you might pour petrol over something and then set a match to it, letting it go up in flames. This is the technique of *satipaññā*, and it is up to each individual to come up with it, for they are all Magga or Path to enlightenment.

Sarikhāra is concoction. If it is the *kilesas* that influence this concoction of *sarikhāra*, then it falls on the side of *samudaya*, the creator of *dukkha*. But if *sarikhāra* is influenced to concoct the truth of *Dhamma*, then it is the means of correcting and overcoming the *kilesas*, similar to the way one analyses and investigates the parts of the body in their various aspects of *asubha*, loathsomeness, or *paṭikkūla* - filthiness, as a living cemetery, and as it decomposes, until it eventually breaks down into the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. These *sarikhāra* fall on the side of *Magga*, the Path. This is the means of correcting and uprooting the

perception of beauty of an individual, of people, or of animals, so that one can see them decompose and break down into the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. How then can one have any affection for this body? It is merely earth, water, air, and fire. It is the same way with a pile of corpses - does anyone have any affection for these corpses? When one looks at these corpses, there can only be sadness and sorrow, aversion and creepy feelings for them. How then can one see this body as attractive and beautiful? One must investigate this again and again repeatedly. *Satipaṇṇā* must force one to make the *citta* tread on this path of investigation continually, and then one will be fighting and battling with the *kilesas*. If we only investigate this way occasionally, once in a long while, then it is not possible to consider this to be the work of investigation to combat the *kilesas*. This is useless. This is not the way of exerting for the sake of *Dhamma* and the truth.

As a follower of the Lord *Buddha*, you must be earnest and resolute - really commit yourselves in this work. There are many techniques of *paṇṇā* that we can come up with. If we can calm the *citta* with the means of *sati* and *paṇṇā*, then we must do so, and if we can calm the *citta* with the use of a *parikamma* object like '*Buddho*', then we must use that particular method. Or if we can calm down the *citta* by our command, that is, if we can

calm the *citta* down any time we want to, then it means that we already know the way of getting the *citta* to calm down. Then you must investigate with *paññā*. You must not remain idle and lie clinging to this state of calm. I was stuck in this state of calm before, and I have told you this many times, so I shall not repeat it again. If one clings onto one's *samādhi*, then one can only gain just this *samādhi*, and one will never be able to progress along the Path. But when one begins to develop *paññā*, then one begins to see all the things that come into contact and be involved with oneself, and one can manage to cut them down and get rid of them. Then one can search and dig for them further, struggle with them, cope with them, and eventually destroy them, with the means of our *sati* and *paññā*. This is the way of developing our *satipaññā* to become strong, piercing, bright, sharp, and absorbed in this investigation, and it is up to each individual practitioner to devise his own different techniques of *sati* and *paññā*.

What has been elaborated here is only presented in general terms, and it is up to each practitioner to come up with the different specific means of coping with his problem. When you have come up with your own technique, then this becomes your own possession, and you should not let what the teacher has presented to

you slip out of your hands and go down the drain, for this will be of no benefit to you. You must take what the teacher has given you as your source of investment in your business of practising, so that you can come up with more profit. No matter how much one has studied in higher education, one cannot help but become the tools of the *kilesas* if one doesn't have any *Dhamma* inside one's heart. The *kilesas* can really enjoy using one who has learned a lot and studied a lot. When there is no *Dhamma* inside the heart of one who has learned and studied a lot, and who is an influential person, he can only create a lot of damage and trouble for others and himself, without him realising it.

This is because one's *lobha* or greed, and one's ambition, and one's delusion in one's power and position of influence, blocks one from seeing these things and from being aware that one has done wrong to other people. But if one has some *Dhamma*, then one must know. Why be so greedy? When one dies, one just lies in a coffin. The *bhikkhus* just come and chant the *kusalā Dhamma*, the meritorious *Dhamma*. But once the body has been cremated, all that is left is just bones and ashes. So why be obsessed with greed? When one has enough to eat and a place to live, that really is enough. Why then be so greedy? Greed never makes people happy, and neither does one's hatred and anger

make one happy. It is the same way with *rāga-taṇhā*, sensual lust. When it arises, it really makes people struggle like a dog in heat. Where can any happiness be found? But when all these things disappear, then one doesn't grasp or struggle for things. When the *citta* calms down, it will not be grasping at things. And when one has totally got rid of all of these disturbing influences, then there will be no grasping or struggling inside one's heart at all. Nothing can disturb or bother one anymore, and this is what the Lord *Buddha* means by freedom.

One can then see very clearly that what was harmful to oneself was one's greed, one's delusion, one's hatred, and one's sensual lust. They are like heaps of fire or like volcanoes erupting and burning one's heart constantly. Before we never saw their harm, but now we can see it very clearly. Once one has learned the nature of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava*, and has dispersed and scattered them from within one's heart, then wherever one looks outside and sees other people, one cannot help but understand every action that people take, because one now understands the driving force that urges people and oneself to do these things, because they are of the same nature. The things that people do are usually driven by the *kilesas*, but they don't realise that. You must, therefore, try to learn the

deceptions and tricks of the *kilesas* within your hearts. Get to see them very clearly. You must be very careful in observing your heart - take care of it well.

When greed, hatred, and delusion, and *rāga-taṇhā* arise, please realise that they arise out of the heart, because it is the heart that creates them. It is the heart that conjures them up, and it is the heart that is always in the state of hunger. You must look at the heart and investigate what it is hungry for. You have to analyse the object of hunger so that the heart will get to know the nature of this object and then lose its curiosity and hunger for it. For instance with *rūpa* or form, the form of a woman is inimical and harmful to a man. One must investigate this form or body to really see the truth of it - not that it is a man or a woman, but that it is just made up of various bodily parts, like the hair of the head, the hair of the body, the nails, the teeth, the skin, the flesh and the sinews, for example. Apart from that, there is just filth all over the body. How can there be any beauty in it? Then one must mentally decompose the body. When a person dies, his body slowly decomposes, and becomes rotten and fetid, and eventually scatters and disperses into earth, water, air, and fire.

Get the heart to see this very clearly. Then this misperception, this presumption and assumption, will steadily diminish. It will lessen and lessen. The truth will increasingly become more distinct - the truth of *asubha*, loathsomeness, *paṭikkūla*, filthiness, and the truth of the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. They will all become obvious. The truth about the four elements is the truth on a very subtle level. When one has entered into the knowledge of the four elements, then one has entered into the subtle truth. What then can come and bother the *citta*? This is the way of correcting the *citta*. This is the way of correcting ourselves. We must take a good hold of *sati* and *paññā*. We must not remain idle. We must come up with the various techniques and means and methods that will develop ourselves.

I really want to see all of you experience the *Dhamma*, for it is within a hand's reach - because it is right within our hearts. The attainment of deliverance from all of these things is right within the heart, and all the *kilesas* are also found right within this heart. The *sati* and *paññā*, mindfulness and wisdom, that will penetrate and pierce the *kilesas* are also found right within ourselves. But why can't we pierce and penetrate the *kilesas*? On the other hand, when the *kilesas* want to pierce us,

they seem to be able to do so very efficiently. When we want to pierce the *kilesas*, all we can do is to poke at their shadows, not the real *kilesas* themselves. We have always been deceived by the *kilesas* to go after something else other than them. The real *kilesas* are right within our hearts. The deceptions are found right within our hearts, but the *kilesas* that deceive us draw up the pictures and images and project them to the outside, and fool us to go and chase after shadows. So we never seem to be able to achieve anything. We must now turn around to look inside to find where the principal culprit is. It is right within the heart. When one attains calm, it is inside the heart, because when the *kilesas* are subdued, they are subdued within the heart, and *satipaṇṇā*, the tools to curb the *kilesas*, are also found within the heart. Be really earnest, and really get into it. When we have attained some calm, then it will be possible for us to see clearly what the *citta* is like. We will be able to differentiate between the *citta* and the *khandhas*. Even though it might not be clearly distinct, we will at least see the difference between them.

The calmness, cool-heartedness, and brightness of the *citta* will become apparent corresponding to the intensity of our exertion in correcting and overcoming the *kilesas*. The enormous change in the *citta* will come when one begins to investigate with *pañṇā*. The

more the *kilesas* are being eliminated by *paññā*, then the more skilful and adaptable will be the *citta*. The conditions of the *citta* namely feelings, perceptions, thoughts, and awareness will steadily change and become more and more subtle as we progress in our practice and exertion. All of these are *sammati* or mundane, and until all of the things that are involved with the *citta*, even the most subtle things like *avijjā*, have been eradicated, then the *citta* will cease to exhibit any changes. It will now remain stable and unchanging. As we progress in our practice, the change will steadily occur, following the change of the *Sammatti Dhammas* found within the *citta*. There will only be change on the good side, and will become more and more subtle. This is because good is *sammati*, and so is evil, and so is wholesomeness and unwholesomeness. They are all *sammati*. When one has come to this subtle level, one will understand this. And once one has attained and passed beyond this stage, then one will become one who has relinquished or let go of both good and evil. It means that now one has let go of all *sammati*, both the good and evil, the coarse and the subtle. One has now let go totally of all *sammati* - none of this *sammati* is found within the *citta* anymore. All that is left is just the natural state of knowingness.

Therefore, I am not very certain about the translation of

the *Pāli* verse which says *Sacitta pariyodapanam* which translates as 'Purify your *citta* until it attains the state of luminosity'. If it had been translated as 'Purify your *citta* to the state of purity', then I could accept this wholeheartedly. Furthermore, consider the *Dhamma* which says 'Behold, *bhikkhus*, the true original *citta* is luminous, but the *kilesas* act like visitors, which make the *citta* become dull'. The Lord *Buddha* did actually describe this true original *citta* as the original *citta* of the *Vatṭa Cakka*, the Cycle of Birth and Death. The Lord *Buddha* did not say that the true original *citta* is purified, and for what reason? This is because the original *citta* of each individual has *avijjā* deeply embedded within it, without any exception. That is why the Lord *Buddha* said 'Behold, *bhikkus*, the true original *citta* is luminous'. But it was due to the *kilesas* that came in, which means that whatever comes into contact with the *citta*, the *citta* then takes up that object to be its own or itself. This is what is meant by the *kilesas* coming in as a visitor. The Lord *Buddha* spoke in *sammatti* or mundane terms.

But when one has purified the *citta* until reaching the state of purity, then this state of luminosity ceases to be an issue. This is because this state of luminosity which is stated in the *Dhammapada*, must be met with by the practitioner who will come across it. When he has arrived at this state of luminosity, the *citta* that is luminous, then he has come face to face with *avijjā*, or the *avijjā citta*.

This luminosity, or the magnificence of *avijjā*, is the most subtle level of the *kilesa*. *Avijjā* is the most clever and most deceptive of the *kilesas*. So when one has attained that state, then the *citta* becomes very luminous and very bright. One then becomes deluded with that state of luminosity. This thing is really like a trap or a deception. It is not the real thing. It is only after this luminosity has broken apart that one attains the state of purity, the purified *citta*. This purified *citta* doesn't take up any more birth, but the luminous *citta* will still take up birth. It is always ready to take up birth, because this luminosity itself is the creator of birth. But once this luminosity has been dispersed, then there is nothing left within the *citta*. During practice, as one progresses to the different stages, at the stage of *samādhi*, there is one form of calm. It has its own foundation, the firmer the *samādhi* of the *citta*, the firmer will be its foundation. It is not easily shaken by anything, and for this reason *samādhi* is a very good nourishment for the *citta*. The *citta* will not be restless or agitated, or hunger for anything, because it has *samādhi* as its nourishment. For this reason, the Lord *Buddha* taught that one must now develop *paññā* because now the *citta* is full and content. One must take this *citta* which is now full and content with *samādhi*, and put it to work by investigating with *paññā*, for it will then be able to perform its duty at its fullest.

It is not like the *citta* that is still hungry for other things, because when it investigates in the way of *paññā*, it will all turn into *saññā-ārammaṇa*, memory. The only exception to this is when one is driven into a corner and one has no other means, then one must use *paññā* to do the investigation on some occasions which I have discussed before, in what we call '*Paññā* develops *samādhī*'. This is when one is restless and agitated, and one cannot calm down the *citta*. One then has to investigate and find out the cause of this agitation and restlessness. This then becomes a special case, a special occasion. Where is this *citta* going? One now must begin to investigate and dig into it, not allowing the *citta* to go out of the confines of the *kammaṭṭhāna*, the forty meditation subjects. One must keep on probing, examining, and investigating, until eventually the *citta* calms down due to the power of *paññā*. One will become very bold and courageous from this practice of *paññā* that can coerce the *citta* to enter into calm. When one withdraws from this calm, one feels sublime and majestic, and this is one case of *samādhī*.

The reason for discussing this is because it really happens within the circle of practice for some people, although it might not happen to others. It happened to me, and that is why I have written about it and discussed it. I wrote about my own experiences, and

there were no fabrications there. That is how it actually happened. It was when the *citta* became restless and agitated, and when I tried to investigate any aspect of *Dhamma*, the *citta* would not accept it. It kept on going in a different direction, so I had to be tough and strong in trying to discipline the *citta*. I had to investigate with *paññā*, using it to round up the *citta*. This is similar to being in a close encounter or in close combat, until the *citta* cowers and calms down. This manner of calming the *citta* with *paññā* can really bring the *citta* to be tame. When the *citta* enters into calm, it enters with boldness and bravery. And when it withdraws from the state of calm, it does so with courage and it becomes very grand and magnificent. This is one special case, but generally it is the way of *samādhi* develops *paññā*. *Samādhi* is the support for *paññā* because *samādhi* is a good nourishment for the *citta*. It is the support for *paññā* that lets that *paññā* keep functioning and doing its work without hungering for other things, so that one's investigation doesn't turn into *saññā-ārammaṇa* – memory, because the *citta* will now perform its function as it has been told, and this is the purpose of *samādhi*. It is one form of foundation.

Now, when one begins to do a lot of investigation with *paññā*, this foundation of *samādhi* seems to have completely disappeared. But this is not comparable to one

who does not have any *samādhī* at all. This is because the *citta*'s total awareness now revolves around *paññā*. The awareness of the *citta* doesn't remain with the *citta* so that it forms *samādhī*, for it has now come out from the power base of *samādhī* and now turns to *paññā*; so now the base of *samādhī* that one used to have has totally disappeared. Where does it go? All of it has now gone and concentrated on the development of *paññā*, because the *citta* now does not want to take any rest. So when one wants to enter into calm, one must really force the *citta* to come and rest in *samādhī*. When one has to do this, the *citta* will indeed enter into *samādhī*, but one must really force it to do so. Once the *citta* no longer goes against our will, then it will have to follow our command. This is because the *satipaññā* of this level is capable of controlling the *citta*, since at this stage there is nothing except the *citta* and *sati* and *paññā*. There is nothing else to become involved with it. There is nothing that can come and drag away the *citta*, so that when one has to try to coerce the *citta*, it really means that one has to drag the *citta* away from the work that it has been doing. One has to do this dragging away with *sati*, so that it can come and rest itself in the state of calm.

I had to control and master the *citta* to remain calm by using the *parikamma* object of *Buddho, Buddho, Buddho*. I haven't forgotten this because I had to repeat it very

quickly, or else the *citta* would go out and do more work. Not that it would have gone out to be immersed in the pleasure of anything, it wouldn't. The *citta* had no interest in anything else at all. The *citta* at this stage has no interest in anything in the whole universe. It is now totally immersed in the pleasure of doing the investigation with *paññā*, and that is why at this stage it is called *uddhacca*, restlessness. That is, it is too engrossed in this investigation, and this is one of the higher fetters, the *saṃyojana*, for now the *citta* has gone overboard. Instead of resting in the calm of *samādhī* so as to replenish itself and recuperate and serve as the base for *paññā*, it doesn't do so. But when it gets too exhausted, it will eventually have to come and rest in *samādhī*, when it cannot go any further from exhaustion. It must take a rest. So when it gets too exhausted and tired to the point when it cannot go on anymore, then it must return and rest in the state of *samādhī*.

After having rested long enough to gain strength and become very light without the burden of the work, then it will just get right back on to the work very energetically, and become wholly concentrated on the work of investigation. At this stage, the base or the foundation of *samādhī* is no longer there to be found. From my own experience, this is what happens. The base of *samādhī* was there during the time when I concentrated my whole effort into

the development of calm and *samādhī*. But then I was not interested in the investigation of *paññā*. But when I began to concentrate on my investigation with *paññā*, then that base of *samādhī* entirely disappeared. As far as the luminous *citta* is concerned, this is not the base of *samādhī* - it is something else. The more *paññā* can cleanse the *citta*, then the more luminous the *citta* becomes. When it is the time for it to be empty, this emptiness can be seen very clearly. I could see this emptiness - the *citta* being empty of the body, the *citta* being empty of everything else. Whatever I looked at appeared like shadows; they were just like shadowy images. Looking at a whole mountain, or a solid rock, they just appeared like shadowy images. The greater part of the *citta* is empty, and it seems that there is no solid rock - just an image of the rock. Walking on the ground, it also appears shadowy - the *citta* appeared to have penetrated it. It just happened that way.

And as far as the body was concerned, it was comparable to the globe of a lantern, for inside it was very bright and very clear. This is the emptiness of the base of *samādhī*, or the emptiness of the base of the *citta*. It does not really feel right to describe it as the emptiness of the base of *samādhī*, but when I describe it as the emptiness of the base of the *citta*, that does feel right. That is, I feel very positive about this description. In the state of *samādhī*,

it is also empty, but when one begins to focus the *citta* on the external things, then it is not empty anymore. But when it is empty by virtue of the base of the *citta*, then wherever one looks at or focuses on the *citta*, everything appears to be empty. But it is not empty of itself. When the time comes for the *citta* to finish its work, then it has to come back and investigate itself until it becomes totally empty. Before, wherever one looks, one sees everything as empty, but oneself is not empty. One is still carrying the burden. One is still carrying the full load of *avijjā* and *taṇhā*. Speaking of this *taṇhā*, it is not the coarser kind of *taṇhā*. This *taṇhā* or desire that we are speaking of refers to the affection for, the intimacy with, and the attachment to the brightness and luminosity of the *citta*.

One must now investigate at this point. When all this luminosity has broken up, then it truly becomes empty. There are three kinds of emptiness: the emptiness of *samādhi*, the emptiness of the base of the *citta*, and this ultimate emptiness in which everything is empty. Everything external is empty and the base of the *citta* is empty and the *citta* itself is also empty. All problems have disappeared. Then there is nothing else to investigate, and one knows this within oneself. One has no doubt or questions about what *sandiṭṭhiko* is. That is, knowing within oneself and experiencing this within

oneself. Though one might never have known or experienced this before, now one knows and there is no doubt about it. There is no more problem or work to be done, and one can see this very clearly. What is there to do anymore, and what is the object of this work? Now there is nothing to come and be involved with the *citta*. The *citta* now is just merely the *citta*. There is no self, animal, people, I or they. They have all disappeared. All forms of *sammati*, and the *sammati citta*, are no longer apparent. What else is there to do?

One has experienced all the hardship in one's exertion from the beginning to the end. The exertion for the development of *samādhī* is very hard work. It is really hard on the body because one has to abstain from food and sleep or sit for a very long time in *samādhī*. This is really *dukkha*. It was very hard in the development of *samādhī*, and when the *citta* had established some foundation, it became very hard on the *citta*, and the more developed the *citta* became, the more subtle everything got, and the harder the work was. But one is no more concerned about this hardship and difficulty than about the work for the realisation for the truth and *Dhamma*, and everything that became involved with the *citta*. But this hardship was no problem, and when one had fully exerted to one's utmost ability, one would eventually come to conquer the *citta* and accomplish

one's work. And one's *satipaññā* that has been revolving like a *Dhamma Cakka*, a wheel of *Dhamma*, will also lose its purpose. They all fall into place naturally. One's diligent effort in the application of *satipaññā* that has been so intensified, turning around relentlessly and incessantly, eventually and naturally stops, because there is nothing else to do. There is no more problem to solve. There is nothing to be corrected.

Paññā is used for correcting and clearing away the *kilesas*, but is there now a single type of *kilesa* found within the *citta*? If one is certain that there is none, then what is there to fight? What is there to cope with, or to struggle with or encounter? Can you battle or fight with empty wind? There is an end to the work of *Dhamma*, but as far as the work of the world is concerned, there can never be an end to it. From the first day of one's birth, there is work to do continuously until the last day of one's life, and even then one has still not finished one's work. People die having worry and concern for their work, their friends, and their relatives. There isn't a single *citta* that can pass away with *sugato*, going to a happy state, without having any worry, or *anālayo*, without having any desire left. There are only *cittas* that die with worry and confusion and entanglement with all sorts of things. So how can there be any happiness when one goes carrying a burden with oneself? The work that one did

before one passed away was not completed, and when one passes away, someone else will have to take over one's job. This just continues on and on. There isn't a single person in the world who can accomplish his task, because as soon as he finishes one job, there is a new one coming up, all the time. People keep on doing it, but are we going to be bold enough to take up this task as well?

Is it possible that we can get into the mundane work and accomplish it before we die? Can you be really certain that you can finish this work? If you are not certain of this, why don't you take up the work that is certain, like the work that the Lord *Buddha* promised? He said that if you take this work of a recluse, and then attain the *vusitaṃ brahma cariyaṃ*, that is, the end of the holy life, then you will really complete and accomplish your task. There won't be a single *kilesa* that could be revived so that it can come and fight with us anymore. Once it is totally got rid of 100%, then it is totally got rid of forever. From that moment on, one will never have to be in doubt, for instance by thinking 'Could this *kilesa* arise again, now that I have destroyed all of them?' It will not happen for they have now all been destroyed. It has all disappeared. They have all been truly got rid of, and from there onward there is only happiness, ease and comfort. As far as all the anxiety and worry and

confusion is concerned, and all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava* that used to afflict one's heart like an erupting volcano are concerned, they have all disappeared. This volcano has been extinguished by the water of the *Dhamma* and the truth. Extinguished are all the fires of *rāga*, *dosa*, and *moha*. They have been quenched by the water of the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*, the Middle Way of Practice.

Once the water has been splashed over this fire that has been afflicting the heart, and has totally extinguished it, then all that is left is just coolness that will last for ever. This is *akāliko* - timeless. The Lord *Buddha* said that this is, '*Akālika citta, akālika Dhamma*' - the timeless *citta* and timeless *Dhamma*. They are both one and the same thing. Once one has arrived at this stage, both the *citta* and *Dhamma* are one and the same thing. One can either call it the *citta* or the *Dhamma*, for there wouldn't be any contradiction. All that is necessary is for the *kilesas*, that are notorious for their contradiction, to disappear from the heart. There will not be any contradiction - nothing to go and contravene anything else. One cannot find anything to contradict one because the *kilesas* of contradiction have all disappeared. That is, the *kilesas* that contradict *Dhamma*. Once the *kilesas* have been wiped out, there is nothing left to contravene, and nothing left to serve as a contradiction.

One will then be at ease and peaceful. You see, the work of a *bhikkhu* does have an end. You must really get into it. Don't be lackadaisical or vacillating, or grope in the dark like blind men. Don't be unearnest and uncommitted, for this is like groping for something when you don't know whether it is an eel or a snake. Then there will only be uncertainty and doubt.

Dukkha

August 4th, 1979

As a practitioner, one must be truly committed to *Dhamma*. One's heart must always be turning towards *Dhamma*. One must not allow the flow of the world, which is the *kilesas*, to come into one's heart, to trample on and afflict it, for this is the flow of the *kilesas*, and they must not be allowed to incite and disturb the heart, which we are taking care of with our utmost effort, to the extent where we are willing to put our lives at stake for it, solely for the sake of *Dhamma*. We must constantly be on the look out for harm and perils. We must not be insensitive to those things which are harmful to us. We must always set up this understanding, and then we can be considered as people who practise *Dhamma* with mindfulness. This mindfulness is the constant awareness of things that are harmful and beneficial to oneself. One must be constantly aware of those things which are beneficial or harmful to oneself. One must always be careful and cautious, and one must get rid of the things that should be got rid of. One should also develop, nurture, and take care of the things that one should be taking care of, and this is our own heart.

This heart is the property of two possessors. However, it is

the *kilesas* that have been ruling over it for a very long time. We ourselves cannot make an account of all of the forms of birth that we have gone through, and the process of birth, ageing, illness, and death, that we have undergone right on up to the present day. This is the work of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava* that lead us to be born and die and experience *dukkha* and hardship. All of them are harmful to us. Every form of existence that we take up is filled with *dukkha*. *Dukkha* is inherent in every form of birth because when one takes up birth, one must also take up death. Both birth and death are a pair or a duality. Therefore, whenever there is birth, there is also *dukkha*. The Lord *Buddha* said that the one whom *dukkha* does not fall on is the one who does not take up birth, for this is the only way to totally wipe out *dukkha*. If one doesn't take up birth, then one doesn't have to experience any *dukkha*. If such is the way, then, what is the cause of *dukkha*? Due to birth, *dukkha* arises; so what is the cause or origin of birth? The origin of birth is *Avijjā*, the King of Delusion that is deeply embedded within the *citta*, to the extent where it is not easy to differentiate or tell them apart. It is, therefore, necessary for us to commit our total effort, to the extent where we will even give up our lives if we have to.

When it is the time to intensify one's effort, one must then intensify it. When it is time to make a hard drive, one must

make a hard drive. When it is time to fight, one must really fight. When it is time for one to be moderate, one will know that for oneself when the time arises. However, one should not take it upon oneself to decide when it is the time to be moderate or to take it easy or relax, when in reality the time is not right to be so. Concerning this, one can sometimes be misled. The practitioner himself will know the right time to take a rest, to relax, to enjoy ease and comfort while breaking away from his strenuous exertion. The way to rest the *citta* is to enter it into the state of calm and coolheartedness. There can be such a time. But when one enters into battle against one's opposition with the means of *satipaṇṇā*, then one must totally commit oneself to it. One must consider the *dukkha* as the *Sacca Dhamma*, the truth, and one should not consider *dukkha* as oneself, for this is the principle of truth and *Dhamma*. This is the correct principle which is right and proper.

The *dukkha* that arises within the body is important. It is something that one can see very clearly and distinctively. The *dukkha* in the *citta* can arise as a consequence of the *dukkha* of the body. This is one aspect of *dukkha*. The *dukkha* that arises in the *citta*, even at the time when the body is not afflicted with any pain or illness, is the *dukkha* that is entirely created by the *kilesas*. The *dukkha* that arises in the body due to illness or from sitting in the

same position for a very long time can cause the *kilesas* to arise. The *citta* will be restless and agitated and will be concocting various ideas. This is caused by the *kilesas* of attachment. The *citta* will become confused, and will concoct the idea that the *dukkha* within the body belongs to oneself, and that the entire body is oneself. If we see that the body and ourselves are one and the same thing, then when there is *dukkha* within the body, we will feel that we ourselves are experiencing *dukkha*. So when we see that we are experiencing *dukkha*, then we will become concerned with ourselves. We will not want to experience *dukkha* and this desire not to want to experience *dukkha* is *vibhava-taṇhā*.

Then we will not be able to look for the truth because we will not be able to find a way to reach the truth or follow the truth principle that says that *dukkha* is an aspect of truth. This is the principle of the *Sacca Dhamma*, the truth. A practitioner who has clearly seen *dukkha* within his heart as an aspect of truth, will then not be overwhelmed by *dukkha*, no matter how severe this *dukkha* might be. This *dukkha* will not be able to trample on and afflict him or cause him to waver. I have experienced this myself and I am not speaking without anything to back me up. I have clearly experienced this and that is why I dare to relate this to you, without being concerned with whether I am showing off or not. I speak from the

truth principle, and what I teach is following the truth principle, aiming only for your benefit and befitting the effort that you have made in coming to me for instruction. I instruct you to the utmost - to the fullest. *Dukkavedanā*, painful feeling can arise from many causes. It can arise from illness. But please keep in mind that it is the same old *dukkavedanā* that we call the *Sacca Dhamma*, the truth. The *dukkha* that arises in the various parts of the body, or the *dukkha* that arises from sitting for a long time, are all the *Sacca Dhamma*. We must take that *dukkha* as the target for the investigation. We must investigate back and forth between the heart and the body where it has permeated. Look and see in which part of the body this *dukkha* has arisen.

For instance, the pain in the legs or in the various organs of the body - one should take the point where the *dukkha* or pain is most profound, and then take that as the point where one establishes one's mindfulness, and investigate with *paññā*, analysing, differentiating and isolating the *dukkha* so that you can see its nature very clearly. We must observe the *dukkha* to see that it has no other characteristics apart from its being *dukkha* itself. It is unlike the body which has various characteristics since it is made up of the different parts. We must compare and examine all the different parts, and then we must

turn inwards towards the *citta*. These three things are terribly important. We must not wish for *dukkha* to go away because the desire for this *dukkha* to disappear is *tanhā* or craving. This will just increase the *dukkha* and one will never have one's wish fulfilled. Instead of this being *magga*, the way for the eradication of *dukkha* from the heart, or curbing the *dukkha* within the body, it merely increases or intensifies the *dukkha* of both the body and the heart. This is the way if one wants or desires *dukkha* to go away. One must neither make any wish nor have any desire. When *dukkha* arises, it arises whether we have the wish for it to arise or not.

We should investigate *dukkha* to see it as it actually is, by differentiating and setting apart those things which are involved with *dukkha*. Find out which part of the body is being afflicted with *dukkha* and take a good look at it. The *citta* must be revolving constantly. This revolving of the *citta* is actually the turning around of *paññā*. *Paññā* probes and examines for the cause of this *dukkha*. When *dukkha* intensifies, then the *citta* cannot get away from that particular spot. It must be turning around very rapidly - this is the way of investigating the *Sacca Dhamma*, and the way to contend with one's enemy. One must differentiate the body, look at it, and examine it. One

must also differentiate and set apart *dukkhavedanā* and examine that. This *vedanā* is merely *dukkha*, but in itself it doesn't know that it is *dukkha*.

And the body - although it might be afflicted with *dukkha* - in itself does not know that it is so afflicted. Who is the one who says that this body is afflicted with *dukkha*, and that the *dukkhavedanā* that appears is *dukkha*? Who says that this is so? If it doesn't come out of our *saññā-ārammaṇa* or memory, where else can it come from? So in the end we cannot help but look into the *citta* itself. Now if the *citta* itself really suffers from *dukkha*, then let us really look into it closely for ourselves. We must look or see it with *paññā*, see it with discrimination, and see it with discernment. Don't just look simply because we only want to look at it. If we look just because we want to get to know (without doing any investigation), this is not the way of looking for the truth. The point is that we should not have any desire, but merely to probe and examine into the truth itself. This will be the natural way of investigation, the *majjhimā* way. If we have any desire, then this will be *samudaya*, and the cause of *dukkha* will arise.

Therefore, even if the *dukkha* afflicts the body to the extent where it will break apart, then let it break apart. As far as the disintegration and integration of the body is

concerned, they are just a pair or a duality. It is natural for them: if they can be formed together, they can also break apart. The main point here is to expose the truth about these three things that are interrelated or combined. See it clearly with *paññā*. One must get to see the pain in the body clearly. One must see it clearly with *paññā* until one can see that the skin is merely the skin, and the flesh is merely the flesh. It is the same way with the sinews and bones and the rest of the parts of the body - they are merely as they are. They themselves don't know that they are experiencing *dukkha*, even though the *dukkha* is like a scorching flame. They themselves don't know that they are undergoing *dukkha*, and the *dukkha* itself doesn't know that it is *dukkha* either. This *dukkha* doesn't know that it is making others suffer, so who then is the one who forms up the presumption and assumption about these things? One must turn around and look inside the *citta*. When looking at the *citta*, one should look the same way one looks at the body and at *dukkhavedanā*. One must look with continuous attention and mindfulness. One must look with the intention of finding out the truth. When one gets to find out the truth, then the *citta* will be merely knowing. Can this knowing be one and the same thing with *vedanā*? And if this knowing, and *vedanā*, and the body, are one and the same thing, when *dukkhavedanā* disappears, how is it that the *citta* still remains?

The *citta* has always been here from the day of our birth. But this *dukkhavedanā* only arises now. If they are one and the same thing, how is it that this *vedanā* doesn't appear at the moment of birth? And how is it that it can disappear? It should not disappear if the *citta* has not also disappeared, so truly they are not one and the same thing. This investigation must be constantly turning around. As far as the desire is concerned - that is the desire for *dukkha* to disappear - one should never bring it into the investigation, if one doesn't want to enhance *dukkha* and accumulate more *kilesas* which is *samudaya*, the cause of *dukkha*. Then one would be knocked down and one would not be able to make it through. When one is about to pass away, one will be helpless. One who sets his heart to investigate and observe the *Sacca Dhamma* is the one who will gain victory, and the one who will be able to withstand to the end. Although he might not have got rid of all the *kilesas*, he would be able to stand on his own with mindfulness and wisdom, *sati* and *paññā*. *Sati* and *paññā* are absolutely vital for taking care of the *citta*, and when the *citta* has attained deliverance, then there is nothing else to talk about. What is there to talk about?

In training and disciplining oneself, one must be bold and courageous, firm and resolute. One must not be feeble

or weak. One must not see anything in this world as more worthwhile than *Dhamma*, or than the knowledge and insight that will deliver us from the *kilesas* and *āśava* that are entangled within our hearts, for we can gradually emancipate ourselves from these things until we are totally free from them. The supreme treasure is the *citta* that has attained deliverance or the *citta* that has developed the various stages of virtue. They are similar to the treasure or possessions that we have accumulated. The more we accumulate them, the more valuable they become - that is, their worth and value increases - until we arrive at the state of contentment. We must develop the *citta* to this state of contentment. We must not be shaken by the *loka Dhamma*, the worldly influences, for they have been as they are since time immemorial. This world is full of birth, ageing, illness, and death, confusion and trouble that afflicts all people and every kind of animal. There is no true peace and happiness in this world. Where are we going to find happiness in this world? We will never find it because there is only *dukkha*. There is the physical *dukkha* when one has to strive and struggle to make a living. When we have desire or craving for possessions, this is also a form of *dukkha*. Whatever form of supposition we set up, we always get attached to it, like a piece of paper which we suppose is a banknote and can be used as currency. We know it very well within our hearts that this is just a piece of paper but we are still deluded with it. Our greed

for it is just immeasurable.

Lobha and *dosa*, greed and hatred, are so severe that they shake the whole world. Is there any happiness in them? *Lobha*, or greed, is one form of fire. When our body is normal - that is when it is not afflicted with any disease, it is quite comfortable and at ease, but when there is any illness then the body is afflicted and disturbed. It is the same with the *citta*. When it is not afflicted with the diseases of the heart, *lobha* or greed; for instance, it will remain in quite a calm and peaceful state. But as soon as this disease of greed happens to strike the heart, then the heart will turn into fire and become troubled and annoyed. Can't we see its harmfulness? *Dosa*, or hatred, is like a shadow that follows *lobha*. When we cannot acquire the things that we want according to our desires, then we become angry. The world has these things as the masters of the heart. So if this is the case, then who in this world can have any happiness because the nature of these things is fiery. Wherever they are, they must always scorch and burn, and totally consume that place. Neither happiness nor comfort can come out of them. Even when one dies, if these things are still full within one's heart, one will never be able to find any happiness. One will never be able to find any basis to hang onto. One will die worried, concerned, and possessive of everything. One will pass away in confusion and worry. One will be consumed and burned through to the

next birth. One will never come across the real essence at the time of one's passing away.

This is because one is deluded with *sammati*, conventional truth. One thinks that *sammati* is the real truth which it is not while on the other hand *Dhamma* and virtue which are the real truth and the treasures that can provide us with cool-heartedness, trust, and confidence, are never accumulated by us. So how are we going to come up with any confidence? Therefore, the building up of virtue inside the heart is terribly important for wise people, especially for us who are the *bhikkhus*, the practitioners. We must be really serious, really earnest. The *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*, the Middle Way of practice, is always suitable for lifting us out of *dukkha*. We should, therefore, depend on and take on the *majjhimā paṭipadā* as our path of practice and as the tool for the eradication of the *kilesas*. No matter how many *kilesas* there are, they must all arise from the heart. All that is necessary is to develop and produce enough *sati* and *paññā* to counter the *kilesas*. When the *kilesas* are subdued, then happiness will arise. We will then come to see the harmfulness of the *kilesas*. Whenever the *kilesas* appear within one's awareness, then one will become afflicted and feel uncomfortable. One will feel ill at ease immediately when the *kilesas* appear. The more the *kilesas* appear, the more affliction we will have to endure.

We must curb them with *samādhī*, *paññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya* - diligent effort. When we manage to curb and restrain them, then we will feel at ease, comfortable, and happy, for this is the quality of one who practises *Dhamma*. At the same time, we will realise the harm of confusion and trouble that is caused by the *kilesas* oppressing the heart. We only have one undertaking or work to do. For a *bhikkhu*, there is no other work that is really genuine or of any worth other than the work of correcting and uprooting the *kilesas*. This is the work of extracting the thorn of the *kilesas* from the heart with our ability. This is in accordance with *Dhamma*, and follows the example of the Lord *Buddha*. When we become weak and discouraged, then we should reflect on the Lord *Buddha* and the *sāvakas*, noble disciples of the past. We should think of them when we take up our refuge; they are our *Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*, and *Śaṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*. But we must not merely reflect upon them; we should think about them and try to follow their example. We have to ask ourselves 'Are these *sāvakas* ordinary human beings, or are they *devatās*, celestial beings?' They are just people like us.

Some of them even came from the very delicate and high classes, like those of Kings, for instance. They had never had to endure the physical hardship of the body, and they

had plenty of possessions and wealth. But they gave them all up, by seeing them as things of little value and significance. Some of them were high officials of the court, and some were merchants, rich and wealthy men. All of them were fully possessed with great wealth, honour, and dignity. So why did they give up all of these things, take up the practice of *Dhamma*, and finally attain *Dhamma* and become famous? They attained the supreme state, and at the same time they also could see the insignificance of those things that they left behind. They were not the 'real things' and were not as worthy as *Dhamma*, and that is why these people were able to attain *Dhamma*. Whatever class or family they came from, once they had gone forth in the *Buddha Sāsana*, they then devoted themselves to the practice of *Dhamma* with diligent effort. Even those who were Kings were willing to give up their Kingships and take up the lives of recluses or *bhikkhus*, just like any other *bhikkhu*. Look at the degree to which they were able to adapt themselves! For this reason they were able to attain the status of great Sages, to whom we pay respect and esteem.

We have to take up their example. During the time of the Lord *Buddha*, this was the only kind of undertaking, or the only work, that the *bhikkhus* were doing. This is the work of walking meditation or *carikama*, sitting in *samādhi*, and the work of *bhāvanā*, mental development. This is the work of

a *bhikkhu*. When they had conversation, they did not talk about politics or about business, or about any other social activities. Nor did they talk about men or women. They did not bother about these things because these things are the affairs of the world which they had left behind, due to the perception that these things are harmful. That is why they got away from these things, and made sure that these things did not come in and bother and disturb them. They only took up the *Dhamma* as their support after they had left those things behind. All the work that they had done in the world they had entirely let go of. The only work that they did now was the work of a *bhikkhu*, which is the *samaṇa Dhamma* or meditation, which slowly leads to peace, happiness, and tranquillity. Wherever they were, they all disciplined and trained themselves with *Dhamma*, and they all consistently attained the result. They all attained the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*, in the various places like the forests, mountains, and caves. This was because they constantly exerted themselves, so how could the Fruit not become apparent?

When they carried on a dialogue, they carried on a dialogue on the *Sallekha-dhamma*, topics of effacing the defilements. These *Sallekha-dhamma* were the topics of their conversation, and when they talked about these *Dhamma*, they were called *Sallekha kathā*, which

means the conversation about the way of deliverance or the cleansing or the uprooting of the *kilesas*. *Sallekha* means to cleanse or uproot. And what does this consist of? What did those people during the Lord *Buddha*'s time talk about? The basis of conversation for a *samaṇa* has bounds and limits. I will elaborate the first of these topics of conversation, although I have elaborated this many times before. But there are newcomers that may not have heard it before, so I will say it again. Please listen very carefully.

The first topic is *Appicchatā*, which means one who is content with little. The Lord *Buddha* did not teach us to be content with many material things that are offered by the laypeople. However much or little one might receive, one is only happy with just a little. This is the best way of practice.

The second topic is *Santutti* or *Santosa* - be content with whatever is available with regards to the requisites. One mustn't bother or make solicitations to the laypeople concerning these things. One just uses whatever is available. This practice ranks second in moderation to the first practice of *appicchatā*, being content with little. One has to be really firm and resolute if one practises in this manner.

The third topic is *Vivekatā*: delighting in seclusion. One has

seclusion for one's dwelling place, and one guards the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body that have contact with the forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects. And one also guards the heart, befitting the nature of the *samaṇa Dhamma*, contemplative life. One cultivates the quietude or seclusion of the heart. If the heart is not able to find quiet, one will not be able to find any happiness. That is why it is vital that we curb and restrain the flow of the *citta* with our diligent effort. If we can find peace and seclusion, then it is possible for the *citta* to calm down. Then happiness will arise, and this is what is meant by *vivekatā*, the delighting in seclusion.

The fourth topic is *Viriyārambhā*, continuous and consistent exertion in all four postures of standing, sitting, walking, and lying down. One is constantly directing one's exertion with mindfulness. With mindfulness it is then possible to exert oneself, and this is *viriyārambhā*, the topic of conversation on the application of diligent effort.

The fifth topic, *Asaṇsakkanikā*, means not mingling or socialising. One doesn't socialise with one's fellow *bhikkhus* or the laypeople.

The sixth topic is *Sīla*, morality. One strives to keep one's *sīla* pure, and to make sure that one's *sīla* doesn't have any

blemishes and lapses. One must protect and cherish one's *sīla* the same way one protects and cherishes one's heart. *Sīla* and the *Dhamma* are one and the same thing. The coarser kind of *Dhamma* is called *sīla*, because it has to restrain and curb the actions of body and speech, with the heart responsible for their actions.

The seventh topic is *Samādhī*, calm and stability of the heart. One relates to another about the various techniques of practice, regardless of what type of *samādhī*. One should talk about them, because each one will be able to learn and gain some benefits from this talk. When one talks about *samādhī*, one can discuss and relate the various characteristics of *samādhī*. This is because there are many different ways of disciplining the *citta*, following the different characters and personalities of people.

The eighth topic is *Paññā*. One talks about the depth and profundity of the discernment, and the various techniques of *paññā*. One should discuss them so that one can share this information with one's fellow practitioners, so that others might benefit from it.

The ninth topic is *Vimutti*, the state of deliverance. This is the most desirable subject of conversation, and the most desirable state. It is the consequence that arises from *appicchatā*, wanting little, and all the way up to *paññā*.

The tenth topic is *Vimutti Ñāṇadassana*, the knowledge and insight that one has attained *vimutti*.

These are the ten *Sallekha-dhammas* that the practitioners and the *bhikkhus* during the time of the Lord *Buddha* talked about. They only talked about the truth and *Dhamma*, and this accords with the *Dhamma* that says *Kālena dhammasākacchā*, the timely talk on *Dhamma*. This talk is timely and appropriate to the time, and they are *Etammangalamuttamaṃ*, the highest blessing for those who are involved in the conversation. And this is what they talked about during the time of the Lord *Buddha* - the *Sallekha-dhamma*. They did not talk about politics, or business, or about gain or loss. They were not involved with the confusing affairs of *saṃsāra*, like the way *bhikkhus* are today. In these *Bhikkhus'* hearts and mouths, there is nothing of any substance, but just the affairs of the world that they give vent to. They are not worth listening to. Can this be in accordance or in conformity with the time of the Lord *Buddha*? So if this is the way, then all that is left is just the name or the label of one who has gone forth. Talking about the maintenance of his *sīla*, one wonders just how much *sīla* has he got? This is because when he talks, he does not restrain or have any reservations. One really wonders whether his *sīla* has gone down the drain. So how can one come up with any *samādhi*, because not a word of

samādhī has been said, not to mention the practice and development of *samādhī* and *citta bhāvanā*, mental development? So how can the result come forth? One just gets into trouble and confusion with the things that bear no benefit.

Because we don't tread the way that the Lord *Buddha* showed us to tread, we don't want to do the work that he wanted us to do. We only do the work that is inimical or opposed to *Dhamma*. We do this constantly, so how can there be any worth or virtue which is the important quality, so that we can be proud of it, if our practice just becomes wayward or tramples on and destroys the *Dhamma* without ourselves being aware of it? There cannot be any result that will come forth, and we can only be proud of our state of going forth. But what is the use of that? What is the use of being proud of our position of one who has *sīla*? What is the use of this if we cannot be proud of the results that we can gain from our exertion? For this result, or the fruits of our exertion, would be our own possession or treasure, be it the *samādhī* treasure, or the *paññā* treasure, or the *vimutti* treasure. These are the treasures that we can be truly proud of: those which arise from our diligent effort.

These all start with *appicchatā*, the practice of wanting little, which is opposing or antagonistic to the practice of wanting a lot. And this is the way the Lord *Buddha* taught us to

correct the *kilesas* because the *kilesas* like to oppose and go against *Dhamma*. For instance, these ten *Dhammas* that we have mentioned earlier: in one of them the Lord *Buddha* says '*appicchatā*', take a little bit. But the *kilesas* say 'Take a lot, take a lot'. When you die you can use these possessions as the fuel to burn yourself with - the *kilesas* really like this. There is no need to look for any firewood, because you can pile up your possessions, your wealth, and then set fire to them to burn your body with. The *kilesas* like it this way, and this is the way the *kilesas* go against *Dhamma*. The *kilesas* will always go against *Dhamma*. They will always go contradictory to *Dhamma*. They will always oppose *Dhamma*. Whenever the *citta* begins to like something, then please understand that the *citta* is already on the side of the *kilesas*, and it has already been led away by them. The *kilesas* will then put it on the chopping board, and cut it up into pieces.

It is only when the *citta* has attained the realm of *Dhamma* and the realm of truth, to the extent where one becomes confident of oneself, that one now understands the truth and *Dhamma*, good and bad within the *citta*. That becomes a different story. When the *citta* has attained that level, then the *citta* will be only inclined towards *Dhamma*. It will like to acquire *Dhamma* and the desire for this *Dhamma* is

called *Magga*, the Path. These desires are not *kilesas* like the other worldly or mundane desires. For example, *vivekatā*. The Lord *Buddha* taught us to be inclined towards seclusion but the *kilesas* like us to mingle and socialise in noisy and maddening crowds. They are the place where the *kilesas* want to go, and this is how they go against *Dhamma*. *Vivekatā* or the delight in seclusion, is on the side of *Dhamma*. The delight in noise and madness is on the side of the *kilesas*. The Lord *Buddha* taught us *viriyārambhā*, the application of diligent effort. The *kilesas* say that we should apply our effort in the wrong way. If we go in the wrong way, then this is contrary to the *viriyārambhā*. The *kilesas* will always go against *Dhamma*, all the way to *vimutti*. This is the nature of the *kilesas*. They will always oppose *Dhamma*. So one must always observe oneself well. No matter how the inclination might arise, one must use *satipaṇṇā* to investigate to see whether it is in accordance with *Dhamma* or not.

If it is not, then one has to realise that it must be in accordance with the *kilesas*. Then one must immediately resist that inclination and let go of it, even though one might be really attached to it and really want to have it. For this kind of desire or attachment is really the affair of the *kilesas*, but letting go of these attachments and desires is the affair of *Dhamma*. If we are going to follow the way of the Lord *Buddha*, then we must let go of them. We must resist our

heart. How can we not resist? If we are not resisting, then we cannot say that we are fighting, combatting, and struggling. If we keep on following our heart's desires, then we cannot be called practitioners. We cannot be considered as one who resists the *kilesas*, fights the *kilesas*, subdues and eradicates the *kilesas*, and one who conquers the *kilesas*, for one will always be losing to the *kilesas*. This is not the principle of *Dhamma* which exhorts us to oppose and to fight. We must always be constantly aware of ourselves. We only hear about the story of the *sāvakas*. Some of them attained the level of *sotāpanna*, some of them the level of *sakadāgāmī*, some of them the level of *anāgāmī*, and some of them the level of *arahant*, in various places. These were the results that they attained, and what about the story of their exertion? What was it like? The story of their exertion and the story of the results that they acquired were in harmony with each other.

Therefore, we must look both at the cause and the result. Look at the means and the consequences. If we want the Fruit or the result, then we must develop the cause or the means for this result to arise. It is like when we look at a certain plant. We observe and investigate to find out what sort of nourishment is good for this plant so that this plant can bear the fruits for us. If we only look for the result without paying any attention to the cause that can make this result appear, then it is useless for us. We must look at

the cause. That is, we must find out what kind of nourishment and fertiliser this plant needs, and we must take good care of it, protecting this plant from other things that can come and destroy it.

It is the same way with our hearts. When we want the results to appear within our hearts, then we have to observe the heart to find out what it needs in order to be able to produce such a result. We have to eradicate whatever is antagonistic or harmful to the heart. Insects are very harmful because they constantly bite; *rāga* also bites; and *dosa* also bites; and it is the same with *moha*. Laziness and weakness also bite. Discouragement also bites. Thinking that one doesn't have the ability is another form of bite. Thinking that the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna* is now out of reach or out of time - this is also another bite. These are all the bites of these insects, the *kilesa* insects. Discouragement and weakness - they bite. When one tries to meditate, it is as if someone is taking one to the gallows. This is another form of bite. They constantly bite us. When we lie down and our head touches the pillow, we don't want to get up. This is also another form of bite.

Please note that these insects are in the heart. They hide inside and permeate the heart. They are constantly whispering and infiltrating the heart. We

must get rid of them with the various techniques, so that we can see and experience the supreme *Dhamma* within our hearts. This will happen due to our diligent effort and our contention with them. In the beginning stages of practice, it is difficult and hard. Even though it is difficult, one will not retreat, but is willing to face it. One accepts the facts that it is difficult and that it is *dukkha*. But then every form of work is difficult because when one has to work, one has to exert. In our practice, we must also exert ourselves. It can be difficult, but we must exert to the utmost so that we can come to the result that we can be content with. The *citta* can be trained and developed, or else the Lord *Buddha* would not have taught us to do it. The *citta* that has no *Dhamma* is like a demon. In such a *citta* there is no *Dhamma* or truth, or any principle of reason. The only thing it has is the wish to acquire things according to its desire, and this is entirely the business of the *kilesas*. As a result, one will never be able to find any happiness either for oneself or for others.

People tend to disturb one another due to the power of the *kilesas*. Human beings are social animals. They have to live together. They cannot live alone by themselves. So they always tend to disturb and hurt one another, and this is due to the harmful things inside the heart that have been vented. When one has constantly trained and developed oneself, then this wildness and recklessness inside the

heart will steadily diminish due to the power of one's exertion. The *citta* that has never attained calm will now attain calm. This is because we are now taking care of the *citta*. We can have calm and coolheartedness because of this care and nourishment arising from our exertion. We have to coerce and control the *citta* constantly, so that it doesn't think out beyond the way of *Dhamma*. We must not allow this *citta* to think about the various things. We must direct it to only think in the way of *Dhamma*. The *kilesas* will gradually decrease, and the heart will then become calmer and more tranquil. Then we will begin to see the merit and value of the heart. We must then intensify our effort because the benefit that arises from being calm is not the only benefit. There are other benefits that are higher and better than this.

A Glossary of Pali and Buddhist Terms

This glossary covers many of the Pāli words and technical terms that you may come across in the book. The most common spellings are listed first, followed by alternates. The phonetic spelling of the Pāli is given in the square brackets immediately following the headword.

- **Abhidhamma** [*abhidhamma*]:

(1) In the discourses of the Pāli canon, this term simply means 'higher Dhamma', and a systematic attempt to define the Buddha's teachings and understand their interrelationships. (2) A later collection of analytical treatises based on lists of categories drawn from the teachings in the discourses, added to the Canon several centuries after the Buddha's life.

- **abhiññā** [*abhiñña*]:

Intuitive powers that come from the practice of concentration: the ability to display psychic powers, clairvoyance, clairsaudience, the ability to know the thoughts of others, recollection of past lifetimes, and the knowledge that does away with mental effluents (see *āśava*).

- **ācariya** [*aacariya*]:

Teacher; mentor. See *kalyānamitta*.

- **adhiṭṭhāna** [*adhiṭṭhaana*]:

Determination; resolution. One of the ten perfections (*pāramīs*).

- **ajaan, ajahn, achaan**, etc.:

(Thai). Teacher; mentor. Equivalent to the Pāli *ācariya*.

- **akāliko** [*akaaaliko*]:

Timeless; unconditioned by time or season.

- **akusala** [*akusala*]:

Unwholesome, unskillful, demeritorious. See its opposite, *kusala*.

- **anāgāmi** [*anaagaamii*]:

Non-returner. A person who has abandoned the five lower fetters that bind the mind to the cycle of rebirth (see *saṃyojana*), and who after death will appear in one of the Brahma worlds called the Pure Abodes, there to attain *nibbāna*, never again to return to this world.

- **ānāpānasati** [*aanaapaanasati*]:

Mindfulness of breathing. A meditation practice in which one maintains one's attention and mindfulness on the sensations of breathing.

- **anattā** [*anattaa*]:

Not-self; ownerless.

- **anicca** [*anicca*]:

Inconstant; unsteady; impermanent.

- **anupādisesa-nibbāna** [*anupaadisesa-nibbaana*]:

Nibbāna with no fuel remaining (the analogy is to an extinguished fire whose embers are cold) - the *nibbāna* of the arahant after his passing away. Cf. *sa-anupādisesa-nibbāna*

- **ānupubbī-kathā** [*aanupubbii-kathaa*]:

Gradual instruction. The Buddha's method of teaching Dhamma that guides his listeners progressively through increasingly advanced topics: generosity (see *dāna*), virtue (see *sīla*), heavens, drawbacks, renunciation, and the four noble truths.

- **anusaya** [*anusaya*]:

Obsession; underlying tendency. (The etymology of this term means 'lying down with'; in actual usage, the related verb (*anuseti*) means to be obsessed.) There are seven major obsessions to which the mind returns over and over again: obsession with sensual passion (*kāmarāganusaya*), with resistance (*paṭighanusaya*), with views (*diṭṭhanusaya*), with uncertainty (*vicikicchānusaya*), with conceit (*manusaya*), with passion for becoming (*bhāva-rāganusaya*), and with ignorance (*avijjānusaya*). Compare *saṃyojana*.

- **apāya-bhūmi** [*apaaya-bhuumi*]:

State of deprivation; the four lower levels of existence into which one might be reborn as a result of past unskilful actions (see *kamma*): rebirth in hell, as a hungry ghost (see *peta*), as an angry demon (see *Asura*), or as a common animal. None of these states is permanent. Compare *sugati*.

- **appamāda** [*appamaada*]:

Heedfulness; diligence; zeal. The cornerstone of all skilful mental states, and one of such fundamental import that the Buddha's stressed it in his parting words to his disciples: 'All fabrications are subject to decay. Bring about completion by being heedful!' (*appamādena sampādetha*).

- **arahant** [*arahant*]:

A 'worthy one' or 'pure one'; a person whose mind is free of defilement (see *kilesa*), who has abandoned all ten of the fetters that bind the mind to the cycle of rebirth (see *samyojana*), whose heart is free of mental effluents (see *āsava*), and who is thus not destined for further rebirth. A title for the Buddha and the highest level of his noble disciples.

- **ārammaṇa** [*aarammaṇa*]:

Preoccupation; mental object.

- **ariya** [*ariya*]:

Noble, ideal. Also, a 'Noble One' (see *ariyapuggala*).

- **ariyadhana** [*ariyadhana*]:

Noble Wealth; qualities that serve as 'capital' in the quest for liberation: conviction (see *saddhā*), virtue (see *sīla*), conscience, fear of evil, erudition, generosity (see *dāna*), and discernment (see *paññā*).

- **ariya-puggala** [*ariya-puggala*]:

Noble person; enlightened individual. An individual who has realised at least the lowest of the four noble paths (see *magga*) or their fruitions (see *phala*). Compare *puthujjana* (worldling).

- **ariya-sacca** [*ariya-sacca*]:

Noble Truth. The word 'ariya' (noble) can also mean ideal or standard, and in this context means 'objective' or 'universal' truth. There are four: stress, the origin of stress, the disbanding of stress, and the path of practice leading to the disbanding of stress.

- **āsava** [*aasava*]:

Mental effluent, pollutant, or fermentation. Four qualities - sensuality, views, becoming, and ignorance - that 'flow out' of the mind and create the flood of the round of death and rebirth.

- **asubha** [*asubha*]:

Unattractiveness, loathsomeness, foulness. The Buddha recommends contemplation of this aspect of the body as an antidote to lust and complacency. See also *kāyagatā-sati*.

- **Asura** [*asura*]:

A race of beings who, like the Titans of Greek mythology, fought the *devas* for sovereignty over the heavens and lost. See *apāya-bhūmi*.

- **avijjā** [*avijjaa*]:

Unawareness; ignorance; obscured awareness; delusion about the nature of the mind. See also *moha*.

- **āyatana** [*aayatana*]:

Sense medium. The inner sense media are the sense organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. The outer sense media are their respective objects.

- **bhante** [*bhante*]:

Venerable sir; often used when addressing a Buddhist monk.

- **bhava** [*bhava*]:

Becoming. States of being that develop first in the mind and can then be experienced as internal worlds and/or as worlds on an external level. There are three levels of becoming: on the

sensual level, the level of form, and the level of formlessness.

- **bhāvanā** [*bhaavanaa*]:

Mental cultivation or development; meditation. The third of the three grounds for meritorious action. See also *dāna* and *sīla*.

- **bhikkhu** [*bhikkhu*]:

A Buddhist monk; a man who has given up the householder's life to live a life of heightened virtue (see *sīla*) in accordance with the *Vinaya* in general, and the *Pāṭimokkha* rules in particular. See *saṅgha*, *parisā*, *upāsampadā*.

- **bhikkhunī** [*bhikkhunī*]:

A Buddhist nun; a woman who has given up the householder's life to live a life of heightened virtue (see *sīla*) in accordance with the *Vinaya* in general, and the *Pāṭimokkha* rules in particular. See *saṅgha*, *parisā*, *upāsampadā*.

- **bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammā** [*bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammaa*]:

‘Wings to Awakening’ - seven sets of principles that are conducive to Awakening and that, according to the Buddha, form the heart of his teaching: [1] the four frames of reference (see *satipaṭṭhāna*); [2] four right exertions (*sammappadhāna*) - the effort to prevent unskillful states from arising in the mind, to

abandon whatever unskillful states have already arisen, to give rise to the good, and to maintain the good that has arisen; [3] four bases of success (*iddhipāda*) - desire, persistence, intentness, circumspection; [4] five dominant factors (*indriya*) - conviction, persistence, mindfulness, concentration, discernment; [5] five strengths (*bala*) - identical with [4]; [6] seven factors for Awakening (*bojjhaṅga*) - mindfulness, investigation of phenomena, persistence, rapture (see *pīti*), serenity, concentration, equanimity; and [7] the eightfold path (*magga*) - Right View, Right Attitude, Right Speech, Right Activity, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration.

- **bodhisatta** [*bodhisatta*]:

‘A being (striving) for Awakening’; the term used to describe the Buddha before he actually becomes Buddha, from his first aspiration to Buddhahood until the time of his full Awakening. Sanskrit form: Bodhisattva.

- **brahma** [*brahma, brahmaa*]:

‘Great One’ - an inhabitant of the non-sensual heavens of form or formlessness.

- **brahma-vihāra** [*brahma-vihaara*]:

The four ‘sublime’ or ‘divine’ abodes that are attained through the development of boundless

mettā (goodwill), *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (appreciative joy), and *upekkhā* (equanimity).

- **brāhmaṇa** (from Pāli *braahmaṇa*):

The brāhmaṇa (brahmin) caste of India has long maintained that its members, by their birth, are worthy of the highest respect. Buddhism borrowed the term brāhmaṇa to apply to those who have attained the goal, to show that respect is earned not by birth, race, or caste, but by spiritual attainment. Used in the Buddhist sense, this term is synonymous with *arahant*.

- **buddho** [*buddho*]:

Awake; enlightened. An epithet for the Buddha.

- **Buddha** [*buddha*]:

The name given to one who rediscovers for himself the liberating path of Dhamma, after a long period of its having been forgotten by the world. According to tradition, a long line of Buddhas stretches off into the distant past. The most recent Buddha was born Siddhattha Gotama in India in the sixth century BCE. A well-educated and wealthy young man, he relinquished his family and his princely inheritance in the prime of his life to search for true freedom and an end to suffering (*dukkha*). After seven years of austerities in the forest, he

rediscovered the 'middle way' and achieved his goal, becoming Buddha.

- **caṅkama** [*caṅkama*]:

Walking meditation, usually in the form of walking back and forth along a prescribed path.

- **cetasika** [*cetasika*]:

Mental concomitant (see *vedanā*, *saññā*, and *saṅkhāra*).

- **ceto-vimutti** [*ceto-vimutti*]:

See *vimutti*.

- **citta** [*citta*]:

Mind; heart; state of consciousness.

- **dāna** [*daana*]:

Giving, liberality; offering, alms. Specifically, giving of any of the four requisites to the monastic order. More generally, the inclination to give, without expecting any form of repayment from the recipient. Dāna is the first theme in the Buddha's system of gradual training (see *anupubbīkathā*), the first of the ten *pāramīs*, one of the seven treasures (see *dhana*), and the first of the three grounds for meritorious action (see *sīla* and *bhāvanā*).

- **deva; devatā** [*deva, devataa*]:

Literally, 'shining one' - an inhabitant of the heavenly realms (see *sagga* and *sugati*).

- **Devadatta** [*devadatta*]:

A cousin of the Buddha who tried to effect a schism in the saṅgha and who has since become emblematic for all Buddhists who work knowingly or unknowingly to undermine the religion from within.

- **dhamma** [*dhamma*; Skt. *dharma*]:

(1) Event; a phenomenon in and of itself; (2) mental quality; (3) doctrine, teaching; (4) *nibbāna*. Also, principles of behavior that human beings ought to follow so as to fit in with the right natural order of things; qualities of mind they should develop so as to realise the inherent quality of the mind in and of itself. By extension, 'Dhamma' (usually capitalised) is used also to denote any doctrine that teaches such things. Thus the Dhamma of the Buddha denotes both his teachings and the direct experience of *nibbāna*, the quality at which those teachings are aimed.

- **Dhamma-vinaya** [*dhamma-vinaya*]:

'doctrine (*dhamma*) and discipline (*vinaya*)'. The Buddha's own name for the religion he founded.

- **dhana** [*dhana*]:

Treasure(s). The seven qualities of conviction, virtue (see *sīla*), conscience & concern, learning, generosity (see *dāna*), and wisdom.

- **dhātu** [*dhaatu*]:

Element; property, impersonal condition. The four physical elements or properties are earth (solidity), water (liquidity), wind (motion), and fire (heat). The six elements include the above four plus space and consciousness.

- **dhutaṅga** [*dhutaṅga*]:

Voluntary ascetic practices that monks and other meditators may undertake from time to time or as a long-term commitment in order to cultivate renunciation and contentment, and to stir up energy. For the monks, there are thirteen such practices: (1) using only patched-up robes; (2) using only one set of three robes; (3) going for alms; (4) not by-passing any donors on one's alms path; (5) eating no more than one meal a day; (6) eating only from the alms-bowl; (7) refusing any food offered after the alms-round; (8) living in the forest; (9) living under a tree; (10) living under the open sky; (11) living in a cemetery; (12) being content with whatever dwelling one has; (13) not lying down.

- **dosa** [*dosa*]:

Aversion; hatred; anger. One of three unwholesome roots (*mūla*) in the mind.

- **dukkha** [*dukkha*]:

Stress; suffering; pain; distress; discontent.

- **effluents:**

See *āśava*.

- **ekaggatārammana** [*ekagattaarammana*]:

Singleness of preoccupation; 'one-pointedness'.

In meditation, the mental quality that allows one's attention to remain collected and focused on the chosen meditation object.

Ekaggatārammana reaches full maturity upon the development of the fourth level of *jhāna*.

- **ekāyana-magga** [*ekaayana-magga*]:

A unified path; a direct path. An epithet for the practice of being mindful of the four frames of reference: body, feelings, mind, and mental qualities.

- **evaṃ** [*evaṃ*]:

Thus; in this way. This term is used in Thailand as a formal closing to a sermon.

- **foundation of mindfulness:**

see *Satipaṭṭhāna*.

- **frame of reference:**

see *Satipaṭṭhāna*.

- **gotrabhū-ñāṇa** [*gotrabhuu-ñāṇa*]:

'Change of lineage knowledge': The glimpse of *nibbāna* that changes one from an ordinary person (*puthujjana*) to a Noble One (*ariyapuggala*).

- **Hīnayāna** [*hiinayaana*]:

‘Inferior Vehicle’, originally a pejorative term - coined by a group who called themselves followers of the Mahayana, the ‘Great Vehicle’ - to denote the path of practice of those who adhered only to the earliest discourses as the word of the Buddha. Hinayanists refused to recognise the later discourses, composed by the Mahayanists, that claimed to contain teachings that the Buddha felt were too deep for his first generation of disciples, and which he thus secretly entrusted to underground serpents. The *Theravāda* school of today is a descendent of the Hinayana.

- **hiri-ottappa** [*hiri-ottappa*]:

‘Conscience and concern’; ‘moral shame and moral dread’. These twin emotions - the ‘guardians of the world’ - are associated with all skilful actions. *Hiri* is an inner conscience that restrains us from doing deeds that would jeopardise our own self-respect; *ottappa* is a healthy fear of committing unskilful deeds that might bring about harm to ourselves or others. See *kamma*.

- **idappaccayatā** [*idappaccayataa*]:

This/that conditionality. This name for the causal principle the Buddha discovered on the night of

his Awakening stresses the point that, for the purposes of ending suffering and stress, the processes of causality can be understood entirely in terms of forces and conditions that are experienced in the realm of direct experience, with no need to refer to forces operating outside of that realm.

- **indriya** [*indriya*]:

Faculties; mental factors. In the suttas the term can refer either to the six sense media (*āyatana*) or to the five mental factors of *saddhā* (conviction), *virīya* (persistence), *sati* (mindfulness), *saṁādhī* (concentration), and *paññā* (discernment); see *bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammā*.

- **jhāna** [*jhaana*; Skt. *dhyana*]:

Mental absorption. A state of strong concentration focused on a single physical sensation (resulting in *rūpajhāna*) or mental notion (resulting in *arūpajhāna*). Development of *jhāna* arises from the temporary suspension of the five hindrances (see *nīvaraṇa*) through the development of five mental factors: *vitakka* (directed thought), *vicāra* (evaluation), *pīti* (rapture), *sukha* (pleasure), and *ekaggatārammana* (singleness of preoccupation).

- **kalyāṇamittā** [*kalyaṇamitta*]:

Admirable friend; a mentor or teacher of Dhamma.

- **kāmaguṇa** [*kaamaguṇa*]:

Strings of sensuality. The objects of the five physical senses: visible objects, sounds, aromas, flavors, and tactile sensations. Usually refers to sense experiences that, like the strings (*guṇa*) of a lute when plucked, give rise to pleasurable feelings (*vedanā*).

- **kamma** [*kamma*; Skt. karma]:

Intentional acts that result in states of being and birth.

- **kammaṭṭhāna** [*kammaṭṭhaana*]:

Literally, 'basis of work' or 'place of work'. The word refers to the 'occupation' of a meditating monk: namely, the contemplation of certain meditation themes by which the forces of defilement (*kilesa*), craving (*taṇhā*), and ignorance (*avijjā*) may be uprooted from the mind. In the ordination procedure, every new monk is taught five basic *kammaṭṭhāna* that form the basis for contemplation of the body: hair of the head (*kesā*), hair of the body (*lomā*), nails (*nakhā*), teeth (*dantā*), and skin (*taco*). By extension, the *kammaṭṭhāna* include all the forty classical meditation themes. Although every

meditator may be said to engage in *kammaṭṭhāna*, the term is most often used to identify the particular Thai forest tradition lineage that was founded by Phra Ajaan Mun and Phra Ajaan Sao.

- **karuṇā** [*karuṇaa*]:

Compassion; sympathy; the aspiration to find a way to be truly helpful to oneself and others. One of the ten perfections (*pāramīs*) and one of the four 'sublime abodes' (*brahmavihāra*).

- **kaṭhina** [*kaṭhina*]:

A ceremony, held in the fourth month of the rainy season, in which a saṅgha of bhikkhus receives a gift of cloth from lay people, bestows it on one of their members, and then makes it into a robe before dawn of the following day.

- **kāya** [*kaaya*]:

Body. Usually refers to the physical body (*rūpa-kāya*; see *rūpa*), but sometimes refers to the mental body (*nāma-kāya*; see *nāma*).

- **kāyagatā-sati** [*kaayagataa-sati*]:

Mindfulness immersed in the body. This is a blanket term covering several meditation themes: keeping the breath in mind; being mindful of the body's posture; being mindful of one's activities; analysing the body into its parts; analysing the body into its physical

properties (see *dhātu*); contemplating the fact that the body is inevitably subject to death and disintegration.

- **khandha** [*khandha*]:

Heap; group; aggregate. Physical and mental components of the personality and of sensory experience in general. The five bases of clinging (see *upādāna*). See: *nāma* (mental phenomenon), *rūpa* (physical phenomenon), *vedanā* (feeling), *saññā* (perception), *saṅkhāra* (mental fashionings), and *viññāṇa* (consciousness).

- **khanti** [*khanti*]:

Patience; forbearance. One of the ten perfections (*pāramīs*).

- **kilesa** [*kilesa*]:

Defilement - *lobha* (passion), *dosa* (aversion), and *moha* (delusion) in their various forms, which include such things as greed, malevolence, anger, rancor, hypocrisy, arrogance, envy, miserliness, dishonesty, boastfulness, obstinacy, violence, pride, conceit, intoxication, and complacency.

- **kusala** [*kusala*]:

Wholesome, skilful, good, meritorious. An action characterised by this moral quality (*kusala-kamma*) is bound to result (eventually) in

happiness and a favourable outcome. Actions characterised by its opposite (*akusala-kamma*) lead to sorrow. See *kamma*.

- **lakkhaṇa** [*lakkhaṇa*]:

See *ti-lakkhaṇa*.

- **lobha** [*lobha*]:

Greed; passion; unskilful desire. Also *rāga*. One of three unwholesome roots (*mūla*) in the mind.

- **loka-dhamma** [*loka-dhamma*]:

Affairs or phenomena of the world. The standard list gives eight: wealth, loss of wealth, status, loss of status, praise, criticism, pleasure, and pain.

- **Lokavidū** [*lokaviduu*]:

Knower of the cosmos. An epithet for the Buddha.

- **lokuttara** [*lokuttara*]:

Transcendent; supramundane (see *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*).

- **magga** [*magga*]:

Path. Specifically, the path to the cessation of suffering and stress. The four transcendent paths - or rather, one path with four levels of refinement - are the path to *stream-entry* (entering the stream to *nibbāna*, which ensures that one will be reborn at most only seven more

times), the path to once-returning, the path to non-returning, and the path to arahantship. See *phala*.

- **mahāthera** [*mahaathera*]:

‘Great elder’. An honorific title automatically conferred upon a *bhikkhu* of at least twenty years’ standing. Compare *thera*.

- **majjhima** [*majjhima*]:

Middle; appropriate; just right.

- **Māra** [*maara*]:

The personification of evil and temptation.

- **mettā** [*mettaa*]:

Loving-kindness; goodwill. One of the ten perfections (*pāramīs*) and one of the four ‘sublime abodes’ (*brahma-vihāra*).

- **moha** [*moha*]:

Delusion; ignorance (*avijjā*). One of three unwholesome roots (*mūla*) in the mind.

- **muditā** [*mudita*]:

Appreciative/sympathetic joy. Taking delight in one’s own goodness and that of others. One of the four ‘sublime abodes’ (*brahma-viharā*).

- **mūla** [*muula*]:

Literally, ‘root’. The fundamental conditions in the mind that determine the moral quality - skilful (*kusala*) or unskilful (*akusala*) - of one’s

intentional actions (see *kamma*). The three unskilful roots are *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (aversion), and *moha* (delusion); the skilful roots are their opposites. See *kilesa* (defilements).

- **nāga** [*naaga*]:

A term commonly used to refer to strong, stately, and heroic animals, such as elephants and magical serpents. In Buddhism, it is also used to refer to those who have attained the goal of the practice.

- **nāma** [*naama*]:

Mental phenomena. This term refers to the mental components of the five *khandhas*, and includes: *vedanā* (feeling), *saññā* (perception), *saṅkhāra* (mental fashionings), and *viññāṇa* (consciousness). Compare *rūpa*.

- **nāma-rūpa** [*naama-ruupa*]:

Name-and-form; mind-and-matter; mentality-physicality. The union of mental phenomena (*nāma*) and physical phenomena (*rūpa*) that constitutes the five aggregates (*khandha*), and which lies at a crucial link in the causal chain of dependent co-arising (*paṭiccasamuppāda*).

- **nekkhamma** [*nekkhamma*]:

Renunciation; literally, 'freedom from sensual lust'. One of the ten *pāramīs*.

- **nibbāna** [*nibbaana*; Skt. *nirvāṇa*]:

Liberation; literally, the 'unbinding' of the mind from the mental effluents (see *āśava*), defilements (see *kilesa*), and the round of rebirth (see *vaṭṭa*), and from all that can be described or defined. As this term also denotes the extinguishing of a fire, it carries the connotations of stilling, cooling, and peace. (According to the physics taught at the time of the Buddha, a burning fire seizes or adheres to its fuel; when extinguished, it is unbound.) 'Total nibbāna' in some contexts denotes the experience of Awakening; in others, the final passing away of an *arahant*.

- **nibbidā** [*nibbidaa*]:

Disenchantment; aversion; disgust; weariness. The skilful turning-away of the mind from the conditioned samsaric world towards the unconditioned, the transcendent - *nibbāna*

- **nimitta** [*nimitta*]:

Mental sign, image, or vision that may arise in meditation. *Uggaha nimitta* refers to any image that arises spontaneously in the course of meditation. *Paribhaga nimitta* refers to an image that has been subjected to mental manipulation.

- **nirodha** [*nirodha*]:

Cessation; disbanding; stopping.

- **nīvaraṇa** [*niivaraṇa*]:

Hindrances to concentration - sensual desire, ill will, sloth & drowsiness, restlessness & anxiety, and uncertainty.

- **opanayiko** [*opanayiko*]:

Referring inwardly; to be brought inward. An epithet for the Dhamma.

- **pabbajjā** [*pabbajjaa*]:

‘Going forth (from home to the homeless life)’; ordination as a *sāmaṇera* (*sāmaṇerī*), or novice monk (nun). See *upasampadā*.

- **paccattaṃ** [*paccattaṃ*]:

Personal; individual.

- **paccekabuddha** [*paccekabuddha*]:

Private Buddha. One who, like a Buddha, has gained Awakening without the benefit of a teacher, but who lacks the requisite store of *pāramīs* to teach others the practice that leads to Awakening. On attaining the goal, a paccekabuddha lives a solitary life.

- **Pāli** [*paali, paali*]:

The canon of texts (see *Tipiṭaka*) preserved by the Theravāda school and, by extension, the language in which those texts are composed.

- **paññā** [*pañña*]:

Discernment; insight; wisdom; intelligence; common sense; ingenuity. One of the ten perfections (*pāramīs*).

- **paññā-vimutti** [*pañña-vimutti*]:

See *vimutti*.

- **papañca** [*papañca*]:

Complication, proliferation. The tendency of the mind to proliferate issues from the sense of 'self'. This term can also be translated as self-reflexive thinking, reification, falsification, distortion, elaboration, or exaggeration. In the discourses, it is frequently used in analyses of the psychology of conflict.

- **pāramī, pāramitā** [*paaramii, paaramitaa*]:

Perfection of the character. A group of ten qualities developed over many lifetimes by a *bodhisatta*, which appear as a group in the Pāli canon only in the Jātaka ('Birth Stories'): generosity (*dāna*), virtue (*sīla*), renunciation (*nekkhamma*), discernment (*paññā*), energy/persistence (*virīya*), patience/forbearance (*khanti*), truthfulness (*sacca*), determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*), good will (*mettā*), and equanimity (*upekkhā*).

- **parinibbāna** [*parinibbaana*]:

Total Unbinding; the complete cessation of the *khandhas* that occurs upon the death of an *arahant*.

- **parisā** [*parisaa*]:

Following; assembly. The four groups of the Buddha's following that include monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen. Compare *saṅgha*. See *bhikkhu*, *bhikkhunī*, *upāsaka/upāsikā*.

- **pariyatti** [*pariyatti*]:

Theoretical understanding of *Dhamma* obtained through reading, study, and learning. See *paṭipatti* and *paṭivedha*.

- **paṭicca-samuppāda** [*paṭicca-samuppaada*]:

Dependent co-arising; dependent origination. A map showing the way the aggregates (*khandha*) and sense media (*ayatana*) interact with ignorance (*avijjā*) and craving (*taṇhā*) to bring about stress and suffering (*dukkha*). As the interactions are complex, there are several different versions of *paṭicca-samuppāda* given in the suttas. In the most common one, the map starts with ignorance. In another common one, the map starts with the interrelation between name (*nāma*) and form (*rūpa*) on the

one hand, and sensory consciousness (*viññāṇa*) on the other.

- **Pāṭimokkha** [*paatimokkha*]:

The basic code of monastic discipline, consisting of 227 rules for monks (*bhikkhus*) and 311 for nuns (*bhikkhunīs*). See *Vinaya*.

- **paṭipadā** [*paṭipadaa*]:

Road, path, way; the means of reaching a goal or destination. The 'Middle way' (*majjhimā paṭipadā*) taught by the Buddha; the path of practice described in the fourth noble truth (*dukkhanirodhagāminī-paṭipadā*).

- **paṭipatti** [*paṭipatti*]:

The practice of *Dhamma*, as opposed to mere theoretical knowledge (*pariyatti*). See also *paṭivedha*.

- **paṭivedha** [*paṭivedha*]:

Direct, first-hand realisation of the *Dhamma*. See also *pariyatti* and *paṭipatti*.

- **Peta** [*peta*; Skt. *preta*]:

A 'hungry shade' or 'hungry ghost' - one of a class of beings in the lower realms, sometimes capable of appearing to human beings. The petas are often depicted in Buddhist art as starving beings with pinhole-sized mouths through which they can never pass enough food to ease their hunger.

- **phala** [*phala*]:

Fruition. Specifically, the fruition of any of the four transcendent paths (see *magga*).

- **phra**:

(Thai). Venerable. Used as a prefix to the name of a monk (*bhikkhu*).

- **pīti** [*piiti*]:

Rapture; bliss; delight. In meditation, a pleasurable quality in the mind that reaches full maturity upon the development of the second level of *jhāna*.

- **pūjā** [*puujaa*]:

Honour; respect; devotional observance. Most commonly, the devotional observances that are conducted at monasteries daily (morning and evening), on *uposatha* days, or on other special occasions.

- **puñña** [*puñña*]:

Merit; worth; the inner sense of well-being that comes from having acted rightly or well and that enables one to continue acting well.

- **puthujjana** [*puthujjana*]:

One of the many-folk; a 'worlding' or run-of-the-mill person. An ordinary person who has not yet

realised any of the four stages of Awakening (see *magga*). Compare *ariya-puggala*.

- **rāga** [*raaga*]:

Lust; greed. See *lobha*.

- **run-of-the-mill person**:

See *puthujjana*.

- **rūpa** [*ruupa*]:

Body; physical phenomenon; sense datum. The basic meaning of this word is 'appearance' or 'form'. It is used, however, in a number of different contexts, taking on different shades of meaning in each. In lists of the objects of the senses, it is given as the object of the sense of sight. As one of the *khandha*, it refers to physical phenomena or sensations (visible appearance or form being the defining characteristics of what is physical). This is also the meaning it carries when opposed to *nāma*, or mental phenomena.

- **sabhāva-dhamma** [*sabhaava-dhamma*]:

Condition of nature; any phenomenon, event, property, or quality as experienced in and of itself.

- **sacca** [*sacca*]:

Truthfulness. One of the ten perfections (*pāramīs*).

- **saddhā** [*saddhaa*]:

Conviction, faith. A confidence in the Buddha that gives one the willingness to put his teachings into practice. Conviction becomes unshakeable upon the attainment of stream-entry (see *sotāpanna*).

- **sādhu** [*saadhu*]:

(exclamation) 'It is well'; an expression showing appreciation or agreement.

- **sagga** [*sagga*]:

Heaven, heavenly realm. The dwelling place of the *devas*. Rebirth in the heavens is said to be one of the rewards for practising generosity (see *dāna*) and virtue (see *sīla*). Like all waystations in *saṃsāra*, however, rebirth here is temporary. See also *sugati*.

- **sakadāgāmī** [*sakadaagaamii*]:

Once-returner. A person who has abandoned the first three of the fetters that bind the mind to the cycle of rebirth (see *saṃyojana*), has weakened the fetters of sensual passion and resistance, and who after death is destined to be reborn in this world only once more.

- **sakkāya-diṭṭhi** [*sakkaaya-diṭṭhi*]:

Self-identification view. The view that mistakenly identifies any of the *khandha* as 'self'; the first of the ten fetters (*saṃyojana*). Abandonment of

sakkāya-dit̥ṭhi is one of the hallmarks of stream-entry (see *sotāpanna*).

- **Sākyamuni** [*saakyamuni*]:

‘Sage of the Sakyans’; an epithet for the Buddha.

- **sākya-putta** [*saakya-putta*]:

Son of the Sakyan. An epithet for Buddhist monks, the Buddha having been a native of the Sakyan Republic.

- **sallekha-dhamma** [*sallekha-dhamma*]:

Topics of effacement (effacing defilement) - having few wants, being content with what one has, seclusion, uninvolvedness in companionship, persistence, virtue (see *sīla*), concentration, discernment, release, and the direct knowing and seeing of release.

- **samādhi** [*samaadhi*]:

Concentration; the practice of centering the mind in a single sensation or preoccupation, usually to the point of *jhāna*.

- **samaṇa** [*samaṇa*]:

Contemplative. Literally, a person who abandons the conventional obligations of social life in order to find a way of life more ‘in tune’ (*sama*) with the ways of nature.

- **sāmaṇera** (sāmaṇerī):

Literally, a small *samaṇa*; a novice monk (nun) who observes ten precepts and who is a candidate for admission to the order of *bhikkhus* (*bhikkhunīs*). See *pabbajjā*.

- **sambhavesin** [*sambhavesin*]:

(A being) searching for a place to take birth.

- **sammati** [*sammati*]:

Conventional reality; convention; relative truth; supposition; anything conjured into being by the mind.

- **sampajañña** [*sampajañña*]:

Alertness; self-awareness; presence of mind; clear comprehension. See *satī*.

- **saṃsāra** [*saṃsaara*]:

Transmigration; the round of death and rebirth. See *vaṭṭa*.

- **saṃvega** [*saṃvega*]:

The oppressive sense of shock, dismay, and alienation that comes with realising the futility and meaninglessness of life as it's normally lived; a chastening sense of one's own complacency and foolishness in having let oneself live so blindly; and an anxious sense of urgency in trying to find a way out of the meaningless cycle.

- **saṃyojana** [*saṃyojana*]:

Fetter that binds the mind to the cycle of rebirth (see *vaṭṭa*) - self-identification views (*sakkāya-ditṭhi*), uncertainty (*vicikicchā*), grasping at precepts and practices (*sīlabbata-parāmaṣa*); sensual passion (*kāma-rāga*), resistance (*vyāpāda*); passion for form (*rūpa-rāga*), passion for formless phenomena (*arūpa-rāga*), conceit (*māna*), restlessness (*uddhacca*), and unawareness (*avijjā*). Compare *anusaya*.

- **sandiṭṭhiko** [*sandiṭṭhiko*]:

Self-evident; immediately apparent; visible here and now. An epithet for the Dhamma.

- **saṅgha** [*saṅgha*]:

On the conventional (*sammatī*) level, this term denotes the communities of Buddhist monks and nuns; on the ideal (*ariya*) level, it denotes those followers of the Buddha, lay or ordained, who have attained at least stream-entry (see *sotāpanna*), the first of the transcendent paths (see *magga*) culminating in *nibbāna*. Recently, particularly in the West, the term 'saṅgha' has been popularly adapted to mean the wider sense of 'community of followers on the Buddhist path', although this usage finds no basis in the Pāli canon. The term '*parisā*' may be more appropriate for this much broader meaning.

- **saṅkhāra** [saṅkhaara]:

Formation, compound, fashioning, fabrication - the forces and factors that fashion things (physical or mental), the process of fashioning, and the fashioned things that result. *Saṅkhāra* can refer to anything formed or fashioned by conditions, or, more specifically, (as one of the five *khandhas*) thought-formations within the mind.

- **saññā** [sañña]:

Label; perception; allusion; act of memory or recognition; interpretation. See *khandha*.

- **sanyojana**:

See *saṃyojana*.

- **sāsaṇa** [saasana]:

Literally, 'message'. The dispensation, doctrine, and legacy of the Buddha; the Buddhist religion (see *Dhamma-vinaya*).

- **sati** [sati]:

Mindfulness, self-collectedness, powers of reference and retention. In some contexts, the word *sati* when used alone covers alertness (*sampajañña*) as well.

- **satipaṭṭhāna** [*satipaṭṭhaana*]:

Foundation of mindfulness; frame of reference - body, feelings, mind, and mental events, viewed in and of themselves as they occur.

- **sa-upādisesa-nibbāna** [*sa-upaadisesa-nibbaana*]:

Nibbāna with fuel remaining (the analogy is to an extinguished fire whose embers are still glowing) - liberation as experienced in this lifetime by an arahant. Cf. *anupādisesa-nibbāna*.

- **sāvaka** [*saavaka*]:

Literally, 'hearer'. A disciple of the Buddha, especially a noble disciple (see *ariya-puggala*.)

- **sayadaw**:

(Burmese). Venerable teacher; an honorific title and form of address for a senior or eminent *bhikkhu*.

- **sekha** [*sekha*]:

A 'learner' or 'one in training'; a noble disciple (*ariya-puggala*) who has not yet attained arahantship

- **sīla** [*siila*]:

Virtue, morality. The quality of ethical and moral purity that prevents one from falling away from the eightfold path. Also, the training precepts that restrain one from performing unskilful actions. Sīla is the second theme in the gradual

training (see *anupubbī-kathā*), one of the ten *pāramīs*, the second of the seven treasures (see *dhana*), and the first of the three grounds for meritorious action (see *dāna* and *bhāvanā*).

- **sīma** [*siima*]:

Boundary or territory within which the monastic saṅgha's formal acts (*upasampadā*, *pāṭimokkha* recitation, settling of disputes, etc.) must be performed in order to be valid.

- **sotāpanna** [*sotaapanna*]:

Stream winner. A person who has abandoned the first three of the fetters that bind the mind to the cycle of rebirth (see *saṃyojana*) and has thus entered the 'stream' flowing inexorably to *nibbāna*, ensuring that one will be reborn at most only seven more times, and only into human or higher realms.

- **stream-entry, stream-winner:**

See *sotāpanna*.

- **stress:**

See *dukkha*.

- **stūpa** (Pāli thūpa (*thuupa*)):

Originally, a tumulus or burial mound enshrining relics of a holy person - such as the Buddha - or objects associated with his life. Over the centuries this has developed into the tall, spired

monuments familiar in temples in Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Burma; and into the pagodas of China, Korea, and Japan.

- **‘such’:**

See *tādi*.

- **sugati** [*sugati*]:

Happy destinations; the two higher levels of existence into which one might be reborn as a result of past skilful actions (see *kamma*): rebirth in the human world or in the heavens (See *sagga*). None of these states is permanent. Compare *apāya-bhumi*.

- **sugato** [*sugato*]:

Well-faring; going (or gone) to a good destination. An epithet for the Buddha.

- **sukha** [*sukha*]:

Pleasure; ease; satisfaction. In meditation, a mental quality that reaches full maturity upon the development of the third level of *jhāna*.

- **sutta** [*sutta*; Skt. *sutra*]:

Literally, ‘thread’; a discourse or sermon by the Buddha or his contemporary disciples. After the Buddha's death the suttas were passed down in the Pāli language according to a well-established oral tradition, and were finally committed to written form in Sri Lanka around 100 BCE. More

than 10,000 suttas are collected in the Sutta Piṭaka, one of the principal bodies of scriptural literature in Theravāda Buddhism. The Pāli Suttas are widely regarded as the earliest record of the Buddha's teachings.

- **tādi** [*taadi*]:

‘Such’, an adjective to describe one who has attained the goal. It indicates that the person's state is indefinable but not subject to change or influences of any sort.

- **taṇhā** [*taṇhaa*]:

Craving - for sensuality, for becoming, or for not-becoming (see *bhava*). See also *lobha* (greed; passion)

- **tāpas** [*taapas*]:

The purifying ‘heat’ of meditative practice.

- **Tathāgata** [*tathaagatha*]:

Literally, ‘one who has truly gone (*tathā-gata*)’ or ‘one who has become authentic’ ‘(*tathā-agata*)’, an epithet used in ancient India for a person who has attained the highest spiritual goal. In Buddhism, it usually denotes the Buddha, although occasionally it also denotes any of his arahant disciples.

- **than, tan**:

(Thai). Reverend, venerable.

- **thera** [*thera*]:

‘Elder’. An honourific title automatically conferred upon a *bhikkhu* of at least ten years’ standing. Compare *mahāthera*.

- **Theravāda** [*theravaada*]:

The ‘Doctrine of the Elders’ - the only one of the early schools of Buddhism to have survived into the present; currently the dominant form of Buddhism in Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Burma. See also *Hīnayāna*.

- **ti-lakkhaṇa** [*ti-lakkhaṇa*]:

Three characteristics inherent in all conditioned phenomena - being inconstant, stressful, and not-self.

- **tipiṭaka** [*tipiṭaka*; Skt. *tripitaka*]:

The Buddhist (Pāli) Canon. Literally, ‘three baskets’, in reference to the three principal divisions of the Canon: the *Vinaya Piṭaka* (disciplinary rules); *Sutta Piṭaka* (discourses); and *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* (abstract philosophical treatises).

- **tiratana** [*tiratana*]:

The ‘Triple Gem’ consisting of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha - ideals to which all Buddhists turn for refuge. See *tisaraṇa*.

- **tisaraṇa** [*tisaraṇa*]:

The 'Threefold Refuge' - the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha. See *tiratana*.

- **ugghaṭitaññu** [*ugghaṭitaññu*]:

Of swift understanding. After the Buddha attained Awakening and was considering whether or not to teach the Dhamma, he perceived that there were four categories of beings: those of swift understanding, who would gain Awakening after a short explanation of the Dhamma; those who would gain Awakening only after a lengthy explanation (*vipacitaññu*); those who would gain Awakening only after being led through the practice (*neyya*); and those who, instead of gaining Awakening, would at best gain only a verbal understanding of the Dhamma (*padaparama*).

- **Unbinding**:

See *nibbāna*.

- **upādāna** [*upaadaana*]:

Clinging; attachment; sustenance for becoming and birth - attachment to sensuality, to views, to precepts and practices, and to theories of the self.

- **upasampadā** [*upasampadaa*]:

Acceptance; full ordination as a *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhunī*. See *pabbajjā*.

- **upāsaka/upāsikā** [*upaasaka/upaasikaa*]:

A male/female lay follower of the Buddha.
Compare *parisā*.

- **upekkhā** [*upekkhaa*]:

Equanimity. One of the ten perfections (*pāramīs*) and one of the four 'sublime abodes' (*brahma-vihāra*).

- **uposatha** [*uposatha*]:

Observance day, corresponding to the phases of the moon, on which Buddhist lay people gather to listen to the Dhamma and to observe special precepts. On the new-moon and full-moon uposatha days monks assemble to recite the *Pāṭimokkha* rules.

- **vassā** [*vassaa*]:

Rains Retreat. A period from July to October, corresponding roughly to the rainy season, in which each monk is required to live settled in a single place and not wander freely about.

- **vaṭṭa** [*vaṭṭa*]:

The cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. This denotes both the death and rebirth of living beings and the death and rebirth of defilement (*kilesa*) within the mind. See *saṃsāra*.

- **vedanā** [*vedanaa*]:

Feeling - pleasure (ease), pain (stress), or neither pleasure nor pain. See *khandha*.

- **Vesak, Vesākha, Visākha, Wesak**, etc. [*visaakha*]:

The ancient name for the Indian lunar month in spring corresponding to our April-May. According to tradition, the Buddha's birth, Awakening, and *Parinibbāna* each took place on the full-moon night in the month of Visākha. These events are commemorated on that day in the Visākha festival, which is celebrated annually throughout the world of Theravāda Buddhism.

- **vicāra** [*vicaara*]:

Evaluation; sustained thought. In meditation, *vicāra* is the mental factor that allows one's attention to shift and move about in relation to the chosen meditation object. *Vicāra* and its companion factor *vitakka* reach full maturity upon the development of the first level of *jhāna*.

- **vijjā** [*vijjaa*]:

Clear knowledge; genuine awareness; science (specifically, the cognitive powers developed through the practice of concentration and discernment).

- **vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno** [*vijjaa-caraṇa-sampanno*]:

Consummate in knowledge and conduct; accomplished in the conduct leading to

awareness or cognitive skill. An epithet for the Buddha.

- **vimutti** [*vimutti*]:

Release; freedom from the fabrications and conventions of the mind. The suttas distinguish between two kinds of release. Discernment-release (*paññā-vimutti*) describes the mind of the *arahant*, which is free of the *āsavas*. Awareness-release (*ceto-vimutti*) is used to describe either the mundane suppression of the *kilesas* during the practice of *jhāna* and the four *brahma-vihāras*, or the supramundane state of concentration in the *āsava*-free mind of the *arahant*.

- **Vinaya** [*vinaya*]:

The monastic discipline, spanning six volumes in printed text, whose rules and traditions define every aspect of the *bhikkhus'* and *bhikkhunīs'* way of life. The essence of the rules for monastics is contained in the *Pāṭimokkha*. The conjunction of the *Dhamma* with the Vinaya forms the core of the Buddhist religion: '*Dhamma-vinaya*' – 'the doctrine and discipline' - is the name the Buddha gave to the religion he founded.

- **viññāṇa** [*viññāṇa*]:

Consciousness; cognisance; the act of taking note of sense data and ideas as they occur. There is also a type of consciousness that lies outside of the *khandhas* - called consciousness without feature (*viññāṇam anidassanam*) - which is not related to the six senses at all. See *khandha*.

- **vipāka** [*vipaaka*]:

The consequence and result of a past volitional action (*kamma*).

- **vipassanā** [*vipassanaa*]:

Clear intuitive insight into physical and mental phenomena as they arise and disappear, seeing them for what they actually are - in and of themselves - in terms of the three characteristics (see *ti-lakkhaṇa*) and in terms of stress, its origin, its disbanding, and the way leading to its disbanding (see *ariya-sacca*).

- **vipassanūpakkilesa** [*vipassanuupakkilesa*]:

Corruption of insight; intense experiences that can happen in the course of meditation and can lead one to believe that one has completed the path. The standard list includes ten: light, psychic knowledge, rapture, serenity, pleasure, extreme conviction, excessive effort, obsession, indifference, and contentment.

- **viriya** [*viriya*]:

Persistence; energy. One of the ten perfections (*pāramīs*), the five faculties (*bala*; see *bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammā*), and the five strengths/dominant factors (*indriya*; see *bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammā*).

- **vitakka** [*vitakka*]:

Directed thought. In meditation, *vitakka* is the mental factor by which one's attention is applied to the chosen meditation object. *Vitakka* and its companion factor *vicāra* reach full maturity upon the development of the first level of *jhāna*.

- **yakkha** [*yakkha*]:

One of a special class of powerful 'non-human' beings -sometimes kindly, sometimes murderous and cruel -corresponding roughly to the fairies and ogres of Western fairy tales. The female (*yakkhini*) is generally considered more treacherous than the male.

Source: "A Glossary of Pali and Buddhist Terms", edited by John T. Bullitt. *Access to Insight*, June 7, 2009, <http://www.accesstoinight.org/glossary.html>

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