

FOREST DESANAS

Volume 2

Ajaan Mahā Boowa Ñāṇasampanno



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Volume 2

*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*

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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 honourific 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 Bhūridatta*, 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 practising 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, settling in 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 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, Wat Pa Baan Taad, in November 1955.

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 memorised 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 practise 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 tranquillity for the practice of the *Dhamma* as taught by the Lord *Buddha*.

Rise to fame

Ajahn Mahā Bua has travelled 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 practised *Dhamma*. This is best exemplified in the *Dhamma* talks he gives to those who go to meditate at Wat Pa Baan Taad. 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 quickens 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 characterised 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 deceptions 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 behaviour 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, odours, 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 mesmerising, 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 a while. 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 characterise 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 realise 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 *āśava*, 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 Bhūridatta Mahāthera*.

Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia,

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ajahn_Maha_Bua

(Consulted 9 September 2009)

Two Kinds of Knowledges

August 9th, 1979

No matter how sophisticated and advanced the world's knowledge may be, it can't eliminate the world's suffering and hardship in the same way the knowledge of *Dhamma* can, because *Dhamma* always imparts peace and coolness. A world without *Dhamma* is a world of *dukkha*. Regardless of how much you may have studied, this mundane knowledge will never get rid of the *dukkha* inside your heart because it's not intended for the removal of *dukkha*. Only the knowledge of *Dhamma* taught by all the *Buddhas* can do this. If you study and practise *the Dhamma*, you'll definitely achieve the results of *Dhamma*. Although worldly knowledge and *Dhamma* knowledge are both considered knowledges, they are different just like males and females, although both human beings, are different. You can always tell them apart by merely looking at them.

It's the same with worldly knowledge and *Dhamma* knowledge: they have different features and purposes. You can tell them apart if you study and practise *Dhamma*. On the other hand, if you haven't studied and practised *Dhamma* you won't be able to tell them apart. How could you? You'll only know about the world and will think it's the greatest place to live, to excel in fame, fortune, honour, influence and power, although your heart is actually empty of them and is always hot and burning. No matter how high and mighty you may proclaim yourself to be, it won't make you truly happy. You mustn't, therefore, think that you'll find true happiness by only learning

worldly knowledge. In whichever time and place, and in whatever class or society of people this *Dhamma* is established, it'll always impart happiness to them, corresponding to the intensity of the *Dhamma* that has been developed in them. The *Dhamma* is, therefore, indispensable for the world. *Dhamma* should always accompany every undertaking if you want to benefit from it, whether it's for yourself, your family, your society, or your country. Without the *Dhamma*, you'll end up with suffering and stress. The reason why there isn't any true happiness in this world is because there isn't any *Dhamma*.

Looking inside your heart, you'll see, whenever you think about all the troubling events happening in the world, your heart will be consumed by them. The more you think, the more troubled your heart will become. You can gauge your *dukkha* by your thoughts. When you don't think about troubling events, your *citta* will be calm and peaceful. When your *citta* experiences the *samatha* or tranquil *Dhamma*, even at the beginning stage, you'll be awestruck. *Samatha* means tranquillity that arises from your *Dhamma* practice and produces true happiness. The *ārammaṇa* or feelings generated by thinking about *Dhamma* and thinking about the world differ greatly from one another. Thinking about the world produces *dukkha* and stress, whilst thinking about *Dhamma* eliminates the *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, *āsavas* and *dukkha* from your heart. If you're a *Dhamma* practitioner and truly believe in the law of *kamma* taught by the Lord *Buddha*, you should closely watch those thoughts that are propelled by the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava* because they will give rise to *dukkha*. Those thoughts and *dukkha* are inseparable. If you want to think, you should think about *Dhamma*, refrain from thinking about the

world at all times, you should always oppose and eliminate those thoughts. No matter how hard it might be, you've got to do it because it's your job. The Lord *Buddha* said this is the way he and his noble disciples or *sāvakas* eliminated the *kilesas*. They all had to endure *dukkha* and hardship before they could destroy all the *kilesas*.

When you go into battle, it's normal for you to run into *dukkha* like boxers fighting in the ring do. Even the winner has to go through a lot of *dukkha*, not just the loser. This kind of winning, however, will never put an end to your conflicts. But the *Dhamma's* triumph over your *kilesas* will. It's normal for you to run into *dukkha* when you have to oppose and destroy the *kilesas* by developing mindfulness and insight. The Lord *Buddha* was the first one to experience this *dukkha* when he collapsed from his exertion. It's the same with the *sāvakas* or noble disciples. If these *dukkha* experiences were normal in the past, how can you expect otherwise? How can you become enlightened without going through this *dukkha* that the Lord *Buddha* and the *sāvakas* went through? It's unavoidable! You've got to run into *dukkha* as you follow the footsteps of the Lord *Buddha* and the *sāvakas*. They had to experience *dukkha*, so must you. They were fighters, so must you be. It can then be said that you're following your great teacher, the Lord *Buddha*. You mustn't be deceived by your thoughts and feelings that are created by the *kilesas*, and mustn't obey them, but must always defy them.

Dhamma is your weapon that'll identify and destroy all the *kilesas*. *Sati* or mindfulness is the *Dhamma* that will protect and support you. The

kilesas will appear in various guises when visual objects, sounds, tastes, smells, and tactile objects come into contact with your heart, where you'll always notice them and oppose them, if your *sati* is ever-present and you're really determined to fight them. *Sati* is the indispensable *Dhamma* that will always take care of you. You shouldn't be idle and unmindful. You might think you're relaxing, but actually you're being complacent and waiting for the *kilesas* to do you in. This is not good for you. What's really good for you is when you're killing the *kilesas*, which is your most important mission and duty because this is your goal and the reason you take up the robe. You've experienced the worldly life before you took up the robe and know that it's mixed with poisons. You can't trust the taste of worldly life to always give you happiness, but you can wholeheartedly trust the taste of *Dhamma*. You're now putting your trust in and relying on your *Dhamma* practice to always provide you with happiness. The four requisites of living - food, clothing, shelter, and medicines - have all been abundantly provided by your lay supporters. They willingly offer their supports out of their *saddhā* or faith and respect, so you don't have to worry about them and be distracted from your exertion which is your only task -- the task of eliminating all the *kilesas* -- using the various means and techniques devised by your own common sense and ability. None of the other tasks are important or vital for a *samaṇa*, one who has gone forth and follows the Lord *Buddha*.

You shouldn't deceive yourself into doing any other tasks because you think they're attractive or worthwhile. Developing worldly things isn't as important as developing your heart so that it will give you

contentment. Although you may be living in a small hut with the roof leaking, you'll find it comfortable and free from worries. When you leave the hut, you won't worry if anything should happen to it. You're not seeking for fame or fortune because that isn't worthwhile even if it's fashionable. It's just a fad, not the real thing. The real thing is the Lord *Buddha's* teaching. If you faithfully follow his teaching, you'll always find security and fulfilment even if you're living in a shack. *Sati* is indispensable in the battle between the *kilesas* and *Dhamma*. Most of the time it's the *kilesas* that destroy the *Dhamma* due to the lack of *sati*. You must, therefore, be very mindful. This is your task. I'm telling you from the bottom of my heart and from my profound appreciation for the *Dhamma* that I realised from my practice. I've always faithfully followed the *Dhamma* teaching, like the one that says, *rukkhamūla senāsanaṃ*, living in the forest, which is an ideal cultivating ground for someone who aims for freedom from *dukkha*, by continually investigating *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā*, *taco*, or head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth and skin.

This is *taca pañcaka kammaṭṭhāna*, literally translated as a list of the five body parts with the skin as the fifth part. What it actually means is the skin that wraps around the body and obscures the heart from perceiving the body's true nature. Even though it's very thin, it can completely cover up the truth. The Lord *Buddha* taught us to investigate the five *kammaṭṭhānas* in both forward and reverse order. When you get to the skin, you must then dissect the skin and look at the flesh and the innards to see what they look like. You've already seen the external body parts; now you want to see the internal parts. If you only look at the external parts; you'll always be deceived. Looking under the skin

will give you insight to the true nature of the body. You should repeatedly investigate these body parts, back and forth, like the farmers who rake and plough their fields, back and forth, again and again, until the soil is ready for planting. You shouldn't use the number of times you have investigated to measure your result of the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*, but you should use your ability to skilfully and repeatedly investigate until truly seeing and letting go of the body as a measurement of your success. When you've truly seen with *paññā* the body's true nature, you'll naturally sever your attachment to the body. This is *sandiṭṭhiko*, seeing the truth by practice. This is the *bhikkhus* occupation, your occupation. You should always keep this in mind.

Don't waste your time working like people in the world do, such as building temples, monks' living quarters or *kuṭīs*, assembly halls or *sālās*, and then forget to do your *Dhamma* practice that will keep your heart calm, peaceful and cool. When you don't practise, you'll feel bored and restless, and be driven to do some other kind of work, like building shrines and pagodas that don't promote peace and calm, but disarray and trouble, inside and outside the temple. Inside the temple, it troubles the monks or *bhikkhus* and novices or *sāmaṇeras*. Outside the temple, it troubles the lay supporters. It'll strain the relationship between the laity and the *bhikkhus* who are *puñña khettaṃ lokassa*, the best people to make merits with. Instead of cooperating, they will oppose each other. The *saṅgha* or the community of monks now turns into vampires instead of being the best people to make merit with. So how can this lead to peace and tranquillity? Think about it! It's because the *bhikkhus* aren't sticking to their occupation which is to develop

morality and the *citta* to perfection. You need *satipaṇṇā* to constantly look after your *citta*, and you should never be without it, if you want your *citta* to become worthy of adoration and reverence. It isn't beyond the disciplining ability of *satipaṇṇā*. The Lord *Buddha* prescribed the forty meditation subjects or themes or *kammaṭṭhānas* for each practitioner to choose from, depending on his or her character and disposition. They are the basis of your mental development and your most important undertaking.

To see the body's true nature, you must use the five *kammaṭṭhānas*, that is, head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth and skin, or the entire thirty-two body parts as your objects of investigation, whichever you prefer. These body parts are with you all the times, so why can't you see them? How was it that the Lord *Buddha* and the *sāvakas* were able to see them? Their eyes were similar to your eyes, their hearts were similar to your heart, and their *satipaṇṇā* were similar to your *satipaṇṇā*. The reason is that they correctly used their *satipaṇṇā* in their investigation for the truth. By following faithfully the *Dhamma* teaching, they were able to remove their delusions and became enlightened. Their mission was to eliminate the *kilesas*, *tanhās* and *āsavas* which is the same mission for all *bhikkhus* because it's their real mission. You should resolve to complete this mission by tirelessly investigating with your *satipaṇṇā* and shouldn't see other undertakings to be more important because they will lead you away from peace and contentment or the *samaṇa Dhamma* and the Lord *Buddha's* teaching. You already have adequate living requisites to fill your needs, so you shouldn't be concerned with them, because it will just needlessly disturb you. You should instead

concentrate all your efforts on your meditation practice, no matter how hard and difficult it might be, because you're now on the battlefield.

If you're having difficulty fighting the *kilesas*, you should ask yourself why. 'Why can't the *citta* calm down? What causes the *citta* to be restless and agitated? What kind of thoughts is the *citta* being obsessed with?' You should then use your thoughts as the object of your investigation to see their true nature. This will then lead you to the *citta* that's being deceived by your thoughts which keep generating ideas and concepts to entangle and bind the *citta* to your thoughts. This is the way of doing the investigation. But, first of all, you should calm your *citta* with *satipaṇṇā*. The *citta* will eventually calm down because it can't resist the power of *satipaṇṇā*. It's the same way with all types of *kilesas*. They can't oppose the power of *satipaṇṇā*. *Dhamma* is always a superior opponent. It's the tool for training and disciplining the *citta* and the tool for the eradication of all types of *kilesas*. But when you apply *Dhamma* in your practice, it's the *kilesas* that are knocking you down. Why? It's because you haven't developed enough *Dhamma* yet to be able to catch up with the *kilesas*. Therefore, you shouldn't remain idle. You should use your *satipaṇṇā* to devise different methods of investigation to gain insight into the *kilesas*' nature and attain to the various *Dhamma* levels that are the consequences of your investigation and contemplation on the various *Dhamma* themes. This can be any part of your body, or other people's bodies that come into contact with you. You must investigate to see them as repulsive or *asubha*. Both your body and other people's bodies can be used to develop the *magga*, the path to the cessation of *dukkha*. It's these *saṅkhāras* or thoughts that can generate either *magga*,

or *samudaya*, the creator of *dukkha*. But normally these *saṅkhāras* are manipulated by the *kilesas* and become the creator for *samudaya*, and this has always been so. There's no question about this. In order to make these *saṅkhāras* the *magga's* weapon and deliver you to freedom, you have to train these *saṅkhāras* to work for *Dhamma*.

If the *citta* doesn't calm down, how can you, a *bhikkhu*, find any happiness? If your *citta* is being burned with the *kilesas'* fire of lust, hatred and delusion, what then is this world, this body and this existence is good for? If you're always depressed and despairing, how can you make your life meaningful and worthwhile? You have to rely on the meaningful and worthwhile *Dhamma* to eliminate the worthless *kilesas*, which are the main culprits that make your life worthless. When the *kilesas* are destroyed, calm will appear. In the beginning stages of practice, calm is very essential. If the *citta* isn't calm, you'll never be happy because you'll be smouldering with the fire of lust, hatred and delusion. You are not noble because you put on the yellow robe. What's noble about this yellow robe? There are plenty of them in the shops. It's only a symbol of your noble life and lofty goal. What's a *bhikkhu's* goal? It's the removal of the *kilesas*, and not the accumulation of the *kilesas*. It's not his goal to remain idle in the midst of the fire of lust, hatred and delusion. His initial goal is to be always calm and cool. Then he must investigate the body to see that it's made up of the four elements, it's *aniccāṃ*, *dukkhāṃ* and *anattā*, it's repulsive or *asubha* and it's filthy or *paṭikkūla*. This body is full of *aniccāṃ*, *dukkhāṃ* and *anattā*. You must concentrate your *satipaṇṇā* to investigate the body to see clearly its true nature.

You shouldn't presume that you'll always be living and studying with your teacher because you're living in the world of impermanence or *aniccam*. So whilst you're still living and studying with him, you should concentrate all your efforts in getting rid of all the *kilesas*. When you have any questions, you can ask your teacher. I'm always ready to answer your questions and to advise you on your meditation practice. Besides instructing you, I'm also waiting to hear about the results of your practice that you've got to see and experience yourself. When you do, it's unavoidable that there'll be questions, especially when you're developing *paññā*. Some of these questions or problems you'll be able to solve yourself, but with some others you'll need your teacher's assistance, as you steadily advance in your practice. For this reason, the Lord *Buddha* called his students *sāvaka*, which means 'one who listens'. You've got to listen to his teaching in order to know how to practise. Only the Lord *Buddha* is a *sabbpaññū*, a self-enlightened one. The *sāvakas* have to listen first before they can become enlightened. You're a *sāvaka*, one who listens, so you must listen to his teaching and have it deeply embedded within your heart. You mustn't just merely listen, for this is like splashing water on a dog. No matter how much water you might splash on it, it'll shake it all off. It's the same with the *Dhamma* teaching that is being splashed into your heart, you can shake it all off with the *kilesas'* power. If you listen unmindfully, it'll be impossible for you to retain any *Dhamma* in your heart and acquire the *satipaññā* to free yourself. This is not the way for a serious practitioner who aims for freedom from *dukkha* to listen. If you do, you'll be like pork on the chopping board.

I have great concern for you, and that's why I have to constantly give you these instructions. I don't see anything in this monastery as valuable as my students who are studying and living with me. I think of the benefits that they'll acquire after they've developed themselves to perfection, and then help propagating the Lord *Buddha's* teaching, which will happen naturally and inevitably. But now you should only be concerned with developing and training yourself to establish a foundation in *Dhamma* and to have complete confidence in yourself. The benefit for others will follow, just as in the way of the Lord *Buddha*. He first concentrated all of his efforts in developing himself and paid no attention to anything else. After he had become enlightened and completely freed from *dukkha*, he then took up the duty of a teacher, teaching *Dhamma* with love and compassion until he finally passed away. By his example, the *Dhamma* teaching has been preserved and passed on right down to the present. The benefits for yourself and others are, therefore, inseparable. All the noble disciples or *sāvakas* have all followed the example of the Lord *Buddha* to their utmost ability. They benefitted others as much as they could. If you aren't enlightened yet, how could you teach others to become enlightened? It's not possible. If you blindly teach, how can your students see the truth? Your students won't benefit from your teaching. If you only know the theoretical *Dhamma* and not the practical *Dhamma*, your teaching won't enlighten your students but will only provide them with speculations that will lead them away from the right path.

This is in great contrast to an enlightened practitioner who can teach with complete confidence, because he teaches what he has experienced and realised within his heart. So how can he blindly teach, when

the truth is clearly manifested within himself? His students will be able to listen with complete confidence. That's how the *Dhamma* was propagated during the Lord *Buddha's* time. Therefore, the transmission of the practical *Dhamma* is different from the theoretical *Dhamma* that can only describe the *kilesas* inside the heart, but can't destroy them. This is useless! You've got to see the truth, because it's distinctly different from the theory. The description of the *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, *āsavas*, the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*, is very different from the actual thing. The description can't terminate the *kilesas*, but the actual experience can. When you've clearly seen the *kilesas'* true nature, they will all disappear. Be sincere and earnest. The Lord *Buddha's Dhamma* can be clearly realised within your heart. Don't relent in your exertion, but intensify it. If there's *dukkha*, you must endure it. Every living being has to experience *dukkha*. Don't be deterred or weakened by the *dukkha* that arises from fighting the *kilesas*, because it won't kill you, but will make you victorious. This *dukkha* will help you eliminate the *dukkha* created by the *kilesas* and remove all the *dukkha* from your heart. So how can this *dukkha* be unbearable, discouraging or cause defeat? If you can't face the *dukkha* arising from your practice, how will you face the *dukkha* created by the *kilesas*? As a practitioner, you have to think rationally. You can't make food out of *satipaṭṭhāna* because it's only good for eliminating the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavas*.

Listening to a *desanā* or *Dhamma* talk given by an enlightened teacher is considered by those who practise mental development to be the first priority. If you're developing calm, your *citta* will calm down very easily whilst listening to a *desanā* even if you never had any calm

before. If you're continually mindful of the sound of *Dhamma* flowing into your *citta*, the *citta* doesn't think about other things. Normally, it's the *citta's* habit to think aimlessly. Even when you're meditating, you can still think aimlessly because your thoughts are more powerful than your *sati*, which, in the beginning stages of development, won't be able to stop your thoughts. When you listen to a *desanā*, you should focus your attention at the sound of *Dhamma* flowing into your *citta*. This will prevent you from thinking aimlessly and consequently your *citta* will calm down. You'll see that it's a lot easier to develop calm by listening to a *Dhamma* talk than meditating by yourself. If you've already established a calm foundation, you'll swiftly and easily enter into calm. Sometimes, when you've entered into calm, you'll let go of the sound of *Dhamma* and your *citta* will remain still without the need of a controller like *sati*. This can also happen.

If you're developing *paññā* when you listen to a discourse, the *citta* won't remain still, but will actively follow the discourse because it's *paññā's* nature to be always investigating even when you're alone. When you listen to your teacher's *desanā*, *paññā* will follow it closely as if your teacher is clearing the path ahead of you. When he comes to the topic of your investigation, you'll attentively listen to the explanation that he will give you without any hesitation because he has already understood it. After you've heard his explanation you'll also understand it. That's why I truly believe that it's possible to become enlightened whilst listening to the Lord *Buddha* giving a discourse. How can I not believe this when I have experienced it myself? Who can teach better than the Lord *Buddha*, who is considered to be the greatest teacher? Next to him were his noble disciples or

sāvakas, who were also enlightened. Everything they taught was all true and came from their practical experiences. If you listen to a *Dhamma* talk given by an enlightened person, you can become enlightened. If it's given by an unenlightened person, it'll be filled entirely with speculation and you won't gain any benefit. The discourse or *desanā* given by a theorist is different from that of a practitioner. A theorist doesn't know the real *Dhamma*. What *Dhamma* he knows is all fake.

The *citta* is where you'll have to eliminate your troubles. You shouldn't look elsewhere because the main culprit is the *citta* that's constantly creating troubles for you by ceaselessly thinking about the past and the future, about visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile objects, about good and bad, right and wrong. No matter how long ago things might have happened, it'll keep thinking about them and become happy, sad or disturbed. You're deceived by the *kilesas*' trickery, by their manipulation of the five *khandhas*, their longtime servants. You've got to make the *khandhas* the *Dhamma*'s servants by eliminating all the *kilesas* from your heart. After you've achieved this, the five *khandhas* will become the *Dhamma*'s exclusive servants. But they will remain active because it's their nature. This is especially so with *sarikhāra* and *saññā*. *Saññā* is much more subtle than *sarikhāra* because it permeates quietly, like ink over absorbent paper. *Sarikhāra* has to stir before it can think. *Saññā* just quietly spreads out to form a mental picture for *sarikhāra* to conceptualise with. It's natural for *saññā* and *sarikhāra* to remain active even without the *kilesas* to manipulate them except when the *citta* rests in *samādhi*. However, whatever they do will have no effect

because there's nobody to be affected by them. But if they're manipulated by the *kilesas*, they'll become a problem. If they're not, they will keep on creating mental images and thoughts until the dissolution of the body where they'll come to a complete cessation.

These five *khandhas* will continue to function after they're free from the *kilesas*, like a lizard's tail which has been cut off that still goes on wriggling as if it's still alive, when in fact there's no life in it. These five *khandhas* will continue on because the *citta* still possesses them, although the *citta* isn't attached to or deluded by them. When you hear a sound, you'll be aware of it because the ears and the sense awareness or *viññāṇa* still function. As soon as you hear the sound, it'll disappear if you don't grab it and become attached to it. It'll appear and disappear. These *khandhas* will only become still and quiet when the *citta* rests in *samādhi*. When they temporarily stop to function, all that remains is just the knowingness that seems to pervade the whole universe, like a sound that spreads in all directions. This is due to its greatness and grandeur. Nothing can penetrate it or influence it. It can't be created through your imagination. It's so subtle that it can't really be compared with anything. Even though you might know what it's like, you just won't be able to describe it. It's as if the world and the universe have all disappeared. All that remains is this knowingness, striking and imposing. You can't pinpoint where this knowingness is, and neither do you care to. What for? When you know you can't locate this knowingness, you just accept that fact. This knowingness has no other characteristics except this undeniable knowing, which is its true nature. It has no desires, no cravings. To it, nothing is too much or too little. Everything is just right. This

knowingness is so vast; it seems to be embracing the whole universe. It's also so empty; it seems devoid of the whole universe, because it doesn't have anything to do with it. After you've emerged from this *samādhī*, all the mental phenomena or *nāma khandhas* like feelings, perceptions, thoughts and sense awareness will reappear. They'll appear and immediately disappear, and won't become a long chain, because there are no *kilesas* to connect them. There are no *samudayas* to create *dukkha* for the *citta*. You can use these mental phenomena anyway you like while they're still active.

You've got to see this for yourself. What I'm telling you may sound incredible to you. When you've seen what I've seen, you'll see what I mean. This is what the genuine truth is like. The *citta* has now become constant or unchanged. You can't say 'How come the *citta* is like this today? How come the *citta* was like that yesterday?' This won't happen. You'll clearly see that it's the *kilesas* that cause the *citta* to change, to become this and that. These changes, whether they're coarse or subtle, are the *kilesas'* conjuring tricks. After you've completely eliminated them, there's nothing left to deceive you. The *citta* remains the same day in and day out. As far as the years, months, and days are concerned, they're just conventional reality or relative truths that have no impact on the *citta*. The *citta* sees them as merely a passage of time and events, from day to night, from sunrise to sunset. What's there to be deluded about? The earth that you walk on is just the earth element. In your stomach, there're plenty of the water element. Your body keeps breathing the air element in and out. The fire element keeps your body warm. They're just elements. Why be deluded with the concept of I and mine, human

beings and animals? Why create these concepts to contradict the *Dhamma*? To defy the *Dhamma* is like walking on thorns. You must see in accordance with the *Dhamma*. If they are just elements, you should see them as just elements. If you see according to the truth that the Lord *Buddha* taught, all your problems will be solved.

Be really earnest and sincere. You must destroy all the *kilesas* because they are harmful to the *citta*. Your thoughts and imagination are also harmful because they are instigated by the *kilesas*. It's the same with your presumptions and suppositions. But after you've completely eliminated the *kilesas*, you can think anyway you want to. It won't do any harm because you can control your thinking; you can prompt it or restrain it. These *khandhas* become like tools that you put in the proper place after you have finished using them. When you want to go to sleep, you just shut them off. When you want to enter into *samādhi*, you just restrain all your thoughts and feelings and enter into the state of knowingness where you can rest in peace and bliss. And that's all there's to it. When the time comes for their dissolution, you're ready for it because you've thoroughly investigated them. You won't get excited because you know that death is just the disintegration of the four elements. You won't feel like wanting to die or wanting to live. Both the aversion to death and the attraction to life are one and the same thing. Why go on living when it's time to pass away? Why try to resist it?

This reminds me of the Lord *Buddha*, our wise and great teacher, during the time when the Venerable *Sāriputta* came to bid him farewell as Venerable *Sariputta* was about to pass away. Had the Lord

Buddha requested the Venerable *Sāriputta* not to pass away yet, but to live a little bit longer to help him teach the *Dhamma*, then this would be encouraging him to remain longer in the *vaṭṭa cakka* or cycle of birth, death and rebirth. If the Lord *Buddha* didn't want him to pass away yet when death was imminent, it would be resisting death. Had he said go ahead, then it would be encouraging death. The Lord *Buddha* advised that when the time is right for *Sāriputta* to die, let it happen. This was the most appropriate advice. When he said 'when the time is right', he meant *Sāriputta* should let death happen naturally following the law of nature that *Sāriputta* had already investigated. In this way he wouldn't be resisting the truth. He could have said go ahead, pass away, but when it's not yet the time, why pass away? That's why he said when the time is right for you to go, go. When it's not yet the time, stay. But before you leave, you should give a *Dhamma* discourse. The Lord *Buddha* said this to the Venerable *Sāriputta*, and the Venerable *Sāriputta* understood that the Lord *Buddha* had given him the permission to display his teaching prowess and supernatural powers. After he finished, he then took his leave. The Lord *Buddha* then gave permission to about five hundred *bhikkhus* and *sāmaṇeras*, monks and novices to accompany the Venerable *Sāriputta* to his birthplace for his passing away. The point here is that the Lord *Buddha* didn't request the Venerable *Sāriputta* to live longer, because it would promote the *vaṭṭa cakka* existence and would defy the law of nature. But if the Lord *Buddha* had said go ahead, it would be another extreme, and would be contradictory to the truth. That's why the Lord *Buddha* told him he should let the *khandhas* break up naturally.

It was the same way with the Venerable *Mogallāna* when he came to bid farewell to the Lord *Buddha*, which was seven days after the Venerable *Sāriputta*, if my memory doesn't fail me. The Lord *Buddha* gave the Venerable *Mogallāna* the same advice and the permission for him to demonstrate his teaching prowess and supernatural powers. First, he gave a *Dhamma* talk; then he flew up to the sky and back down to earth to give another *Dhamma* talk and repeated this feat several times. The Lord *Buddha* also gave the *bhikkhus* and *sāmañeras* permission to accompany the Venerable *Mogallāna* as he left for his passing away.

During the Lord *Buddha*'s time, the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* were plentiful amongst the practitioners. There were many who were imbued with the *magga* and *phala*, the path and fruit. But when it comes down to our time there are only people possessed with fake *Dhamma*. There are only the names of the *kilesas* and of *Dhamma*, but the real *Dhamma*, be it *samādhi* or *paññā* or *vimutti*, is not there. Who's going to bring back to life the real *Dhamma* of the Lord *Buddha*? Who's going to apply the *majjhimā*, the middle way of practice that is suitable for achieving the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*, and eliminating all the *kilesas* which oppose the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*? It must be you, the practitioner. You should only be concerned for and look after yourself. Always remind yourself to practise. Don't remain idle if you don't want to remain ignorant. You should devise various methods and techniques of *paññā* to fight the *kilesas* and gain insight. First, you have to nurture your *paññā* until it can investigate on its own without being prompted and will relentlessly investigate to the point where you'll have to restrain it.

Concerning *uddhacca*, one of the higher *saṃyojana* or fetters as described in the texts, I wonder what was in the mind of the person who recorded this. This is not trying to find fault with him but the text reveals his state of mind. That is, was he free of the *kilesas* or was he still possessed with the *kilesas*, for describing *uddhacca* as a mundane state of restlessness and agitation as classified in the five mental hindrances that can occur in any mundane or worldly person? Because this *uddhacca* is an obsession with the investigation where *paññā* has gone to an extreme. That's why it's categorised as one of the higher fetters or *saṃyojana* that also includes *māna* (conceit) and *avijjā*, that imposing and resplendent state of knowing inside the heart. This *citta* is not really in a mundane state of agitation and restlessness but it's restless and agitated from being obsessed with the investigation.

This is at the level of *arahatta-magga*, the path to *arahantship*. This is when the *arahatta-magga* is in progress. As soon as this *arahatta-magga* becomes fully mature, then the *arahatta-phala* will appear immediately, the instant when the *citta* completely cuts off birth and existence. Everything is totally shattered the instant the path merges with the fruit or the *arahatta-magga* merges with the *arahatta-phala*. But at this stage, it cannot be considered the complete or perfect *Dhamma* or the complete work of mental development. Like when you're stepping up from the stairway to the floor of the building, one of your feet is on the stairway and the other is on the floor of the building. This is the instant when the path merges with the fruit. As soon as your other foot is lifted

off the stairway and placed on the floor of the building, at that instant you'll have attained the complete or the perfect *Dhamma* which is *nibbāna*. When you're lifting your other foot, you're still working. But as soon as you placed your other foot on the floor of the building, you have completed your work or achieved the total cessation of *dukkha* and realised the perfect *Dhamma*. You have achieved the ultimate result.

When you're still lifting your other foot, this is the *magga* approaching the *phala*. But when both feet touch the floor, it's described by some commentators only as the *arahatta-phala*, the fruit of *arahantship*. In fact, this is also *nibbāna* because the Lord *Buddha* had also mentioned this. Had he not done so, then the *sāvakas*, noble disciples, would have questioned why he didn't mention this *nibbāna* that immediately follows *arahantship*. Therefore, with the wisdom of a great Teacher, the Lord *Buddha* elucidated the four paths, four fruits, and one *nibbāna*. The *magga* and the *phala*, the path and the fruit, are pairs like the *arahatta-magga* and the *arahatta-phala*. Passing beyond this pair, you can say it's the *arahatta-phala*, the fruit of *arahantship*. You can also say it's *nibbāna*. There is no contradiction here, especially with the one who has attained to this state. Anyone can say anything about it, but he doesn't see any contradiction because he has already realised the ultimate truth. The *bhikkhus* during the Lord *Buddha's* time were possessed with the *magga* and *phala*. So how can you be possessed with weakness and laziness?

A Lifetime Endeavour

August 15th, 1979

In one of the monastic rules of conduct, monks are forbidden from calling out loudly when they want to get other monks' attention. They should instead signal with their hands because the Lord *Buddha* wanted them to have a quiet environment to meditate. During Lord *Buddha's* time, the monks took up meditation as their lifetime endeavour. But nowadays, most of the monks and the laity don't. The Lord *Buddha* and the noble disciples or *sāvakas* taught only the practice of walking and sitting meditation, the places that were suitable for the meditation practices and the methods used to eliminate the *kilesas*, *tanhās* and *āsavas*. The main topics of conversation that the monks had during the Lord *Buddha's* time were the *sallekha-dhamma*, which means cleansing or purifying. It's the cleansing of the *kilesas* from their conduct, speech and thought. They should only be talking about cleansing and eliminating the *kilesas* because they took up the robe for this purpose and not to accumulate the *kilesas*.

Right now you only have the appearance of one who has gone forth. Originally, going forth was for the purpose of destroying all the *kilesas*, *tanhās* and *āsavas*. If you believe in this ideal, but are not doing any practice, you'll instead accumulate more *kilesas* and defy the *Dhamma-vinaya*. As a practitioner, you must strictly adhere to the *Dhamma* teaching that has been recorded in the scriptures and use it as your guide. The purpose of recording and preserving the Lord *Buddha's*

teaching is to serve as a guiding light for those who are interested in the practice of mental development. Had it not been recorded, you wouldn't know how the Lord *Buddha* and his noble disciples practised and became enlightened. Nowadays, you only study the scriptures and do not do any practice. All that you have learned are the descriptions of the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*. If your goal in studying the scriptures and practising mental development is to become a famous guru, you'll unknowingly accumulate more *kilesas* and reject the goal set for you by the Lord *Buddha*. You should seriously think about this.

You shouldn't rely solely on your teacher's instruction because it's not enough to make you wise. How do you become wise? You have to do a lot of investigation, analysis and reflection and be always mindful of the sense objects that come into contact with your eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and heart. If you don't use your *sati* and *paññā* you'll never gain any wisdom. The Lord *Buddha* and the *sāvakas* gained wisdom through their *sati*, *paññā*, *āsaddhā* and *virīya*. They didn't become wise by being idle and hopeless. When doing walking meditation, they didn't let their mind think aimlessly like the way you're doing, which is no different from people who don't practise walking meditation. *Sati* and *paññā* connect to form a formidable weapon to free your heart from the *kilesas*' oppression. *Saddhā* is the belief in the *magga* and *phala*, and the belief that having faithfully followed the Lord *Buddha's* teaching, you'll become enlightened. You should always practise with diligent effort or *virīya* to develop your *sati* or mindfulness and investigate with *paññā*. If you

always maintain your diligent effort, you'll never get tired of fighting the *kilesas* or be discouraged from developing your *sati* and *paññā*.

The *citta* is the real thing. The body is merely a phenomenon. When you practise meditation whilst walking back and forth without any mindfulness, you're like people who go for a stroll, not like someone who practises meditation. But you're worse than them if you practise walking meditation without any mindfulness. You mustn't walk like that. The Lord *Buddha's* teaching, which has been recorded in the scriptures, can be very useful for your practice if you reflect on it with your *sati* and *paññā*. However, usually you don't reflect on it but merely chant it like a parrot chirping: 'Precious stone, precious stone...' When you give a parrot a precious stone, it doesn't know what to do with it because it only knows about fruits such as bananas. You're like a parrot because you don't know the perils inherent in the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsavas* that you're passionately obsessed with and never seem to have enough of. You also don't know the worth of *Dhamma* which is like a precious stone. That's why you never want to have anything to do with the *Dhamma*, like applying your diligent effort.

When you do walking meditation, your knees become weak and when you do sitting meditation it seems as if your bones and your body are bursting apart. When you develop *sati* and investigate with *paññā* to remove the harmful *kilesas*, you become weak and discouraged and let the *kilesas* trample all over you and knock you out. All you can

think is 'This is hopeless. I have been striving so hard but I can never enter into calm'. So while you're doing walking or sitting meditation, your practice just turns in the *kilesas*' favour because it's being driven by the *kilesas*, not by the *Dhamma*. So how can you ever become enlightened? This is the way you should reflect if you want to gauge your success or failure. If you think with *paññā* you'll know how far you've progressed in your practice. You should think 'Today I have walked and sat in meditation. How were my *citta* and *satipaññā*? Did I merely walk like people going for a stroll or sit casually? When people sit casually, it's not as bad as when I sit hopelessly and unmindfully. When I meditate, I should be striving for freedom from *dukkha* and should always remind myself of this goal'. You mustn't be complacent because there's no reason in this world for you to be so.

The Lord *Buddha* had always taught you to refrain from acquiring worldly possessions and pleasures because they are like fire. He said that they are all *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā*, and are all unreliable, so you mustn't be attached to them. If you cling to them, it'll be like clinging to fire. The correct way to deal with them is to always reflect on their *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā* nature. If you're attached to them you'll always be afflicted with *dukkha*. The intensity of *dukkha* varies with the intensity of your attachment. There is no other endeavour for you but the practice of sitting and walking meditation. You should always watch your heart with *satipaññā* if you want to catch the *kilesas*' tricks and deceptions because *satipaññā* is an indispensable tool for catching them. With *satipaññā*

you'll always detect the *kilesas* in whatever form they might appear in the heart, be it *rāga* or *dosa*, lust or anger, because the heart is the one who knows and *satipaṇṇā* is the one who analyses. You have to focus your attention at the heart in order to see the cause and the effect of *dukkha*. But you mustn't merely wish them to disappear, for this is *taṇhā* or craving. If you want *dukkha* to vanish, you'll have to find and remove the cause of *dukkha*. Otherwise, *dukkha* will not disappear, but will intensify to the point where you won't be able to endure it. For this reason, it's absolutely vital for you to watch your heart.

I've tried my best to provide you with the opportunity to practise. I'm very protective of you and really care for you. I truly cherish the reclusive life and the meditation practice which I've devoted my entire life to. The results are really satisfying because it released me from *dukkha* after I eliminated all of the *kilesas* from my heart with my *satipaṇṇā*, something not beyond your own ability. I'd really like to see you realise all levels of *Dhamma* attainments, beginning with *samādhī*. What is *samādhī* really like? What kind of calm and coolness? If *satipaṇṇā* is constantly focused at the *citta* and observing it, then the *citta* won't have time to produce any harmful thoughts to hurt you and will eventually enter into calm. When the *citta* becomes reckless and stubborn, then you must use the various techniques of *satipaṇṇā* to restrain it because *satipaṇṇā* is superior to the *kilesas*. This is *pañṇā* develops *samādhī*. When the *kilesas* are extremely wild, you must put all of your effort into taming the *citta*. It's a life and death situation. You

must subdue the *kilesas* with your *satipaṇṇā* until the *citta* withdraws inside and calms down.

I can confidently relate to you the experience realised from my meditation practice. When the *citta* became very reckless with lust or *rāga*, I had to subdue it with my *satipaṇṇā* until I was in tears before I could see its harmfulness. When I sat for a long time until the pain became very excruciating, I had to use *satipaṇṇā* to investigate the body. If I was using a *mantra* or being mindful of my breathing I had to stop doing it when the *dukkhavedanā* attacked with its full force. I had to continually investigate *dukkhavedanā* with my *satipaṇṇā* like two boxers punching each other. You can't afford to be off-guard because when you are, you'll be vulnerable. It's the same way with your investigation. You must probe and analyse until you find and eliminate the cause of *dukkha*. After you've achieved this, how can the *citta's* spectacular nature not appear? There is nothing in this world that could be more spectacular than a developed *citta*. On the other hand, there is nothing in this world that could be worse than an undeveloped *citta*. The *citta* is very important because it's the indispensable container for all the different levels of *Dhamma*, especially the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*. You must, therefore, strive to develop the *citta*.

When you fast, you should really concentrate on your meditation practice. Your exertion should be more strenuous than it would normally be. Fasting or reducing your food intake is a means of developing your mindfulness, or *sati*. If fasting suits you, it'll make your

practice easier and more fruitful than when you eat normally. If it doesn't suit you, it won't help your practice, because you'll be thinking about food all the time rather than about your practice. When you fast your body will become light, your *citta* nimble and alert, your mindfulness ever-present, and you will experience no sleepiness. You'll see that your sleepiness comes from eating a lot of food. After fasting for two or three days, there'll be no drowsiness left. You'll sit erect like a post, and your *citta* will enter into calm very easily. There is nothing to bother your *citta*. When you develop *paññā*, it will flow very easily, spinning round and round. Regardless of the *Dhamma* level you're in, the methods of practice like fasting will always promote your progress, if they suit your temperament. If they don't, they will become a hindrance.

You shouldn't speculate about things that you haven't yet experienced in your heart, like imagining what *khaṇika samādhī* is like, what *upacāra samādhī* is like, what *appanā samādhī* is like, or what the *citta's* convergence into complete concentration is like. This is just imagination that will lead you away from the heart who is the one to experience and develop them, be it any kind of *samādhī*. The point is never to speculate what *khaṇika samādhī*, *upacāra samādhī*, or *appanā samādhī* are like, other than experiencing the truth of these *samādhīs* yourself because this is the correct way to do it. It's like describing what a particular dish of food is like. Whether it's sweet or not really doesn't matter. Even a child who hasn't had any schooling about culinary matters will know if the food is delicious or not when he eats it. It's the same with *samādhī*. You have to

experience it by developing it yourself. It doesn't depend on your speculation; that is useless and wastes your time. Be it any kind of *samādhi*, you'll get to know it yourself. You'll know what kind of *samādhi* suits you when you've developed it with your mindfulness and strenuous effort. After you've entered into calm, you'll know what it's like and how to achieve it.

Normally the *citta* likes to think a lot because it's always restless and agitated like a monkey. But when you've developed *sati* to control your *citta*, like when you've continually concentrated on your *mantra* or any other meditation object, then the *citta* won't have the chance to think aimlessly and will calm down. Whatever kind of calm it may be, you'll know it, as well as the happiness, ease and comfort that accompany it, be it *khaṇika*, *upacāra* or *appanā*. The important point is never to speculate about them, because it's a waste of time and a hindrance to your meditation practice, especially when you're investigating for the truth. What you've studied from the scriptures or heard from your teacher, are all speculation. If you apply it in your investigation, you'll ruin it and never become enlightened. The *citta* will unknowingly think that it's the truth. Therefore, you mustn't let your speculation interfere with your investigation. If you want to become enlightened, you must always attentively watch your *citta*. You're practising *citta bhāvanā* or mental development. You're not practising for the development of mental delusion. If you constantly study the *citta*, you'll clearly see that the *citta* is the knowingness or the 'one who knows'.

The Lord *Buddha* had to give about 84,000 different discourses to suit the needs of thousands of his devotees, who are like patients afflicted with different kinds of diseases. Is it practical for a doctor to use only one kind of medicine to treat all of his patients? Of course not. He must have many kinds of medicines to treat his patients. It's the same with the Lord *Buddha*, who couldn't give just one discourse to all of his devotees. The important point is never to speculate about the *citta*, but to know it from your practice. In order to be firm and stable, you have to be firm in your development of *samādhi* and mindfulness. Your diligent effort is crucial for achieving your *samādhi*, or mental stability, which is vital for the investigation for insight or *vipassanā*. With a calm *citta*, your investigation with *paññā* will be easy because the *citta* won't be distracted with cravings. *Samādhi* is the *citta's* nourishment that will keep it calm, cool and contented. When you investigate, your *satipaṇṇā* will perform at full capacity and you'll become enlightened. You can take my words for it because I've already experienced it myself.

There're many levels of *paññā* but you shouldn't speculate about them. *Paññā* will become skilful, quick, alert, sharp and penetrating if it's being continually developed. You must develop *paññā* to eradicate the *kilesas* if you want to achieve the goal of your going forth. You mustn't be unmindful when you do sitting or walking meditation. If you do, you'll unknowingly prostrate yourself to the *kilesas*. All of your thoughts will be manipulated by the *kilesas*. Instead of eliminating the *kilesas*, you'll accumulate more of them. So

you must never surrender because you're a fighter. You have to be serious and earnest in your practice. There's nothing more important than the activities of the *citta*. It's here where you'll have to focus your observation.

The two mental components that are constantly active are *saṅkhāra* or mental concoctions, and *saññā* or memory. *Saññā* is much more subtle than *saṅkhāra* because it doesn't have to concoct; it just recollects. It's similar to water that permeates through the ground. *Saññā* will subtly recall knowledges and mental images. Both *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* are *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*. If you don't know their true nature and what they are up to, they'll be used by the *kilesas* to deceive you.

You have to be resolute and earnest with your practice. I would really love to see you experience *samādhi* and *paññā* because they are what you've devoted your effort for. The experiences that you've heard from your teachers and fellow practitioners are not your own yet. They are like merchandise in the market that you haven't yet bought because you haven't got any money. All that you can do is look at them. It's the same with the Lord *Buddha's* experiences like *samādhi*, *paññā*, *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* that you can only admire. Although you might have studied the scriptures a lot, and you're very proud of it, just what have you achieved? All that you've accomplished was to commit the scriptural knowledge into your memory without a single *kilesa* being eliminated from your heart. If you don't practise, you'll never experience *samādhi*, *paññā*,

magga, *phala* and *nibbāna* which you've memorised. Please understand this and get into your practice. If you develop *paññā*, you'll get *paññā*.

You mustn't let other tasks distract you from your practice because 99% of them are *kilesas*. When you're not serious and earnest with your practice, then it'll be 99% *kilesas*. If the *kilesas* have 99 weapons, and *Dhamma* has only one weapon, you won't be able to fight them. So you must develop lots of *Dhamma* weapons by practising seriously and earnestly. When you investigate the body, you shouldn't investigate perfunctorily, but investigate for true knowledge and insight. How many times you've investigated doesn't matter. You have to compel the *citta* to keep on investigating and not allow it to do anything else until you've achieved your goal. This is the way to make the *kilesas* surrender. When you fight them by putting your life at stake in your investigation for the truth, the *kilesas* will have to give up because your *satipaññā* is more powerful than the *kilesas*. You'll see this very clearly. How can the *kilesas* be stronger than the *satipaññā* taught by the Lord *Buddha*?

When the *kilesas* are forceful, your *satipaññā* or the *magga*, which is the suitable weapon for defeating the *kilesas*, must also be equally forceful. When the *kilesas* are less forceful, then the *magga* will also be equally less forceful. This happens in the early stages of practice, when the *citta* is restless and agitated. It's like taming a buffalo which will eventually have to surrender to the tamer. It's the same with the *kilesas*, which will eventually have to yield to

your *satipaṇṇā* and diligent effort. It will become weaker, whilst *satipaṇṇā* becomes stronger. The *citta* can then establish peace and coolness as its support. There won't be any restlessness and agitation that are like smouldering fire left inside the heart, like the fire that smoulders the rice husks. You have to extinguish this fire with your diligent effort. When the *citta* has attained to calm, it will have coolness as its support. This happened to me. The important thing is not to be idle. You must keep on practising. When you sit meditating for calm and *samādhī* or when you investigate with *pañṇā*, you have to do it earnestly.

If you're mindful in your investigation, you'll gradually discover the ways and techniques of removing your delusion and achieving insight. Investigating with mindfulness is crucial for realising knowledge and insight. Whatever you do, you should always investigate and analyse. This is the way of developing *pañṇā*. In the beginning stages of developing *samādhī*, it's very hard. But you mustn't give up. If you do, you won't succeed. If you persist, you'll eventually achieve calm. When you investigate with *pañṇā* you should first investigate the body, your body and other people's body, to see that they are the living dead. Do you want to live with these living dead? Our bodies are the living dead. Are they beautiful? Are they real? Of course they're not! When you investigate on *asubha* (loathsomeness) and *paṭikkūla* (filthiness), you'll find that these bodies are loathsome and filthy. When you investigate on death, *aniccā*, and suffering, *dukkhā*, you'll see that these bodies will age, get sick and die. This world is the world of the dead.

You're just waiting for your death, like animals waiting in queue to be slaughtered.

Once you're born, you're targeted by death. Death has already laid claim on you, whether you're a man or a woman, young or old. Some will die today, some tomorrow and so on. You have to investigate until you see this truth if you want to develop *paññā* to impact your heart. You've already been branded by death, but you don't know this, because you're too preoccupied with your pursuit of happiness. You're like the cows and buffaloes that have been branded for slaughter. *Aniccaṃ*, or impermanence, is constantly putting its brand on you. The sound that arises from this branding can be heard across the universe. That's how loud this branding is if it can be compared to a sound. If you listen, it will break your ears and burst your brain because the effect of *aniccaṃ*, *dukkhaṃ* and *anattā* can shake the whole world. Every part of your body is continually branded with the mark of *dukkhaṃ*, *aniccaṃ* and *anattā*, even when you're sleeping. They never stop. They do it when you think: 'Oh, this food is delicious!' Do you know this? You have to investigate until you're truly impressed by this truth.

Aniccaṃ is impermanence. It's the truth or the law of the *vaṭṭa cakka* the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. You must investigate until you can see this clearly. You must take control of your heart because it's your only real possession. Don't pickle it with the brine of *aniccaṃ*, *dukkhaṃ* and *anattā*. You must free it from your delusion that makes you cling and crave for the nonessentials that are

immersed in the mire of *aniccāṃ*, *dukkhaṃ* and *anattā*. What good can you find from things immersed in the mire? Even a solid bar of gold, once immersed in the mire will not look good. The heart is much more precious than a bar of gold. When it's immersed in the mire of greed, hatred and delusion, how can it become precious? You should, therefore, free your heart from the mire of *aniccāṃ*, *dukkhaṃ* and *anattā* that constantly oppresses your heart. When you've seen the truth of *anattā*, you'll see that there're no people, animals, I or they to cling to.

You should earnestly investigate to see the truth clearly inside your heart and should not oppose the *Dhamma* teaching because it is the truth. The *kilesas* and *Dhamma* will always oppose one another. The *kilesas* will make your views and understanding differ from the *Dhamma* teaching and will destroy the *Dhamma* teaching without you being aware of it. When you have clearly seen the truth, your *citta* will defeat the *kilesas*. It will be firm and resolute like a warrior. Your exertion will be very intense; your *satipaṇṇā* will probe relentlessly until you see all the truth. When *paṇṇā* starts to investigate, it will first probe the entire world to see without any doubt that everything is all made up of the four physical elements of earth, water, wind and fire. When you have seen this truth you'll let go of them. After that the scope of your investigation will become narrower because the *kilesas* and your delusions are fewer.

Satipaṇṇā will now focus on the five *khandhas*, separating and identifying them. Its goal is to see the *rūpa khandha* or body as merely a

body, the *vedanā khandha* or feelings as merely the three kinds of feelings of *sukha* (good), *dukkha* (bad) and neutral, *saññā* as merely *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* as merely *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* as merely *viññāṇa*. The four mental aggregates or *nāma khandha* have a similar nature. When you investigate one of them and see its true nature, you'll also see the true nature of the other three. Once you've clearly seen their true nature, how can you not let go of them? You'll let go of them because the reason you've been clinging to them is simply because you didn't know their true nature. The goal of your meditation practice is enlightenment, insight into your true nature, and insight into the nature of your delusion that causes you to cling to *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā*.

When you have clearly seen the truth of the five *khandas*, *satipaṇṇā* will then probe inside the *citta*, because there is nothing outside to investigate anymore. The scope of the investigation and the *kilesas* will converge into the *citta* where the *kilesas* will be completely eliminated. When they are completely removed, what is left? Gone is *aniccā*, gone is *dukkhā* and gone is *anattā*. Everything is let go of and left as it is. These three characteristics inherent in all conditioned phenomena -- *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā* -- are the path to *nibbāna*. When you've arrived at *nibbāna*, these three characteristics will lose their usefulness, like when you travel on the road and arrive at your destination, the road that led you to your destination will become superfluous. It's the same with the *citta* when it travels on the path of *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā* until arriving at its destination; then these *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā* will serve no useful purpose. Your

investigation that was spinning like a *Dhamma Wheel* will stop, because all the *kilesas* have been destroyed.

This was the endeavour of the *Dhamma* practitioners during the Lord *Buddha's* time. They attained the *magga, p halā* and *nibbāna* in the forest and on the mountains because they practised for the elimination of the *kilesas*. They knew that wealth and status were lures that would lead them to insanity and knew that the *kilesas* were the ones that enticed them with wealth and status. What can be more precious than the *Dhamma*? You should fight the *kilesas* until you become enlightened. You'll then let go of everything. Wealth and status are kids' stuff, like children's toys. After you've become enlightened, you'll relinquish everything because they are all *sammatti* or opposition. Enlightenment is the most satisfying result. It's the fruits of your uphill struggle from start to finish, and the fruits of training, disciplining, developing, protecting and nourishing yourself with the *Dhamma* that you should value more than anything else.

You must consider the practice of mental development to be your most important endeavour and must not do other work or activities just to alleviate your annoyance as this will only serve to increase your frustration. When the *citta* has achieved the ultimate goal, it'll be blissful and all problems will come to an end. The practice of mental development will also come to an end. It's not like the worldly undertakings that have no end. You'll do them until you die and carry with you to your next life all of your worries, confusions and miseries.

You'll never find any lasting happiness, ease and comfort. But if you've accomplished the practice of mental development, you'll lose all your worries. This is *anālayo*, totally free of worries, because you've left all things as they are, even your body; whatever should happen to it, you'll let it happen. You've already learned the nature of your body and know that it's *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, just like *vedanā*, *citta* and *Dhamma*.

The Lord *Buddha* said that you must let go of all *Dhammas* at the final stage of practice. When you haven't yet arrived at your destination, don't let go of the path yet. But after you've arrived at your destination, you must let go of the path. You must not cling to it. 'All *Dhammas*' refers here to all the *sammati Dhammas* or relative truths. When you've reached the final stage of practice, you'll let go of the path. At this stage, the *citta* will become very subtle and it'll be totally immersed in the investigation. But when it realises that all *Dhammas* are *anattā*, the *citta* will completely let go of them. After you've passed beyond *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, what is this state? This isn't *sammati*, and you won't describe it because you know it's indescribable. This is the ultimate truth. You can't describe it but you know what it is. You know this is the Great Sage although it doesn't say it is so.

Genuine Progress

August 21st, 1979

Without *Dhamma*, there can be no genuine progress in the world or in Buddhism. When there is *Dhamma*, there will be peace and happiness, because *Dhamma* is selflessness. With *Dhamma*, you'll see that all human beings are the same, and you'll have loving-kindness, compassion and unselfish concern for the welfare of others. Without *Dhamma*, you'll put yourself above others. Although you're bad, you'll be deluded into thinking that you're good. That's why *Dhamma* is indispensable. When a person, a society or a country has *Dhamma*, there'll be peace. When there is no *Dhamma*, there'll be strife. When your heart is ruled by the *kilesas*, it will be engulfed by fire. The Lord *Buddha* and all the sages of the present and the past never praised the *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, *āsavas* -- greed, hatred, and delusion -- because they agitate and torment the heart. Who can be wiser than a *Buddha*? All *Buddhas* propagate the same teaching. They praise the things that are worthy of praise and censure the things that are worthy of censure. They teach you to let go of the things that you should let go of and to develop the things that you should develop for the sake of establishing peace and happiness within your heart and living a peaceful existence.

If you can let go of some of these things, you'll be more peaceful and have fewer *kilesas*. If you can totally let go of everything, you'll be completely free from the *kilesas* and become a noble and superior being. What can afflict the heart if not the *kilesas* that have *avijjā* as their root? Any behaviour directed by the *kilesas* can only produce trouble and

affliction. The *kilesas* are troublesome, whilst *Dhamma* is cool, peaceful and pleasing to the eyes and ears. *Dhamma* is, therefore, absolutely vital for your well-being. You can always trust *Dhamma* because it's the truth that has existed since time immemorial and can't be wiped out. There are fewer wise people than there are foolish people born into this world. That is why *Dhamma* can only appear once in a long, long time. The appearance of the *Dhamma*, of Buddhism and of the Lord *Buddha* are the results that follow the enlightenment of a super human being who calls himself *Buddha*, who through his own efforts and wisdom discovers the *Dhamma*, the basic principles of the cosmos, which he then presents to the world. After his death, his teaching gradually fades away, due to the powerful influence of the *kilesas*, *tanhās* and *āsavas* that encompass the hearts of sentient beings. Eventually they totally forget the *Dhamma* and let the *kilesas* do anything they please to deny them real happiness and only bring them sorrow and pain. Such is the way of the world. Now let's talk about yourself.

When you're peaceful, calm and discerning, regardless of where you are, you'll always be cool, because you're protected by the *Dhamma*. When you're sidetracked from your meditation practice, like being involved with building a new cottage, you can become restless and agitated. The Lord *Buddha* prohibits monks from engaging in any activity that will undermine their meditation practice. For a beginning practitioner who hasn't established any *samādhi* yet, he should avoid a monastery that is under construction or renovation. Don't be inclined to build this and build that. Don't live in a place where people mingle and socialise. You should always seek seclusion and consider your

meditation practice as your main undertaking, your lifetime endeavour. You should always practise. This is what the Lord *Buddha* teaches the monks. For this reason, many monks during the Lord *Buddha's* time could realise the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*. After they heard the Lord *Buddha's* teaching, they seriously believed it, took up the practice and became enlightened.

It is the heart that earnestly believes and practises that becomes happy. It is also the heart that doesn't believe and doesn't practise that becomes miserable. As a practitioner, you should concentrate all your efforts into your meditation practice. You must not be weak or lazy because you're in the battlefield. Who and where are your enemies? They are the *kilesas* inside your heart. You have to fully develop *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* to oppose and eliminate them. The Lord *Buddha* said: '*Attā have cittaṃ seyyo*' - it's noble to conquer yourself. To conquer yourself, you have to vanquish the *kilesas*. Where do you achieve victory, if not inside your heart? This is where your enemies are found. This is where you'll lose or win. But you'll not lose because you'll concentrate all of your efforts into the fight. It doesn't matter if you should die fighting. You'll fight until you win. The place to learn about the cycle of birth, death and rebirth is inside your heart. This is where you'll find out whether your heart will be reborn again or not.

The numbers of births that you've taken up are beyond counting. It is *avijjā* and *kamma* that cause your *citta* to take up birth. You can't

choose your birth because it was selected by your *kamma* that were driven by *avijjā*. Neither can you choose to be happy or sad because they are the consequences of your good and bad *kamma*. If you can't control your *kamma*, you can't choose your birth. What is the difference between being imprisoned by the law of *kamma* and the law of your country? There really is no difference. You have to use this comparison to see the truth of the costs and benefits of your *kamma* in order to spur you on to meditate. Birth and death are in your *citta* where you'll have to probe, meditate and become enlightened. Your *citta* is the creator of your ceaseless cycles of birth and death although you might not know it. But the testimony that attests to this fact is found right in your *citta*, which you'll eventually realise through your *Dhamma* practice. The more you meditate and probe, the more subtle your *citta* will become, and the more you'll see clearly the perpetrator of your birth.

After the Lord *Buddha* became enlightened, he was able to see and reveal to others the truth of *samsāra*, the cycles of birth, death and rebirths that all sentient beings have to go through. For this reason his *Dhamma* teaching is known as the *svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo* - the well-taught *Dhamma*, because not a single word of his teaching ever deviates from the truth. You're the one who takes up birth, disease, ageing and death. Why don't you know this? Because there are blinding influences within your heart that totally block and obscure this truth. You have to reveal them through your meditation practice. You have to catch the chief culprit in your *citta* that leads you to be born and to die again and again. This is

paticca sammuppāda or dependent origination - *avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā*, *saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇam*, etc. *Avijjā* is the principal driving force that propels you to take up birth in the various realms of existence and to experience the fruits of your *kamma*. The Lord *Buddha* said that it is the *kilesas* that drive you to do good and bad *kamma*. After you have committed these *kamma*, the fruits of these *kamma* will then follow you.

When I say *kilesas*, I mean *avijjā*, the master of all the *kilesas*, who drives all sentient beings to do *kamma* and to experience the fruits of their *kamma* by going through the cycles of birth, death and rebirth called *vaṭṭa cakka*. This is similar to an ant that runs around the edge of a basket - it just keeps running round and round, similar to your running round and round the edge of the *vaṭṭa cakka*. You'll never know this if you don't practise mental development. Even if you study the entire *Tipiṭaka*, the Buddhist Canon, you'll still be in the dark. The Lord *Buddha* and his noble disciples became enlightened by practising mental development, not by studying and memorising the Buddhist Canon. The truth and what you commit to memory are two different worlds. Your memories will always fool you. For instance, if you talk about England, if you have never been there before, you can only imagine what it's like. But after you've been there, your imagination will be replaced by what you actually see. This is what is meant by seeing the truth. When you see the truth, your imagination will disappear because your imagination is fake. What you have studied is also fake. When you come across the truth in your practice, the fake will disappear. This is the way of learning about the *citta*.

There are no limits to the *citta's* involvements. The oceans and rivers have shores and banks. But the *citta* is all over the universe and *saṃsāra*. Therefore, you have to reign in your *citta* with *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya*, in order to see the *citta's* true nature. You have to diligently eliminate from your heart all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava* that thrust you to be born and die. Then your *citta* will be more obvious, the knowingness will be more distinct, and you will clearly see the cause of your wandering around the cycles of birth, death and rebirth. You will see how much of this cause still remains in your *citta*. Though it might not propel you to take up birth in the lower realms of existence, you know you will still have to take up birth. You will know this as this cause becomes more subtle and as you advance in your practice. Eventually you will completely eliminate this cause from your *citta*, which will then be detached from everything including the five *khandhas* of *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, which the *citta* has been responsible for. They will no longer affect the *citta*. The *citta* will just be the *citta*, 'the one who knows' will just be 'the one who knows', and the *khandhas* will just be the *khandhas*. The *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* will just be *sammati* or conventional reality.

When you've investigated with *paññā*, you'll sever everything from your *citta*. You'll cut off *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, *viññāṇa* and all physical and mental objects. You'll sever the body, which is merely the element aggregate, a composition of the four elements of earth, water, air and fire that you see as human, animal, man

and woman, and are totally immersed in this delusion and confusion. A very thin membrane of skin can totally blind and obscure your eyes. *Paññā* must penetrate this skin so that you can see the true nature of the body: that it is *paṭikkūla* or filthy, and merely a composition of the four elements. How can you have attachment, affection and aversion for the elements? When you see this clearly, you'll let go of the body. Concerning *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, they are merely conditions that arise out of the *citta*, but they are not the *citta*. With *paññā*, you'll be able to restrain them and detach them from your *citta*. This is the way to cut off birth and existence.

When you have totally severed the five *khandhas* and destroyed *avijjā* from your *citta*, the cause of birth will be completely eliminated. Your *citta* will be like cooked rice that will not grow anymore. It's only good for eating. Your *citta* will now be only suited for experiencing the bliss of freedom or the *vimutti sukha*, and the state of purity. It's no longer suited for taking up any more birth. You'll know this within your heart. In the *Ādittaparyāya Sutta* or the Fire Discourse, the *Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta* or the Not-Self Discourse, and the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* or the First Discourse, the Lord *Buddha* proclaims thus: 'From this moment onward, there is no more birth for me, for this is my last birth'. He also proclaims in the Not-Self Discourse: *vusitaṃ brahma cariyaṃ*, the work of totally eradicating the *kilesas* has now come to an end. This is the most noble quest that requires your total effort, your *satipaññā* and your life. This endeavour has now come to end. You've now destroyed all of the *kilesas*. *Kataṃ karaṇiyaṃ*, the task of letting

go o f a l l t h i n g s a n d t h e t a s k o f m e n t a l d e v e l o p m e n t h a v e b e e n a c c o m p l i s h e d. *Nāparam itthattāyāti*, t h e r e i s n o f u r t h e r w o r k t o d o. *Pajānāti*, y o u h a v e n o w b e c o m e e n l i g h t e n e d. *Vimuttassamim vimuttamiti ñaṇam hoti*, a s s o o n a s y o u ' v e a c h i e v e d f r e e d o m, t h e r e a l i s a t i o n t h a t y o u ' v e a c h i e v e d f r e e d o m w i l l a l s o a p p e a r s i m u l t a n e o u s l y.

T h i s i s t h e *bhikkhu's* e n d e a v o u r. T h i s i s h o w t h e p r a c t i t i o n e r s d u r i n g t h e L o r d *Buddha's* t i m e a c c o m p l i s h e d t h e i r t a s k. T h e i r m i s s i o n w a s t o d e v e l o p t h e i r *citta* a n d i n v e s t i g a t e t h e *kammaṭṭhāna*, s t a r t i n g w i t h t h e f i r s t f i v e p a r t s o f t h e b o d y: *kesā, lomā, nakhā, dantā, taco* a n d t h e n t o a l l t h e o t h e r p a r t s. T h e s e a r e t h e o b j e c t s t h a t y o u ' l l h a v e t o i n v e s t i g a t e. H o w d o y o u d o i t? F i r s t, y o u s h o u l d d e v e l o p *samādhi* o r c a l m w i t h a *mantra* l i k e *Buddho* o r a n y o t h e r o b j e c t o f c o n c e n t r a t i o n. T h e n y o u s h o u l d i n v e s t i g a t e t h e t h i r t y - t w o b o d y p a r t s t o s e e t h e i r t r u e n a t u r e. A r e t h e y c l e a n o r f i l t h y? Y o u h a v e t o k e e p o n p r o b i n g, e s p e c i a l l y t h e s k i n t h a t w r a p s a r o u n d t h e b o n e s. Y o u c a n ' t s e e t h e b o n e s. A l l y o u c a n s e e i s t h e s k i n w i t h w h i c h y o u a r e o b s e s s e d a n d w h i c h d e l u d e s y o u. Y o u h a v e t o l o o k t h r o u g h t h i s s k i n t o s e e i t s c o n t e n t. T h i s i s h o w y o u s h o u l d i n v e s t i g a t e a f t e r y o u ' v e e s t a b l i s h e d c a l m w i t h a *mantra*, w h i c h i s l i k e c h o p p i n g u p a p i e c e o f m e a t w h e n y o u r e p e a t *Buddho, Buddho, Buddho*, o r *kesā, kesā, kesā*, o r *nakhā, nakhā, nakhā*, o r *dantā, dantā, dantā* o r *taco, taco, taco*. T h i s i s t h e w a y t o c o n c e n t r a t e t h e *citta's* s t r e n g t h. W h e n t h e *citta* i s d i s t r a c t e d, i t h a s n o s t r e n g t h.

I t ' s l i k e g r a s s, w h e n t i e d t o g e t h e r i n t o a b u n c h, i s m o r e d i f f i c u l t t o b r e a k

apart. If you want to cut it, you'll have to chop it several times. On the other hand, you can easily break apart a single blade of grass. It's the same with the *citta*. When it is scattered, it doesn't have any strength. It has to be concentrated with a *mantra*. When the *citta* has acquired strength, it will be calm and cool and ready for you to investigate with *paññā* for true knowledge and insight. Starting from *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā* and *taco*, you'll proceed to the rest of the thirty-two body parts. You'll go over these parts thoroughly until you see the body's true nature, both of yourself and others. You'll see that they are all the same. This is the *bhikkhu's* task. This is the way the Lord *Buddha* taught you to develop *paññā*.

When you investigate *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, your *satipaññā* has to be sharper in order to see their true nature and let go of them. You'll also have to investigate the *kilesas* that have gathered inside the *citta* and let go of them. After you've let go of all of them, there'll be nothing else to let go, because all the *kilesas* have been destroyed. There is nothing else for you to do. All the *kilesas* will by then have been totally eliminated. First, you've to destroy the *kilesas* that cling to the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. Then you must destroy the *kilesas* that are attached to your body, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. Finally, you'll have to eliminate the *kilesa* that is embedded in the *citta*, which is the main culprit. After you've achieved this, then it is *vusitaṃ brahma cariyam*, the end of your endeavour. This is the *bhikkhu's* endeavour. Please listen and take it seriously.

Don't be sidetracked and led astray to do other tasks because you won't get rid of the *kilesas* that way. The only way to do it is the practice of mental development, the way that I have described to you here. There is no other task that is more noble than the practice of mental development. Though it is the most difficult task, it yields the loftiest benefits. Please set up your determination to concentrate on your investigation. Don't relent wherever you are. As far as staying with your teacher is concerned, this is not certain, because you live in the world of *aniccam* or impermanence. There is no certainty in the world of *aniccam*, because sooner or later there will definitely be separation from one another. What you have learned from your teacher and deeply embedded in your heart, you must not lose or deviate from. Wherever you go, you must strictly adhere to the *Dhamma-vinaya*, the teaching and the discipline. You have to be earnest and serious, not apathetic and indecisive or lacking in principles. No matter how difficult your task might be, you must shoulder it.

You have to muster your faith in the enlightenment of the Lord *Buddha*, and in your ability to become enlightened and free from *dukkha* by your diligent effort, in order for you to become strong and powerful, persistent and forbearing. Then your *samādhī* and *paññā* will steadily grow, because they can't be otherwise. Don't ever dismiss from your mind this undertaking if you want to see for yourself the attainment to *arahantship*, something that you've heard happen to the practitioners during the Lord *Buddha's* time. No matter how much you might remember these stories, they can't do anything to the

kilesas. The *kilesas* are not affected by what you can remember, but they are by your practice. For example, the study of *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā* and *taco* that your *upajjhāya* (teacher) taught you at your ordination is *pariyatti*, the theoretical understanding of *Dhamma* obtained through reading, study and learning only, but they must now be investigated in your practice to have any result.

After you've thoroughly investigated them, you'll gain insight into their true nature. This is *paṭivedha*, the direct, firsthand realisation of the *Dhamma*. It can't be otherwise. Nothing can prevent the *citta* that has strictly adhered to the *Dhamma* teaching from realising the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*. The only things that obstruct the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* are *dukkha* and *samudaya*. Neither time nor place can obstruct them. Only the *kilesas*, *dukkha* and *samudaya* can. For this reason, you have to develop *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* to remove the *kilesas* that obstruct the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*. Then your attainment to the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* will not be anywhere else but right within your *citta*. It is your *citta* that will become enlightened, let go of everything, vanquish the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava* and become supreme, exalted and transcending the world. All you have to do is accomplish your mission.

Mental Development

August 28th, 1979

The Buddhist religion was founded by the Lord *Buddha*, who was renowned for his extraordinary energy, forbearance, attainment, wisdom, moral excellence and teaching prowess. His *Dhamma* teachings are perfect, truthful, worthy of respect and practice, in every respect without exception, because they are all essential for the development of moral excellence and are crucial for the gradual and total elimination of all the harms and poisons created by the *kilesas*. It is like clean water washing away filth. Your *citta* has been dirty since time immemorial but you don't know what makes your *citta* dirty and how long it has been dirty. The filth that makes your *citta* dirty is thoroughly blended with your *citta* like a nail head that is completely embedded in the flesh. These impurities and the *citta* become one and the same thing and it's not possible for you to differentiate them through ordinary reflection. The only way to find out is through the practice of *citta bhāvanā* or mental development.

The Lord *Buddha* became enlightened and purified his *citta* with *Dhamma* practice and became the world's object of respect and admiration. It was the same way with the *sāvakas* or noble disciples. When the Lord *Buddha* expounded his *Dhamma* teaching to the first group of *sāvakas*, the five ascetics, he taught them how to remove all the filth that was embedded in their *citta*. The *sāvakas* listened for true knowledge and insight. They listened with mindfulness and contemplation as they

were all advanced practitioners. They were *ugghaṭṭitaññu*, capable of becoming enlightened very quickly, because they had all developed *satipaṇṇā* to contemplate on the *Dhamma* teaching and they had already established a very high degree of *samādhī* or calm within their *cittas* to the point that made them think that they had already attained *nibbāna*. This is because this state of calm and coolness is totally devoid of the world.

But these five ascetics couldn't see the subtle *kilesas* that were still embedded within their *cittas*. When the Lord *Buddha* taught them the Four Noble Truths, they could then see the true nature of all the *sabhāva-dhammas* or phenomena both inside and outside the *citta*. When the Venerable *Aññā Koṇḍañña* had achieved the first level of enlightenment, he uttered the following: '*Yaṃ kiñci samudaya dhammaṃ sabbantaṃ nirodha dhammaṃ*' – 'Whatever comes into being, must cease to exist'. The Venerable *Aññā Koṇḍañña* was profoundly moved by this insight. The Lord *Buddha* responded by saying: '*Aññāsi vata bho Koṇḍañño!*' - 'You are enlightened!', '*Aññā Koṇḍañño tveva nāmaṃ ahoṣīti*' – 'From now on I shall call you *Aññā Koṇḍañña*'. Listening to the *Dhamma* teaching is a prerequisite to practice and enlightenment which is why the Lord *Buddha* had to teach the *Dhamma* to the five ascetics.

When the Lord *Buddha* practised he did it with his utmost ability, to the point where he passed unconscious before he could become enlightened. When he taught the *Dhamma* to the five ascetics, he told them how he himself had practised because *Dhamma* practice was indispensable for

their own enlightenment and this became the hallmark of his teaching. He didn't become enlightened by only studying the scriptures like today's Buddhists who think they can become enlightened by studying alone. While listening to the Lord *Buddha's* discourse the five ascetics also pondered on what he was elucidating and became enlightened right there and then. This is the way of studying, practising and becoming enlightened at the same time.

Earlier on, I was talking about the *citta* being contaminated with all sorts of filth and impurities because it hasn't been purified yet. It's so polluted that it's not possible to make out what the *citta* really is. For this reason you have to practise, because by practising you'll wash away all the impurities from your *citta*. Starting from the practice of *sīla* or morality, you'll gradually move up to *samādhī*, which is essential for getting inside the *citta* before you can develop *paññā*. *Samādhī* will gather all the *kilesas* in one place to temporarily stop them from contacting the visible objects, sounds, aromas, flavours and tactile sensations and consequently stop them from bothering the *citta*, which will then become calm and cool. *Paññā* will then purify the *citta* by investigating the various phenomena that the *citta* becomes entangled with.

What visual object is the *citta* obsessed with? Is it the image of a man, a woman or another visual object? *Paññā* will have to investigate the image the *citta* is attached to. Why must the *citta* be obsessed with a beautiful body that causes it to become restless and agitated? Because this body has an alluring power and the *citta's* perception is delusional.

Paññā has to investigate and analyse this body. Why must the *citta* cling to it? Before, when the *citta* hadn't seen this body, it didn't have any affection for it. But after having seen it, the *citta* becomes agitated and restless. This body now sticks with the *citta* all the time. What is the reason for this? Such is the way of enquiry. In order to free the *citta* from this obsession, you have to disassemble this body, starting from the hair of the head, to the skin, the flesh, the sinews, the bones and all the internal organs.

You have to investigate thoroughly with *paññā*, repeatedly, many many times, over and over again. Then you must see its demise, becoming a bloated corpse. Even when it's still alive, this body is full of filth. As far as beauty is concerned, this is the fabrication of the *kilesa*, the master of deception that deceives the *citta* to see ugliness as beauty and become obsessed with it. This is how the deception works. Therefore, *paññā* has to correct this illusion. What is the cause of this deception, this perception of beauty? You must probe and examine in order to see the truth. Beauty isn't the truth, neither is loveliness or attractiveness. You shouldn't be obsessed with them. They are not the truth. They are the *kilesa*'s deceptions. The *Dhamma* is the truth that can be used to correct this illusion right there and then. You'll see that these bodies aren't really pretty or good-looking. It's just a very thin sheet of skin that wraps up this body that we call man and woman. It's not even as thick as a sheet of paper and yet the *kilesa* deceives you to see it as good-looking. The deeper you investigate, the more filth you'll see. This is the truth. Where is the beauty that the *kilesa* creates? There is no such thing! The *kilesa* just fools you. You have to see it this way because this is

paññā.

You have trusted the *kilesa* and suffered for too long already. There are many kinds of *kilesas*. There are those that fool you to see things as beautiful and have affection for them. There are those that mislead you to have incorrect perceptions that arouse your sexual desire which burn your heart. The *kilesas* are fiery and deceptive. It is, therefore, necessary to eliminate them with *Dhamma*, which is the truth. Concerning beauty - where is beauty? Take a good look. You must look at the truth which is the *Dhamma*. Your perceptions must not go against the truth if you don't want to be led by the *kilesas*, which oppose the *Dhamma* and yourself. You have to thoroughly and repeatedly investigate your body with *satipaññā*, starting from the skin and going inwards. You'll see filth and impurity inside your body. You won't find any beauty or find a man or a woman in this body to love, because there is no such thing. It's only an illusion to deceive you. It's not the truth.

This is what the body looks like when you're alive. Now let's see what it looks like when it gets old and dies. Even the body of a young man or woman, when it dies, it's full of filth and stinks. There's no worse filth than that of a dead body that becomes bloated and decomposes. This is the ultimate stage of *paṭikkūla* or filthiness and the ultimate *Dhamma* that will absolutely eliminate the perception of beauty. You have to investigate to see this filthiness with *paññā*, which is the *Dhamma* weapon that will totally destroy all of your wrong perceptions, which are the *kilesas'* creation. You have to clearly see this truth. How then will the *citta* not withdraw itself from this incorrect perception? It can't do otherwise. This is the

technique of *paññā*.

Concerning sound, this is just the sound of wind coming from the mouth, both the good and the bad sounds that you hear, like when you're criticised or praised. If you don't interpret them, they'll be just the sounds of wind that flow in and out of your ears. When you hear good music, it is good only because your *kilesas* interpret it to be so and you enjoy it. This is an illusion created by the *kilesas* when in fact it is just the sounds of wind, like the sounds of wind blustering the leaves. They come and go. When you investigate the nature of visible objects, sounds, aromas, flavours and tactile sensations, you only have to investigate just one of them, choose the one that you like. When you see its nature, you'll see the nature of all the others as well. You also have to investigate the nature of your own body so that you can compare it with other bodies. You'll find that they are all the same. They are full of *paṭikkūla* or filth and are just body parts. The body is not I or mine, not worth clinging to. If you cling to the body because you think it's your body, then you'll be nurturing the *kilesas* to become stronger and hurt you more. This is the way to contemplate with *paññā*. What has been briefly discussed here is the way of developing *paññā* and the way of purifying the *citta*.

Whatever object the *citta* becomes entangled with, you must sever it by investigating its true nature. You have to ignore the *kilesas'* commands. Following the *kilesas'* orders is deceiving yourself. Opposing the *kilesas'* biddings below for below is *Dhamma*. Investigating relentlessly and consistently an object's true nature is *paññā*. By alternately investigating and resting in *samādhi*, you'll make the *citta* calm, firm,

peaceful, cool, courageous, sublime and magnificent. You must relentlessly investigate, because it's absolutely vital for achieving freedom from *dukkha*. You must not speculate about the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*. The practitioners during the Lord *Buddha's* time realised their *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* in the mountains and forests. How did they practise? They practised the same way that I have just told you, by strictly following the *Dhamma* teaching without the slightest deviation, because the *Dhamma* teaching hasn't deviated from the truth which would make it impossible for you to eradicate the *kilesas* with it.

This *Dhamma* teaching is suitable for the elimination of all the *kilesas* and the purification of the *citta*, because it is the *majjhimā paṭipadā*, the middle way of practice, which is suitable at all times - past, present and future. Apart from this *Dhamma* teaching, nothing else can do the job. There isn't a single *kilesa* which is superior to this *Dhamma* teaching. During the Lord *Buddha's* time, every practitioner used the *majjhimā paṭipadā* as the means of destroying the *kilesas*, all of them, from the Lord *Buddha* down to all the *sāvakas* or noble disciples. The *kilesas* were the same kind: greed, hatred and delusion. You have them in your *citta* and you must apply the *Dhamma* in your investigation. You have to depend on the *Dhamma* weapon, *satipaṇṇā*, to fight your opponent like in the Lord *Buddha's* time. The *kilesas* will definitely disappear from your *citta* just like they did in the past.

It's definitely not the time and place that will eliminate the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* will only disappear from one place, which is the *citta*, at the time when *satipaṇṇā* has been developed to maturity. It's in the *citta* that the *kilesas*

will be eliminated. You have to earnestly put in your effort. You, who have taken up the robe, have to be tough, forbearing and persevering like the Lord *Buddha*, your teacher and the founder of Buddhism. The Lord *Buddha* was well accomplished. To whom did the Lord *Buddha* pass on his accomplishment and diligent effort? He passed it on to you. Diligent effort is *viriya*. *Chanda* is delight. What do you take delight in? If you take delight in the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*, then you must take delight in your diligent effort. *Chanda* is to take delight in the task that will free you from *dukkha*, which is your goal. *Viriya* is the application of your energy into the practice. As the Lord *Buddha's* follower, you have to develop the four *iddhipāda* or factors of accomplishment: *chanda* or delight, *viriya* or diligent effort, *citta* or concentration and *vimaṃsā* or reflection. You need these four factors of accomplishment to become enlightened. If you, a Buddhist monk, can't develop diligent effort, then who in the world can?

Buddhism is your most vital part. It's your duty as a Buddhist monk to develop *Dhamma* in your *citta* with the aid of your *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *viriya*. How can you not do this? Is this really possible? You have to be earnest and serious in your struggle with the *kilesas*. You have to really fight them. You mustn't be frivolous because that wasn't the way the Lord *Buddha* and the noble disciples fought to free themselves from *dukkha*. You mustn't be weak, lazy, careless or cut corners. You have to be genuine, earnest and mindful with whatever task you do. Then when you meditate, your *citta* will be also genuine, earnest and mindful because you have trained yourself this way. This is the way to do it if you want to acquire the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*, because they are in your *citta* that is now

surrounded by the *kilesas*. When you have totally eliminated the *kilesas* from your *citta*, you won't have to ask where *nibbāna* is because *nibbāna* is just a name.

The term '*kilesas*' refers to the defilements in the *citta*. *Paññā* is common sense or ingenuity, the indispensable instrument for the elimination of the *kilesas* which are extremely cunning. But they can't be smarter than *satipaññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* which are the most vital *Dhamma*. You have to be mindful, firm and resolute with your practice, by always concentrating your *citta* on the present, the here and now. Don't speculate about the past, the future, where to get rid of the *kilesas*, or where to attain the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*, which can't be found anywhere else but in the *citta*. The *kilesas* themselves never speculate. That's why they manage to dominate the hearts of all sentient beings. When you practise to eliminate the *kilesas*, why do you have to look for the time and place? This will only amuse the *kilesas*. You have to probe right here. Let's do it even if it's hard and painful. If you're not dead or when you exert yourself, you'll have to experience some pain, whether doing a mundane or spiritual task. Every task demands effort. You know this very well because you've worked before. You must not obstruct your practice by thinking that it's too difficult. You should think that to be free from *dukkha* is the most satisfying outcome. This is the practitioner's crucial way of thinking. You must be firm and resolute.

If you haven't developed any *samādhi* yet, you must develop it now. When the *citta* goes outside, *satipaññā* must pull it inside. The *citta* can be controlled. If *satipaññā* can't control the *citta*, nothing

in this world can. *Satipaṇṇā* is stronger than the *kilesas* and the *citta*. The *citta* only knows. It doesn't know good or bad, coarse or subtle, superficial or profound. It doesn't think. It just knows. It's like an insane person who does whatever he likes or whatever the *kilesas* tell him to do, because he doesn't have any *satipaṇṇā* to look after himself and be responsible for his actions. All that he has is just the knowingness that is surrounded and controlled by the *kilesas* that make him behave in such a pathetic manner. An insane person doesn't have any *sati* or mindfulness and *pañṇā* or common sense. But you are not without any *satipaṇṇā*. You have *satipaṇṇā* just like other ordinary people. You are normal. But you want to develop your *satipaṇṇā* beyond the ordinary level for the purpose of eliminating the *kilesas*. You want to develop it up to the level of *mahā-satipaṇṇā* or ultra-*satipaṇṇā* that will perform automatically, quickly, efficiently, skilfully and smoothly. This is the result that will follow if you keep on practising.

In the beginning stages of practice, it'll be an uphill struggle. Eventually, your *satipaṇṇā* will become skilful, a result of your persistent practice. This *satipaṇṇā* will eliminate every kind of *kilesa* that is found within the *citta*. Neither the time nor the place can prevent the *Dhamma* practitioner from attaining freedom from *dukkha*. *Sanditṭhiko* or enlightenment here and now is not reserved only for the Lord *Buddha*. It is for everyone who practises the *Dhamma* correctly. This is true in the past, in the present and in the future, because the *Dhamma* teaching that I have instructed you are for the purpose of eliminating the *kilesas*, and for achieving the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*. The *Dhamma* is never outdated. It is the *kilesas* that are outdated because they obstruct all sentient beings from

gaining true happiness. As soon as the *Dhamma* enters the *citta*, it will immediately make the *citta* calm and cool because it is not outdated! With the *Dhamma*, you will never be outdated, especially the *Dhamma* of *satipaṇṇā* that is ever present and capable of destroying all the *kilesas*.

Please understand that every aspect of the *Dhamma* teaching is designed for the removal of the *kilesas*. So you must not take your practice lightly because this is not the way to practise. It will slow your progress or destroy you due to your wrong understanding of the *Dhamma*. You should earnestly practise. Don't be distracted by or have any interest for anything in this world because they are all *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā*. You have experienced them through your eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind long enough to know that they are *aniccā*, *dukkhā*, *anattā* and shouldn't have any interest in or curiosity for them left in your mind. You haven't experienced any *Dhamma* yet. So you should now develop an interest for the *Dhamma* practice and experience its results. You'll then see which is better, the *Dhamma* or the world.

If you don't know an object's true nature, how can you let go of it? You have to know first before you can let go. If you know a little, you'll let go a little. When you have experienced the results from your practice, you'll see that they are a lot more valuable than the things that you're attached to. When you have experienced the ultimate result, you'll let go of everything. Nothing in the three realms of existence is as valuable as a purified *citta* that's absolutely freed from *dukkha*. When you've discovered the *Dhamma* to be a lot more superior to the things that

you're attached to, you'll gradually let go of them. When you've reached the ultimate *Dhamma*, you'll let go of everything. You'll also let go of the *citta*. How do you get there? By persistent practice. When you take up the robe, you have a goal. You should practise to achieve that goal. You mustn't be weak in willpower, courage or vitality. *Sati* is absolutely indispensable. You mustn't forget this. I have always told you this. You need *paññā* occasionally, but you need *sati* all the time. The only exception is when you fall asleep. If you can develop your *sati* to be ever-present, your practice will rapidly advance.

The Dhamma Teaching

September 5th, 1979

The *Dhamma* teaching is the most perfect, flawless and ideal teaching, unequalled by any other teaching in both the means and the end results. This is because the teacher is the Lord *Buddha* who is the supreme embodiment of excellence that all sentient beings can take up as their role model and follow with their utmost ability. His diligence, endurance, resourcefulness and the ability to discipline himself and his noble disciples rank above all other human beings. In striving, he kept on exerting himself until he accomplished his task. In enduring, he sometimes fell unconscious. But he never relented in his endeavouring but excelled in every task until he became enlightened. His enlightenment made it possible for others to become enlightened as well. All they have to do is follow his *Dhamma* teaching which is suitable for the four distinct groups of his followers: *bhikkus* or monks, *bhikkhunīs* or nuns, *sāmaṇeras* or novices, *upāsakas* or laymen and *upāsikās* or laywomen.

The term *sāsadā* means supreme teacher, who is wise in the way of teaching. He knows what kind of *Dhamma* is suitable for what type of person. He doesn't teach anything which is beyond the ability of his students to practise and achieve. Teaching monks differs from teaching laypeople and the

general public. However, he taught the laypeople who practised like the monks the same way he taught the monks, with *Dhamma* geared specifically to suit each individual practitioner's ability and attainment. He would explain until his students were fully satisfied and had their doubts cleared away. Apart from teaching human beings, he also taught the *devatās* or spiritual beings. Have you seen any *devatā*? Or is it a matter of choosing what you want to believe based on your opinion which is contaminated with the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āśava*?

There are internal and external phenomena, coarse and subtle. The phenomena that the Lord *Buddha* taught ranged from coarse to very subtle. There are coarse phenomena such as visual objects, and there are very subtle phenomena like the spiritual beings that we have heard and read about from the scriptures. The three divisions of the *Pāli* Canon, the *Suttas* or discourses, the *Vinaya* or the monastic discipline, and the *Abhidhamma* or higher *Dhamma*, are all true. There isn't a single chapter or verse in the *Pāli* Canon that is not true. Thus, it can't be said that some of the teachings of the supreme teacher are true and some are false. This is because the Lord *Buddha* teaches only the truth. If you're going to trust someone, you can completely trust the Lord *Buddha*.

When the Lord *Buddha* taught the *devatās*, he also instructed them in the *Dhamma* suitable to their abilities and

attainments, just like the way he taught human beings because *Dhamma* is universal. Whether it's a *brahma* - an inhabitant of the non-sensual heavens of form or formlessness, a *devatā*, or a human being, they are just the *citta* with varying degrees of subtlety or coarseness. It's the *citta* that takes up these various forms of existence. Some life forms are less morally developed than others, such as animals. The Lord *Buddha*, therefore, couldn't teach the animals because they couldn't distinguish right from wrong, good from evil, heaven from hell, or the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava*. Although they are committing these deeds daily, they don't know the morals of their actions. But with human beings, they can distinguish and learn the various aspects of *Dhamma* from the *Pāli* Canon. Although not everyone is capable of doing this, there are some who can study and practise the *Dhamma* from the three divisions of the *Pāli* Canon which contain the complete and faithful collection of the Lord *Buddha's* teaching. Everything in the *Suttas*, the *Vinaya* and the *Abhidhamma* is true.

It's the *citta* that will study, practise and experience the *Dhamma*. Whilst some *cittas* can perceive various paranormal phenomena due to their ability of extrasensory perception, some *cittas* can only perceive phenomena through the senses. For this reason, the Lord *Buddha* has to select the appropriate *Dhamma* to teach each *citta* based on its ability and attainment. The *Dhamma* teaching is, therefore, an ideal teaching for the world to follow in every

aspect, such as the application of diligent effort, endurance, perseverance, austerity, the right, mindfulness, resolve, discipline, and wisdom for mental development and mental stability. It is suitable for both the monks and the laity because *Dhamma* is a universal teaching that benefits everyone.

As a monk you should diligently practise for the elimination of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava*, with the support of your endurance and perseverance. You should concentrate your *satipaṇṇā* to search for the *kilesas* which are deeply embedded within your *citta*, so that they can be totally eliminated. This task can be accomplished with persistent *satipaṇṇā* and diligent effort which a layman also can apply in his daily activity. It will make him calm, peaceful, and stable, not drifting or making a mess. There is no other teaching as perfect and ideal as the Lord *Buddha's* teaching that will benefit the monks and the laity - especially the *Dhamma* practitioners who follow it faithfully. What did the Lord *Buddha* teach? What is a monk's duty? What is the purpose of going forth? These are the primary questions that you should ask.

During Lord *Buddha's* time, people went forth for the purpose of eliminating the *kilesas* which are harmful to the *citta* and cause it to take up birth in the various realms of existence. It's in the *citta* where you'll find good and evil, right and wrong, happiness and suffering. That's why the Lord *Buddha* taught you to dig deeply into your *citta* which is the most important object. When the body dies, it decomposes, but the *citta* doesn't decompose. The *citta* doesn't die but

you don't and won't know this unless you practise. That is why the Lord *Buddha* exhorted you to practise. What is the purpose of taking up the robe? It's for eliminating the *kilesas* with the *Dhamma* practice. What is the duty of a monk? During Lord *Buddha's* time, a monk's duty was to practise walking and sitting meditation.

If you're resolute in destroying the *kilesas* due to your perception of the harm of the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, you have to develop *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya* to full potential. They must be developed concurrently. If the *citta* is constantly nourished, how can it not develop? It will definitely grow and excel. The *cittas* of the Lord *Buddha* and his noble disciples were also immersed in the *kilesas* for a long time like your *citta*. Their *kilesas* and your *kilesas* are the same *kilesas*. How did they manage to get rid of their *kilesas* and achieve freedom from *dukkha* and become the world's refuge? The term *Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi* – I take refuge in the *Buddha* - doesn't refer to just the *Buddha* of our era. It refers to all the *Buddhas* who became enlightened and taught *Dhamma* to the world.

The term *Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi* – I take refuge in the *Dhamma* - refers to the absolute truth discovered by all the *Buddhas*. *Dhamma* is the natural principle that has always existed since time immemorial. The term *Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi* - I take Refuge in the *Saṅgha* - refers not only to the

noble disciples of our era, but to all the noble disciples of all eras who have risen from the cesspool of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava*. How did they manage to cleanse themselves to become noble ones and refuges for all sentient beings? It was due to their diligent effort.

There are four essential mental faculties that the Lord *Buddha* exhorted you to develop. The first is *chanda*, which is delight or taking pleasure in your duty of eliminating the *kilesas*. *Viriya* is persistence or diligence. Whether it is a physical or mental task, there must always be diligent effort and perseverance. *Citta* is attentiveness, being observant of your task. If you pay close attention to your task, it will flow smoothly and flawlessly. *Vīmaṃsā* is extremely important because it is *paññā*. You must be thorough and circumspect with your task, physical or mental, and especially with the practice of mental development. You have to develop *paññā* to its fullest potential by always contemplating the three characteristics of all phenomena, which are *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā*. You must see them in this light in order to release your attachments or *upādāna*, which are deeply embedded within your *citta* and liberate your *citta* from *dukkha*. Therefore, these four mental faculties are absolutely vital.

You must not be heedless, but must always be vigilant and mindful. You should never think that the *kilesas* and you will ever be good friends. They are like fire. Can you get intimate with fire? If you really investigate, you'll see that they are like fire. That is why the Lord *Buddha* called them *rāgagginā*, *doṣagginā*, and *mohaḥgginā* or the fire of

lust, hatred and delusion. If they are not harmful, why would he call them fire? The Lord *Buddha* never lied nor exaggerated. He only spoke the truth. The problem with you is that you never look at the truth, but always deny the truth unknowingly. This is the work of the *kilesas*, which is similar to fire. When you touch the fire, knowingly or not, it will burn you. That is why you have to be very careful and must not expose yourself to the *kilesas*, because they are your enemy and they are like fire.

Wherever you are, whether you're standing, sitting, walking, or lying down, you must always meditate and establish mindfulness because it's your duty. You have to take the *Buddha*, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha* as your refuge. Ultimately, you have to put your life at stake for the freedom from all *dukkha*. This is your undertaking. You are abundantly provided with the requisites of living by the lay devotees who have faith in your endeavour and hope to make merit by supporting you. You are not lacking any of these requisites. What is lacking is your resolve and commitment to fight and eliminate the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava*. After you've accomplished your mission, you can then teach others. This is the most important point. If you can't teach yourself, how can you teach others? When you are not yet enlightened, your teaching won't be comprehensive and true. You should only teach after you've become enlightened. Then every aspect of your teaching will be true and your students will really benefit.

This is the way of *Dhamma* which has never done anybody any harm. It's the *kilesas* that harm everybody. That's why you

have to concentrate all your efforts to destroy them. Whether you're standing, sitting, walking, or lying down, you should always establish mindfulness. Be vigilant and mindful! *Sati* or mindfulness is crucial for your *Dhamma* practice. You need *sati* to direct your investigation with *paññā*. *Sati* and *paññā* must always work together as a team.

The greatness of the Lord *Buddha* is due to his ability to reveal to others the supreme *Dhamma*. So when he teaches this *Dhamma* to the world, the world finds it to be priceless. However, when this *Dhamma* is heard by immoral listeners, it will appear worthless. You must, therefore, prepare yourself to be a proper vessel to receive the Lord *Buddha's Dhamma*, by developing *sīla* (morality), *samādhi* (mental stability) and *paññā* (wisdom) until achieving enlightenment and *vimutti* - freedom from *dukkha*. You'll then become truly great without the need to have someone to vouch for you. How can you not become truly great after you have acquired this supreme *Dhamma*?

How can your *citta* which is always agitated, restless and confused find any peace and happiness? It's because the *kilesas* keep manipulating it to see only trials and tribulations rather than peace and harmony. To you, the world appears gloomy and bleak when in fact it's not so. This is due to your delusion, and that is why it is necessary for you to develop your *sati* and *paññā*, so that you can become wise and intelligent. You should establish *samādhi* which is your *citta's* foundation, and should earnestly and mindfully develop *samādhi* with the method that is most effective for you.

The *Dhamma* is a serious teaching. The Lord *Buddha* took the *Dhamma* very seriously. So why are you fooling around? Is this the way to follow the Lord *Buddha*? The Lord *Buddha* seriously practised and became enlightened. If you playfully practise, you'll become foolish. You'll never become enlightened. All that you will acquire are more delusions and deceptions.

If you earnestly practise, you'll definitely achieve results. *Samādhi* isn't beyond your ability. It's the *kilesas* that agitate your *citta* by manipulating and inciting it. Therefore, it is necessary to concentrate your *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya* right at the *citta* and practise relentlessly. How then can your *citta* become agitated? *Sati* must force the *citta* to totally concentrate on the task at hand and forget about everything else, such as life, death and time. You should only be aware of what you're doing, like repeating a *mantra* or watching your breath. Don't let your *citta* think about other things that will agitate it, which will happen if you're absent-minded. You should pretend that at this moment the world doesn't exist, although it actually does exist, by not thinking about it. Let there be only the *citta* and the meditation object. Then the *citta* will stay put and will definitely become calm. I have experienced this before. I'm not bragging. I have never seen any undertaking to be as difficult as the practice of mental development.

From the start when I tried to establish some calm and tranquillity, I found the *citta* to be a lot more restless and agitated than a monkey due to the influence of the *kilesas* over the *citta*. I had to replace the *kilesas* with the *Dhamma*

so that the *Dhamma* can become the *citta's* master and had to concentrate all my efforts into the practice, sometimes putting my life at stake. If I was going to die, so be it! Having been born, I am destined to die. The same with everybody whether he or she practises or not. Nobody is exempted from the cemetery. Who can live forever in this world? If I had to die fighting the *kilesas*, I was ready. It was either I die or become enlightened. When my practice started to home in on the *kilesas*, I was able to subdue the *kilesas* and establish calm, as well as making the *citta* bright and cool. It was an incredibly amazing and wonderful experience that enormously enhanced my faith in the *Dhamma* teaching as well as my diligence, forbearance and perseverance to fight and completely vanquish the *kilesas*.

This is how it will be when you really exert yourself. When it is the time to make the *citta* go into *samādhi*, you must solely concentrate on developing *samādhi*. Don't develop *paññā* at this time. When you want to establish calm, you must do only that. If you want to use *paññā* to develop *samādhi* then you must investigate the body. This is called going on a *kammaṭṭhāna* sight-seeing trip. The term *kammaṭṭhāna* means the basis of action or task. The most suitable objects for this task are the thirty-two parts of the body. If you investigate the body, going from top to bottom, having *sati* or mindfulness directing your investigation, the *citta* will eventually become still. This is one way to develop *samādhi*.

Now let me tell you how to develop *paññā*. When the *citta* has gained enough calm, it will be contented, not hankering for anything. You have to direct this calm *citta* to investigate the various aspects of *Dhamma*, like the thirty-two parts of the body. You should investigate your body as well as other people's bodies. You should look for *paṭikkūla*, filthiness, or *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā*, because they are the truth. We all know how filthy the body is. The Lord *Buddha* did not lie to us. But the *kilesas* prevent us from seeing the body's filthiness. They are the masters of deception. Is there a person in this body? Look carefully. You have to look the way the Lord *Buddha* instructs you to look. Is there beauty in this body? It's actually full of filth, inside and outside. It's also full of *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā*.

But this isn't the picture the *kilesas* have drawn up, which portrays the body to be beautiful, good-looking, and to be I and mine, which contradicts the *Dhamma* teaching. The *kilesas* always contradict the *Dhamma* teaching. If your thinking and understanding are like this, then you're contradicting the *Dhamma*. You must turn around your understanding to conform with the *Dhamma*, by seeing the body as filthy or *paṭikkūla*. You must investigate until you see the truth of this filthiness. Then it can be said that you are seeing the truth. You should also investigate the body to see it as *aniccā* (impermanence), *dukkhā* (suffering) and *anattā* (the negation of an entity, self, or person in this body, which is just made up of the four elements of earth, water, air and fire). For truly, there is no such thing as a self, an animal or a human being. This is the truth.

When you see this truth, the *kilesas* will disappear from your *citta*. Your delusion will gradually disappear as the truth gradually appears. First, you'll see the truth of *paṭikkūla*. Then you'll see the truth of the four elements. When the body is just elements, how can you be attached to it? If the body isn't good-looking, how can you be attached to it? It's like excrement along the roadside. Who would dare step on a pile of excrement? This is how you should see the body in order to free your *citta* from this delusion. The *citta* will stay clear from the body like you stay clear from a pile of excrement. These are the means of removing the *kilesas* which are like thorns that irritate and annoy your *citta* and prevent you from having any peace and happiness. Although you may think that you're practising mental development or *bhāvanā*, actually, you're most of the time making yourself restless and agitated by doing something else.

The time when you have any *sati* or mindfulness is only brief, but the time when you don't have any mindfulness and are being dragged away by the *kilesas* to do something else must be at least 95% of the time. So how are you going to find any tranquility, happiness and coolness, when 95% of the time belongs to the *kilesas* and only 5% belongs to the *Dhamma*? Is this enough to oppose the *kilesas*? You must, therefore, develop *sati* and *paññā* to a very high level. You have to be really earnest with your investigation of the body so that you can see its true nature with your own method of investigation. You must not be lazy when it's time for you to develop *paññā* and just wait for your teacher's

advice or expect him to show you all the details of practice. The teacher will only point out the major points. You have to come up with the details using your own *sati* and *paññā*. Whatever methods of investigation you've devised will be your genuine possession.

When you investigate, you will truly see the body's true nature and will eliminate your delusion. The more you truly see, the more your delusion will disappear. When you have completely seen the body's true nature, your attachment to and delusion of the body will be uprooted. The *citta* will then come inside. This is the investigation of the body. You have to investigate it so that you can see its true nature very clearly. You can investigate your own body or someone else's body. They are the same as long as you investigate for the purpose of uprooting your delusion and for insight. It will always be correct, because it's *magga*, the path. But when you incorrectly investigate your own body or someone else's body, it will be harmful to you. The purpose of your investigation is really crucial.

Sammādiṭṭhi, right views and *sammāsaṅkappo*, right thoughts are the components of *paññā*, which is the Lord *Buddha's* teaching that is designed for eliminating the *kilesas*, attachments and delusions. When you are skilful in your investigation with *paññā* of both your own body and other people's bodies, you'll not be deluded by them. So how can the *citta* become attached to them? The reason why the *citta* is attached to them is because it is deluded. It doesn't see the body's true nature. Even after you've listened to your teacher, it will be merely imagination. Your *citta* hasn't yet seen the truth, in other words

the truth hasn't yet penetrated the *citta*. The only way to experience the truth is to practise mental development. The results that appear will be true knowledge and true insight that will enable the *citta* to let go. Whatever object you're attached to, for example your body, after you've seen its true nature, you'll let go of it.

After you've realised the truth of your body and is clearly impressed by the truth of the elements, the truth of *paṭikkūla* and the truth of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, your *citta* will definitely let go of the attachment to your body. You'll clearly see this without having to ask anybody about it. You'll see the harm of your attachment, and how oppressive and burdensome this attachment has been for you. How then can your *citta* not relinquish your body? It will definitely let go. Your attachment to your body is now neutralised by your *paññā* and investigation. Your *citta* will now come inside because it has relinquished your body. You're now liberated from your attachment to your body.

Your next targets of investigation are *vedanā*, *saññā*, *sarikhāra* and *viññāṇa*, the four *nāma khandhas* or the four mental aggregates. There are three kinds of *vedanā* or feelings: good, bad and neutral feelings - *sukha*, *dukkha* and *upekkhāvedanā* - which are in the body and the *citta*. *Saññā* is memory or recognition. *Sarikhāra* is thinking about all sorts of things, past, future and present. *Viññāṇa* receives or acknowledges the sense data, like when the visual objects come into contact with the eyes and the sounds come

into contact with the ears. When these sense objects disappear, the acknowledgment also disappears. This is *viññāṇa*. They are merely mental phenomena. There is no self or essence in them. *Vedanā* is just *vedanā*, *sukha* is just *sukha*, *dukkha* is just *dukkha* and neutral feeling is just neutral feeling. There is really no essence in them. They are just phenomena.

When you've investigated up to this point, how can your *citta* not see the truth? It's your deluded *citta* that keeps thinking that *dukkhavedanā* is harmful because it's used to think in this manner and make itself miserable. When you've investigated with *paññā* these three *vedanās* - *sukha*, *dukkha* and neutral - you'll see that they are *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. It's the same with *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. You'll relinquish them just like you did the body. You'll no longer have any attachment for any body or any feeling - good, bad or neutral - with the exception of those feelings in the *citta*, that you haven't yet relinquished, which are also good, bad and neutral feelings.

Saññā is memory or recognition. *Saṅkhāra* is thinking which continually rises and ceases, like flashes of lightning. *Viññāṇa* also rises and ceases. It rises just so that it can cease. It doesn't rise for any other purpose and not for any entity, self, people or animals. It just rises and ceases. What essence is there in any of them? When you've seen their true nature, you'll relinquish them. You'll let go of *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, which

are merely mental phenomena and are not the *citta*. Although they might appear in the *citta*, they aren't the same thing, like men and women who live together yet you can tell them apart. You'll know beyond any doubt that *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, are not the *citta*. This is the knowledge that arises from practice. But you have to investigate in the manner that has been discussed here. When you've let go of them, there won't be any attachment left.

Destroyed are the paths used by the *kilesas*, which are the chief culprits that are deeply embedded in the *citta*. There is now no way for the *kilesas* to come out of the *citta*, because they can no longer use *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* as their paths. Neither can they use visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes and touch, for they all have been destroyed by *paññā*. Now you can see very clearly that within the *citta* there is just the *citta* and the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* are no longer attached to *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* or *viññāṇa*. They used to hide behind these five *khandhas*, claiming them as I and mine. When *sati* and *paññā* have finally rounded up the *kilesas* into the *citta*, the *citta* must now be the investigation target for *sati* and *paññā*. You no longer have anything to do with *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. However, you still have to use the arising and ceasing of *saṅkhāra* as the means of getting to the genuine *kilesa*, which is *avijjā*.

At this point the knowingness will stand out prominently from the *khandhas*. You'll see this very clearly. This is the time when you'll really get to know the

citta. Although *avijjā* is in the *citta*, you won't know it, because *avijjā* is very subtle, smart and clever. When you first get to this stage, you won't know that this is *avijjā*, if you don't have an enlightened teacher to point *avijjā* out for you. You'll think it's a genuine gold bar, when in fact it is not. You'll now become enamoured with this *citta*, which has converged to become extremely bright and magnificent. After you've let go of everything else, you now become attached to the *citta* and think that the *citta* is all alone by itself, not knowing that there is a tiger lurking inside it. This tiger is *avijjā*. Even the automatic *sati* and *paññā* or *mahā-sati* and *mahā-paññā* can still be deceived by *avijjā*'s charms because *avijjā* is the king of the three realms of existence.

There isn't a single kind of *kilesa* that can be more subtle and clever than *avijjā*. The coarser manifestations of *avijjā* are the *kilesas* of *lobha*, *dosa*, and *moha* - greed, hatred and delusions. Even with these coarser kinds of *kilesas*, you can be deceived by them. If you were not deceived by them, how could you become so greedy, so hateful and so deluded? This is because you think they are valuable and a natural part of you. For this reason, they are all over the world of *samsāra*. If you know how dangerous and harmful they are to you, then what is the use of being greedy, hateful and deluded? It's the same with the *citta* that is being deceived by itself. This deception is on the most subtle level. It is, therefore, necessary to use *paññā* to investigate this phenomenon, in the same way that you investigated *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* to see its true nature. You have to observe its activity or movement. If it is *sammati*, even at the most subtle level, there'll still be activity. This activity will expose the very subtle characteristics of *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā* of this very subtle

phenomenon.

You have to keep on investigating with *sati* and *paññā* until you fully and clearly see its true nature. When you do, this phenomenon will be completely destroyed. There will be nothing left behind including the *citta's* magnificent brightness, bravery, obsession and attachment. All that remains is the natural knowingness which is different from the knowingness tainted by *avijjā*. They are as different from one another as the sky is from the earth or stones from diamonds. This will be the final result of your practice. This is the ultimate freedom and the total destruction of the *kilesas*, the cause of suffering, birth, ageing, illness and death in the various realms of existences. But it's *kamma* that causes you to be born in a higher or a lower realm, and to have happiness or sadness. *Avijjā* is the primary cause, and *kamma* is the secondary one. *Avijjā* incites you to make *kamma*. Once you have done *kamma*, you'll have to bear the results of *kamma* called *kamma vipāka*. These are the causes of ceaseless rounds of birth, death, rebirth and suffering.

Like the Lord *Buddha* and all the *sāvakas*, you have to probe and analyse the *citta*, because it's the one that takes up birth, ageing, illness and death. Why do you have to wait for them to reveal this truth and teach it to you? Why are you not capable of learning it yourself? If you don't believe in them, who else can you believe in? If you only believe in yourself, you'll remain sinking in the pool of *dukkha*. When will you ever transcend this pool of *dukkha* that has birth, ageing, illness and death as its cause? If you don't believe the Lord *Buddha*, who else can you believe? You have to believe in him by doing the investigation. You will then see clearly the *citta's*

involvement with the past and the future, and with all the things that cause you to take up birth, ageing, illness and death in the various realms of existence. Even if you take up birth in the higher realms of existence, it's still an existence, it's still *sammatti* or relative truth that has *dukkha* embedded within it. The intensity of this *dukkha* corresponds to the realm of existence.

You have to eradicate *avijjā*, the real creator of existence, from the *citta* with the power of *sati* and *paññā*. You have to completely eliminate it. Then you'll see for yourself whether you'll have to take up birth and die again or not. You'll know this. How did the Lord *Buddha* get to know it? He got to know it by practising mental development, not by memorising the scriptures. He became enlightened by practice. You have to practise until you truly see and know *avijjā*. Then it will be permanently destroyed. How then can there be any more birth or existence when the principal cause of birth has been totally destroyed, as you can see it very clearly with *paññā*? There is nothing more left behind. All that is left is the purified *citta*. You will also know that you haven't disappeared. How can you disappear when you know? This is the natural principle. This purified *citta* is the absolute truth. How can you annihilate the purified *citta*? This is merely speculation. You have to see this absolute truth yourself.

The Lord *Buddha* could teach this absolute truth because he had discovered it. It's not beyond the ability of your *citta* to also discover this absolute truth. You have to probe and search until you find it. When you do, all of your trials and tribulations will completely vanish. The questions concerning your future: what kind of birth you'll take up, good or bad - will all disappear. As for the

present: you know at all times what it is like. You know there isn't any attachment left because all the *kilesas* have been entirely eliminated. The purified *citta* is not attached to itself, because there are no *kilesas* left in it. If the *citta* still has *kilesas*, it will still have attachment. The intensity of attachment corresponds to the intensity of the *kilesas* which will always create attachment. If they are still in the *citta*, they'll cause the *citta* to attach to itself. When you have completely eliminated them from the *citta*, there'll be no attachment left. What is left is the purified *citta* which is permanently freed from all forms of attachment.

This is *sandiṭṭhiko*, or visible here and now, that is constantly challenging you to experience it from the day of the Lord *Buddha's* enlightenment to the present. The *Dhamma* is never outdated. It is the *majjhimā paṭipadā*, the Middle Way or the right path to enlightenment, beginning with *sammādiṭṭhi* and ending with *sammāsamādhī*. It is *sandiṭṭhiko* or self-evident. You'll see it yourself because it's inside your *citta* and the way to achieve this has already been taught by the Lord *Buddha* and his noble disciples. This is the core of the *Dhamma* teaching, the core of practice. You have to practise following this *Dhamma* teaching, which the Lord *Buddha* called the *magga*, the path to enlightenment, the tool to permanently eliminate *dukkha* and the *kilesas*.

You must really exert yourself in your practice and must not relent or be lazy like a pig. The Lord *Buddha* didn't teach the pigs and the *Dhamma* teaching is not pig's feed. The Lord *Buddha* had to go through fire and hell to

become enlightened. He taught the *Dhamma* so that others could also become enlightened. You should, therefore, faithfully follow the *Dhamma* teaching and totally commit yourself to the practice to see if it's true or not. That's all that you have to do. The *kilesas* are sharp and clever. Nothing in this world can be sharper and more clever than the *kilesas*, but when they dominate you, they make you foolish. That is why they are the world's rulers. It's the *kilesas* that rule the *vaṭṭa cakka* or the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Don't ever think that it's something else. If you want to see this clearly, you have to dig into your *citta* in the way that I have just told you. You'll see it in your *citta*. After the *kilesas* have been eliminated from your *citta*, who'll be the ruler? There'll be no ruler because you've realised absolute freedom. Please be resolute and earnest with your practice.

Watching Your Thoughts

September 10th, 1979

You mustn't think the practice for the total removal of the *kilesas* from your *citta* to be too hard for you, because that would be contrary to the Lord Buddha's *Dhamma* teaching that teaches you to exert yourself, endure and persevere. This kind of thinking is the work of the *kilesas* which have been opposing the *Dhamma* teachings from time immemorial. When you start to exert yourself in your practice, they will oppose the *Dhamma* and make you weak and discouraged. They will come up with various tricks to make your *citta* weak and irresolute in order to keep you under their control. You, as a *Dhamma* practitioner, must be constantly mindful of your thoughts to see if they're opposing or following the *Dhamma* teaching. This is the crucial aspect of your practice. You have to always be rational and always watch your thoughts or *sarikhāra*.

There are two kinds of *sarikhāra*. The *sarikhāra* that opposes the *Dhamma* teaching will destroy you, the truth, and the *Dhamma*. They are *samudaya*, the origin of stress or suffering. The *sarikhāra* that follows the *Dhamma* teaching will destroy the *kilesas*. They are *magga*, the path of practice leading to the disbanding of stress or suffering. You have to always watch your thoughts that your *citta* constantly generates. It is similar to a football that is being kicked back and forth. How can your *citta* remain still? It's constantly being surrounded by the *kilesas*, which are like football players that keep kicking your *citta* to constantly think. It is, therefore, necessary to apply the *Dhamma* teaching with your strenuous exertion, endurance and

perseverance to correct the harm done by the *kilesas*. If you can't persevere and endure, then you're not totally committed to your task. If you don't strive, then you're not following the Lord *Buddha*, your teacher.

To be a good human being, you have to strive with your diligent effort to faithfully follow the *Dhamma* teaching, because this is the right kind of endeavouring. If you have to endure pain to achieve it, you must willingly put up with it. You're born in a world that is full of pain and you're in the midst of it. It's not possible to separate yourself from this pain, especially the emotional or mental pain which is a lot more painful than the physical pain. Your mental pleasure and pain are more profound than your physical pleasure and pain. In fact, the body never generates any pleasure. It only generates pain, when it becomes ill. When it's not sick, it doesn't produce any pleasure. It only generates pain when it becomes sick, and the pain can be extremely excruciating. If you haven't practised any mental development before, you'll be consumed by this pain. There'll be two kinds of pain happening at the same time: the physical and the mental pain.

Mental pleasure and pain are very obvious and profound. When you experience emotional pleasure, it will make you joyful and happy, whether it's mundane or spiritual. I can't really say that the body produces any pleasure. To me, it only generates pain. When the body is normal and healthy, it doesn't produce any pleasure at all. But when the bodily pain appears, it really shows itself. The intensity of pain corresponds to the intensity of the illness. The *citta* then loses its mindfulness and clings to the body due to its own delusion. This is like trying to lift a mountain and roll it over. How can this be possible? The true nature of the body, which is

aniccam, *dukkham* and *anattā*, is all over the body. It's a lot bigger than a mountain. How can you defy it? You should instead investigate to see the body's true nature. The *citta* will then be able to free itself from its attachment to the body and free itself from the physical and mental pains.

As a practitioner, you have to constantly investigate and analyse and always watch your *citta*, which will become your most valuable possession after it has been trained and developed. If it hasn't yet exhibited any worthwhile or exceptional capability, it's because it's being covered with the defilements of greed, hatred and delusion. For this reason, it's necessary to practise mental development with your utmost ability and energy to cleanse them away. The *citta* is the one that takes up birth, ageing, illness and death, the one that ceaselessly wanders in the *saṃsāra vāṭṭa*, and the one that experiences pleasure and pain. It's this *citta* that will excel after it's been purified to become the absolute truth and be completely free from all worries. The past will converge into the present. The future will also be clearly seen in the present. This purified *citta* will be complete, perfect, contented, most sublime and have no craving for the past or the future. Therefore, the *citta* should be relentlessly and diligently trained, developed, cleansed and purified until it becomes a pure *citta*.

Sati or mindfulness is absolutely vital. I have said this many times before. In all of the *Dhamma* talks that I have given, I have always emphasised *sati*, because it's indispensable for your practice. Whatever you do, if you have no *sati*, you will fail, especially in

your practice. *Sati* is absolutely necessary. You have to be vigilant, careful and cautious, constantly maintaining your *sati* until it becomes *sampajañña* or alertness. *Sati* means mindfulness. When you continually establish mindfulness, it becomes *sampajañña*. This is the second level of *sati*. The third level is the automatic or always-on *sati*. When you get to this level, you don't have to establish it, because it's ever present. From the time you wake up to the time you go to sleep, you will never be absent-minded and leave your *citta* exposed to the *kilesas* to attack it. That's why it's called automatic *sati*, or during the time of the Lord *Buddha*, *mahā-sati*.

Mahā-sati and *mahā-paññā* are inseparable. You'll see this in your practice. As soon as *sati* appears, *paññā* will follow immediately behind. Both of them will be tracking the *saṅkhāra* that thinks and conceptualises, not to mention the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavours and tactile sensations that come into contact with the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, which are coarser phenomena. The *citta's* thinking won't be able to slip away from this automatic *sati* that will become aware as soon as the *citta* starts to think. Automatic *paññā* will follow right behind, curbing and restraining it right away, except when the *citta* is investigating for insight and detachment. *Paññā* will let the *citta* continue investigating.

At this stage, whatever appears in the *citta* will immediately disappear. As soon as a thought appears, it will immediately disappear, just like the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavours and tactile sensations that come into contact with the eyes, ears,

nose, tongue and body. You can't eliminate them, all you have to do is to know their true nature and be detached from them. It's the same with the five *khandhas*. Eventually, *sati* and *paññā* will learn the true nature of *saṅkhāra*, which is very subtle, and *saññā*, which is even more subtle. They're extremely subtle because they are mental phenomena or *nāma-dhamma*. As soon as they arise, *sati* and *paññā* will know right away as a result of continual developing of *sati* and investigating with *paññā*, which will gradually become more skilful without any doubt.

This is the path traversed by the Lord *Buddha* and his noble disciples in freeing themselves from *dukkha*. This was the way they practised. They never became discouraged or relented in their exertion. Therefore, you, who are the Lord *Buddha's* follower, who practise mental development, who have taken up the robe and who are striving for freedom from *dukkha*, must faithfully follow this path. You must not be discouraged or relent. You must face up to any kind of *dukkha* as you strive to gradually eliminate the *kilesas* from your *citta*. We are all subjected to *dukkha*, because this is the world of *dukkha*, the world of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. Wherever you are, you can never escape from experiencing the *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* of the body or the *citta*. You are not shielded from the *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, so how can you not experience *dukkha*? Even when you're not exerting effort in your practice, you'll still have to undergo *dukkha*. So it's better to experience *dukkha* while you're exerting effort than to suffer while you're doing nothing, which doesn't do you any good.

As a practitioner of mental development, you must really exert and commit yourself to the practice.

The *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* are in your *citta*. You mustn't think that they are somewhere else. The *dukkha* in your *citta* is much more excruciating than the *dukkha* in your body. What is *samudaya*? It is craving for sensuality, craving for becoming and craving for not-becoming. Where does it appear? It appears in the *citta*. Its source is in the *citta*. It uses the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind as its tools. It is, therefore, necessary to investigate the physical and mental phenomena that the *citta* is attached to. Find out why the *citta* is obsessed with them. If you're attached to the body, then you must analyse the body until you see clearly its true nature, lose your obsession for it and detach from it. What are the bodies of men and women really like? You have to look at the hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones and the other internal organs, starting from the outside and then going inside. You have to look at the truth.

You must constantly and relentlessly investigate with your *sati* and *paññā* these thirty-two body parts until their true nature is seen. You must not blindly investigate, because this is not the way the Lord *Buddha* and the sages investigated. After you have seen the body's true nature, your delusion and attachment to the body will be eliminated. What's the use of clinging to them with your delusion? This is the way to investigate. I'm demonstrating this method of investigating the body as an example. You have to adapt it to suit your preference. You can either investigate your body or someone else's body. This will not be wrong,

because it's *magga*, the path to the cessation of *dukkha*. When you're attached to someone else's body, you will love or hate it; this is *samudaya*, the origin of *dukkha*.

The most important part of your practice is the application of your diligent effort. You must not speculate about *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* or about the time and place that you will become enlightened. When the *kilesas* spring into action, they pay no attention to the time and place. They are in your *citta*, where you have to focus your attention. The *kilesas* are like fire that must be extinguished whenever they appear. Don't be concerned with the time and place. Stress and the origin of stress are in your *citta*. Stress is a mental condition while the pain in your body is a physical condition. *Samudaya*, the origin of stress is a mental condition. It is *kāma-taṇhā*, craving for sensuality, *bhava-taṇhā*, craving for becoming and *vibhava-taṇhā*, craving for not-becoming. Having been born, you don't want to die. How is that possible? This is *vibhava-taṇhā*, craving for not-becoming. These three kinds of cravings are in your *citta*.

Nirodha, the cessation of stress, is the product of *magga*. This cessation of *dukkha* is a gradual one, corresponding to the strength of the *magga*, the eightfold path consisting of *sati*, *paññā* and the other path factors that will gradually eliminate the *kilesas*. *Nirodha*, the cessation of stress that is created by the *kilesas*, will gradually appear. When the *magga* becomes stronger, more *kilesas* will be eliminated. You'll see the *kilesas* being eradicated from the *citta* as you do sitting or walking meditation. *Satipaṇṇā* will constantly and relentlessly keep on eliminating the *kilesas*,

except when you take a rest, or when you go into *samādhi*. This is the only time when *satipaññā* of this level will not be working. But as soon as you stop resting, *satipaññā* will continue on working, constantly attacking the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavas* until they're entirely removed from the *citta*.

Therefore, you should diligently keep on developing *satipaññā* to gradually eliminate the *kilesas* from your *citta* until you get to the point where you'll have to search for them. These are the very subtle *kilesas*. When *satipaññā* becomes very powerful, the *kilesas* will cower and go into hiding. But wherever they hide, they will be discovered by *satipaññā* that is constantly searching for them. Eventually, they will all be destroyed. The *kilesas* are very overwhelming in the beginning stages of practice. Look at all the visual objects and sounds for example. They are all over the world. You're attached to them because you're affected by them. You're affected by the good and the bad sounds, the sounds of praise and criticism. You're also attached to the aromas, flavours and tactile sensations. For this reason, the *kilesas* are said to be all over the universe.

But when you investigate, you'll see that it's the flow of your thoughts that is attached to these sense objects by your mistaken or unfounded opinion or ideas. After you've investigated and seen their true nature, the flow of your thoughts will withdraw into the *citta*. The scope of your investigation that encompasses the entire world will become narrower. It was the *kilesas* that expanded the scope of your investigation. You have to round up the *kilesas* into the five *khandhas*, by letting go of all the sense objects with your

satipaṇṇā. After you've done this, you won't have to investigate the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavours and tactile sensations anymore, because you've seen their true nature and let go of your attachment. Why do anymore investigation when you already know what they really are and are no longer attached to them or have any mistaken opinion about them? The one who has attachment and unfounded ideas about them is the *citta*, which has now disengaged from them and let go of them. So what is the use of investigating them anymore?

The investigation will now turn to the body, which is one of the five *khandhas*. You have to investigate to see its true nature. You can investigate any part of the body that you like until you see the three characteristics of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. You can investigate any one of these three characteristics, because it will be like investigating all three of them, since they are all interrelated. When you have seen with *pañṇā* as taught by the Lord *Buddha* the true nature of any individual part of the body, you will have seen the rest of the body. Then how can you be attached to this body? What is the use of being attached to the bones, skin and flesh? Is it really an animal or a human being? Is it really I or mine? The flesh is just flesh. The bones are just bones. The sinews are just sinews. The skin is just skin. This body will eventually become bloated and decomposed. So how can this rotting and bloating body be you? How can it be I or mine? It will eventually disintegrate into the four elements of earth, water, air and fire. How can it be I? If it's made up of the earth, water, air and fire elements, why do you take it as yourself? You have to investigate until you see it very clearly with your *citta*. The Lord *Buddha* called this kind of seeing true *pañṇā*.

It's the same way with pain. To investigate *dukkhavedanā* or pain, you have to be fearless and daring. Wherever it arises, that's where you have to continuously and mindfully probe. If you have to die, let it happen. This world is a cemetery, a world of birth and death. If you should die whilst sitting in meditation, let it happen! There is no need to have the other monks chant the *Kusalā Dhamma* or wisdom for you, because you are right now developing the *Kusalā Dhamma* yourself. So why bother the other monks to do it for you when you can do it yourself? You must investigate the nature of pain. Don't be afraid. No matter how severe the pain might be, you must not wish it to go away. You must really investigate to see the truth. You have to clearly see the face of pain, see it as it really is. You have to see pain as just pain, because it's nothing more than that. You'll then see the *citta* that is being entangled with this pain.

You must now investigate until you see the *citta* is just the *citta*, pain is just pain and the body is just the body. They're just as they are, separated from one another. When there are no mistaken or unfounded opinions or ideas about the body, the pain and the *citta*, you'll see their true nature. When you see them just as they are, then the *citta* won't be troubled or shaken. No matter how severe the pain might be, you won't have any qualms, because you've already understood it with *paññā*. You'll see more clearly the nature of feeling as *paññā* moves deeper into the *citta*. Notice, for instance, *sukhavedanā* or bliss. When the *citta* becomes very subtle, there'll mostly be bliss, which will stand out very distinctly. You must see the true nature of this bliss.

You mustn't think that pain is the only form of stress, because if you are attached to bliss, this is *samudaya*, the cause of stress. You have to analyse until seeing this clearly. You probably have never heard before that attachment to bliss is a cause of stress. The *kilesas* that create this stress are called *samudaya*. When the *citta* becomes attached to this mental bliss, this is *samudaya*. You have to investigate with your inexhaustible *paññā* to see this clearly. *Paññā* knows this subtle kind of bliss and also knows this subtle kind of stress.

The investigation of the four mental phenomena or *nāma-khandas* - *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* - can be done with anyone of the four phenomena, because they all have a similar nature. It isn't necessary to investigate all four. But the phenomenon that you're investigating must be live, happening now. When you're investigating *vedanā*, you'll also be investigating *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. After you've repeatedly investigated, you'll be able to detach from them, just like you've detached from the body. You have to investigate all three feelings, good, bad and neutral until you stop clinging to them. You'll then also stop clinging to *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, which perpetually rise and cease. How can you consider them to be a self, a human being or an animal? They're just phenomena that rise and cease in the *citta*. This is seeing with *paññā*.

You have to keep on investigating until the *kilesas* run out of places to hide. When their hiding places, which are the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavours and tactile sensations, have all been destroyed, they will then hide behind the five *khandhas*. So you have to search for them in the five *khandhas*, and destroy them with the *tapa dhamma*, the fire of *Dhamma*, beginning with the body. When you have investigated until seeing the body's true nature, you'll realise that its nature is like the sense objects, and see that it's made up of the four elements. How then can you become attached to it, when it's just a phenomenon? When you see this with *paññā*, you'll immediately let go of it.

Saññā, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* are just phenomena that continuously appear and disappear. That's the way they are, and they don't know what they are. It's you who incorrectly define them and become attached to them. When *paññā* has investigated until their true nature is clearly seen, you'll let go of them. You'll let go of *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. What you haven't let go of yet is the *citta*. The *kilesas* now only have the *citta* under their control. They can't go outside because all the exits have been blocked. They can no longer exit through the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, because they've been blocked by *paññā*. They can no longer exit through the *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, by assuming them to be I or mine, because they have also been blocked by *paññā*. The *paññā* of this level is the automatic *paññā*.

When the *kilesas* have no other place to go, they go back to their nest where they rule the *vaṭṭa cakka*, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, or

the *vaṭṭa citta* which still revolves around the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Do you understand? The *kilesa* inside this *vaṭṭa citta* is *avijjā*. All the rest of the *kilesas* have been neutralised. All their exits have been blocked. All that is left to them is the *citta*, where you'll have to probe. This is where the king of the *kilesas* resides. *Paññā* must now concentrate all of its investigating prowess at the *citta* to reveal the *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* hidden in the *citta*, just like the way it investigated all the other phenomena or *sabhāva dhammas*. The only difference is that this one is more subtle than all the other *sabhāva dhammas*.

You must not cling to the *citta*. Should it be destroyed, let it happen. You must now treat the *citta* like a football and kick it very hard. Should the *citta* be crushed by your investigation, let it happen. Don't cherish it. You must kick it hard. Whatever is *sammati* or conjured into being by the *citta* is *aniccam*, *dukkha* and *anattā* and will naturally disappear. The purified *citta* will not be tainted with *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. It will be separated from everything. This *citta* has attained freedom. It's right here. The *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* are realised right here. You don't realise them at that place or at that time, which is mere speculation and a waste of time. You must now concentrate your investigation right here. The first Noble Truth, *dukkha sacca* and the second noble truth, *samudaya sacca* that shroud the *citta* are in the *citta*. The fourth Noble Truth, the *magga*, the tool that eliminates the *dukkha* and *samudaya* is also right here. It's *sati*, *samādhi* and *paññā*. *Nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha*, is the outcome of *magga*. When you've eliminated *samudaya*, *dukkha* will cease. The cessation of *dukkha* is called *nirodha*.

When the time comes for total elimination, you mustn't leave behind any trace of *sammā* or anything conjured into being by the *citta*. If the *citta* should be destroyed because it can't withstand your scrutiny, let it be. But the *citta* won't be destroyed. It is *avijjā* or *sammā* or *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā* that will be eliminated. The Lord *Buddha* said: You have to let go of good and evil. You have to do it right here in the *citta*. It was here where the Lord *Buddha* became enlightened, terminated rebirth, eliminated the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavas*, and became noble and the world's greatest teacher. It was the same way with all the noble disciples. They became enlightened by following the *Dhamma* teaching, which is the only thing that the *kilesas* are afraid of.

That's why when you practise, the *kilesas* will always oppose you, resist you and hypnotise you to make you weak. If the *kilesas* are doing this to my students, it will be a cause for concern. There are many of them here and they are increasing every day. I really am worried about their practice. When there are too many students the quality of practice will be diluted. When there are very few, it'll be highly concentrated. You must not relent in your practice. If you want to eliminate the *kilesas* and want freedom and *nibbāna*, you must always look at the *kilesas* as your enemy. You also have to closely watch your *citta*. If you do this, you won't be disappointed. Your *citta* has always been the right location to do your practice, because the *kilesas* are in your *citta* and are all harmful. Only the *Dhamma* teaching can neutralise the *kilesas*. Nothing else can, because the *kilesas* are not afraid of anything else. That's why you have to strive in your practice, be vigilant and

mindful of the *kilesas* that will resist the *Dhamma* teaching and terminate your practice.

The Four Requisites

September 18th, 1979

If you are a genuine Buddhist monk, your goal should be enlightenment. This was true for nine out of ten monks during the Lord *Buddha's* time. In the *Pali* Canon, there are many stories about the enlightened disciples who left their home and their possessions to become monks, because they saw nothing more important than enlightenment. They came from every social status: kings, princes, aristocrats, wealthy men, merchants, commoners, paupers and outcasts. The Lord *Buddha* didn't care which class his followers came from because he was full of compassion for all beings. It's also true with his enlightened disciples. They weren't conceited or arrogant, which is the nature of the *kilesas*. All the disciples had their hearts set on enlightenment and faithfully followed the *Dhamma* teaching.

Some of them were kings and princes with lavish lifestyles. Their four requisites of living - food, shelter, clothing and medication - were of the highest quality. When they became monks, they didn't take with them their old lifestyles. This was true with the Lord *Buddha* and his relatives. All they had were the four requisites of a monk, which relied on the generosity of donors. Sometimes there were plenty, sometimes very few, sometimes sophisticated and sometimes simple. It was all up to the givers. But they were happy with whatever they received, because they were faithful to the *Dhamma* teaching, even before they became

enlightened. For the commoners and merchants who were used to a hard life, it was no problem for them. Those who were used to living in luxury and easy circumstances and had to abandon them were not deterred by the hardship. They willingly took up the monk's lifestyle. This is what a real monk should be.

When you go to live in the forests and hills, there aren't many amenities you can take with you. You just have to make do with what you can find. I used to wander in the hills and forests myself, so I know what it was like. You get from the donors what they have, what they use and what they eat. There is a huge difference between living in the town and living in the forest regarding the living requisites. So I can imagine what it was like for the Lord *Buddha* and his disciples, who usually lived in the forest, on a hill, or in a cave, and at least one kilometre away from a village or town. How could they find any comfort from these places? Their hearts, however, were faithfully following the *Dhamma* before they became enlightened. They were striving for enlightenment with diligent effort and pure motives. This was how they practised before they could become our refuge or *Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*.

As a *Dhamma* practitioner, you should take only the Lord *Buddha*, his enlightened disciples and the *Dhamma* teaching as your refuge or role model. If you do, you won't be disappointed. When you're going through a lot of hardship from your practice, you should look to the Lord *Buddha* and his enlightened disciples for inspiration. They went through a lot of hardship. They didn't cop out. You have to think like this to make you tough and strong like them. In crossing the *vaṭṭa saṃsāra*, the

cycle of birth, death and rebirth, which is a boundless space of *dukkha*, you'll have to go through a lot of adversity, just like the Lord *Buddha* and his enlightened disciples did. For the upper class, their hardships were much more severe than the merchants and the commoners who were used to a life of hardship before becoming monks. It's difficult to adapt to a new lifestyle. But they were not deterred because of their unshakeable faith in the Lord *Buddha* and his teaching. They used the four requisites of living to sustain their lives so that they could diligently practise for enlightenment. Besides the requisites they were only interested in enlightenment.

You should follow their examples because they're your role models. You shouldn't take anybody else as your role model, because nobody is wiser than the Lord *Buddha* and his enlightened disciples. You should be prepared to face the hardships that come from fighting the *kilesas*, which have ruled over your *citta* for a very long time. Your *citta* is the *kilesas'* headquarters. How can they not dominate your *citta*? If you don't fight like the Lord *Buddha* and his enlightened disciples, how can you win? This world is full of hardships because all inhabitants, animals and humans, have to make a living and are surrounded by all sorts of dangers. The monks in this monastery are abundantly supplied with the requisites of living. There are lots of charitable people in this country who love to support monks who faithfully follow the *Dhamma* teaching, because it's a way for them to make lots of merit. That's why this monastery never lacks the requisites of living. Why then, can't you

follow the *Dhamma* teaching and develop yourself to the utmost of your ability?

You have to accept the hardships that arise from your practice that will free you from *dukkha*. You have to be strong, resolute, courageous and totally commit yourself to this noble endeavour. You should always be mindful of your *citta*, which is driven by the *kilesas*. *Avijjā paccaya saṅkhāra* means your thoughts are driven by *avijjā*. Listen to that! *Avijjā* is the major force that drives your thoughts and perceptions through your eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. *Avijjā* makes you cling to the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavours and tactile sensations, which causes mental pain and stress, because you are not mindful of your *citta*. You'll see this very clearly when you're enlightened. I've seen it (and I'm not bragging).

When the going gets tough, you have to be tough and strong. When you become skilful and proficient with your practice, the hardships will diminish. It's only at the beginning stages of practice that it's hard. When you keep on practising you'll be skilful and competent. You'll be tough and strong, skilful and competent if you develop *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya*, which will generate the mental power to gradually eradicate the *kilesas* and *āsavas*.

You'll see that the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavas* are generated in your *citta* and you'll see the way to destroy them. Don't ever think that the *kilesas* are anywhere else but in your *citta*. The real *vaṭṭa cakka* is the *citta* that ceaselessly revolves around the cycle of birth, ageing, illness, death and rebirth. I have realised this from my investigation with my *sati* and *paññā*. I have no doubt that the cause of birth is *avijjā* that is firmly embedded deep within my *citta* to the extent where it's impossible to differentiate my *citta* from *avijjā*. This is a crucial fact. When you dig into your *citta*, you'll see this principal driver of your ceaseless wandering and its followers that control your eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, as well as *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. Everything you do is driven by the *kilesas* that flow out of your *citta* to accumulate *dukkha* for you by your mistaken and unfounded opinions or ideas. These *kilesas* are directed by *avijjā* which is their master.

For this reason, the Lord *Buddha* had to teach you to be earnest and resolute with your practice of mental development. You have to concentrate all your efforts and mindfulness at your *citta*. Listen! The four *satipaṭṭhānas* or the four establishments of mindfulness is the *Dhamma* teaching that guarantees and certifies the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*, and the complete elimination of the *kilesas*. The four *satipaṭṭhānas* and the four *ariya saccas* or Four Noble Truths are the crucial teachings. Where are the four *satipaṭṭhānas* and the four *ariya saccas*? They are in your *citta*. So you have to exert yourself to the utmost of your ability and win in order to measure up to the Lord *Buddha* and his enlightened disciples.

It's the *citta* that thinks endlessly whether you have *sati* or not. This is natural for the *citta* that is under the control of *avijjā*. It is *avijjā* that drives this thinking. The *citta* thinks with craving or *samudaya* 99% of the time if you're not watching it and 100% if you're reckless. What does it think about? It perpetually thinks, becoming obsessed with love, hatred, anger, sadness, happiness, the past and the future. How can it find any peace of mind when it's deluded? Right now you can't comprehend this. That's why you have to develop calm for your *citta*. When it becomes calm, you should investigate with *paññā* the first of the four objects of *satipaṭṭhāna*, which is the body, to clearly see its true nature. What's this body made of?

You have to continually and mindfully probe the body, not casually, occasionally and carelessly, which is the way of the *kilesas* and *samudaya*. This is not the way to investigate the four *satipaṭṭhānas* for the purpose of eliminating the *upādāna* or attachment to the body. If you investigate with mindfulness or *sati*, how can you not see the body's true nature? How did the Lord *Buddha* get to see his body and the bodies of others? How did he become a *lokavidū*, one who knows the world? His enlightened disciples are also *lokavidūs*. But the scope of the Lord *Buddha's* knowledge is far more extensive and profound. *Lokavidū* means being enlightened to the Four Noble Truths that shake the foundations of the world. Every living being is cursed or blessed with the Four Noble Truths, depending on which parts of the truth it's exposed to. If you develop *sati*

and *paññā*, you're exposed to the good truth, because it's the path to the cessation of stress. If you develop craving and stress, you're exposed to the bad truths. These cravings and stress are inherent in every living being that still revolves around the *vaṭṭa cakka*, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, because they are driven by *avijjā*.

It is, therefore, imperative to investigate the body's true nature, starting from the skin, to see clearly both sides of the skin, outside and inside that are quite different. The Lord *Buddha* said it is *paṭikkūla* or filthy. The outer part of the skin is dirty with sweat and grime from top to bottom. When the body decomposes, it will be filthier. When it's alive it's wrapped with the skin to make it look attractive. But when you flip the skin inside out, you wouldn't want to look at it, be it the body of a man or a woman. The skin will deceive the eyes of undiscerning people. It's a very thin layer of skin, and yet you're not capable of penetrating it. How can you say that you have *paññā* or wisdom? The Lord *Buddha* had penetrated it and so had the *sāvakas*, because they had *paññā*.

You have to look at the truth. Don't deny it by seeing something that's ugly as beautiful, something that's repulsive as attractive, something that's impermanent as permanent, and something that's not I and mine as I and mine. If you're constantly contradicting the Lord *Buddha's* teaching, it means you can't fight the *kilesas*, because when the *kilesas* tell you to reject the *Dhamma* teaching you'll promptly oblige. The *kilesas* will always oppose the *Dhamma* teaching, because they are adversaries. So you

must always resist the *kilesas*. When you see, hear, smell, taste, feel or think about something that will give rise to the *kilesas*, you must stop. You have to restrain yourself. You also have to search for the *kilesas* that are hiding inside your *citta*.

If you want to investigate filthiness or *paṭikkūla*, you have to look inside your body. Is there a single part that isn't filthy? There isn't, because the whole body is filthy. It's also *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. Will you still keep clinging to it? The Lord *Buddha's* teaching is the means of removing your delusion and makes you see the truth. You have to apply this *Dhamma* teaching in your practice and not allow the *kilesas* to constantly hurt you. The *kilesas* are having a lot of fun, and you are having a lot of *dukkha* because you are under their influence and power. You have to really investigate the body: yours and others'. The body has no awareness. It has the five sense organs - the eyes, ears nose, tongue and body - to receive the five sense data. But these five sense organs are not the *citta*, the one who knows. Only the practitioner of mental development will realise this truth. You'll see that the body is just a medium. When the *citta* detaches from it, there'll be no sense objects for the *citta* to perceive.

Normally, the *citta* will suffuse over the entire body and thereby shoulder the burden of the body with all the filth inside it, and shoulder the burden of I and mine, because the *citta* is deluded. That's why the Lord *Buddha* had to teach you to investigate the body in order to see the truth of *paṭikkūla*, *asubha*, *aniccam*,

dukkham and *anattā*. The body is always changing. There isn't a single instant when the *ti-lakkhaṇa* or the three characteristics of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* stop working. *Aniccam* or impermanence works around the clock. *Dukkham* or stress constantly oppresses you. *Anattā* is not-self. Is there really I or mine? These truths are staring at you. You have to investigate with *paññā* to see these truths. When you see them, your delusion and attachment to the body will be severed automatically. You'll also see that the visible objects, sounds, aromas, flavours and tactile sensations are *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*.

After you've let go of your attachment to your body, you'll still look after it, but you won't consider it to be I or mine. The *citta* now knows that it's the *citta* and is fully contented. It doesn't need anything to make it happy. *Vedanā* is *vedanā*. The *citta* is the *citta*. *Dukkha*, *sukha* and neutral *vedanās* are merely *vedanās*. They are *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. You should listen when you chant *vedanā anicca*, *vedanā anattā*. When it's *sukha*, it's *anattā*. When it's *dukkha*, it's also *anattā*. When it's neutral, it's also *anattā*. Similarly with *aniccam*. What is there to cling to? These phenomena rise and cease, because it's their nature to do so. *Vedanā*, *saññā*, *sarikhāra* and *viññāṇa* are just phenomena. The *citta* is the *citta*. How can the *citta* cling to these phenomena and take them as itself? If it still does, it will unknowingly be like a football kicked around by the *kilesas* to take up birth in the various realms of existence, like a blind person who doesn't know where he's going because he can't see. Wherever he is led, he will follow.

Wherever the *citta* is led by the *kilesas*, it will follow. But it doesn't know where it's going and has to experience a lot of *dukkha*, like the *dukkha* of your body at the time of illness, old age and death. Please don't ever think that your body will bring you true happiness. It'll eventually become a heap on the fire. If there is attachment to your body or *upādāna*, the *dukkha* will be excruciating due to your delusion. So you have to investigate to see the truth of *aniccam*, *asubha* and *paṭikkūla*. You can investigate either your body or someone else's body. Do it repeatedly. At first you look at the pleasant and beautiful aspect of the body to fool the *kilesas*. Then you have to look at it when it decomposes and disappears until you see it vividly in your *citta* and let it go. This attachment to your body is very heavy, heavier than a mountain. How can you say that a mountain is heavy? Have you ever lifted a mountain? Has a mountain ever weighed down on you? It has never burdened you, because it keeps to itself.

But your body is a very heavy burden. The Lord *Buddha* said: *Bhāra have pañcakkhandhā* the five *khandhas* are very heavy burdens. The Lord *Buddha* didn't say that a mountain is a heavy burden, but he did say it of the five *khandhas*. This is where you have to investigate your body and someone else's body. Look at it when it comes into being and when it disappears. How can the *kilesas* consider themselves to be an entity, pleasant and attractive? This perception contradicts the *Dhamma* teaching. You have to investigate to see the truth. Then you'll be able to eliminate the *kilesas*. The notion of beauty, pleasantness, permanence, I and mine will all vanish. The attachment to the body will disappear and the heavy burden removed from the *citta*, which will then rise up to freedom. This is how you should

investigate, earnestly and diligently.

The *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna* are here and now in the *citta*. The *kilesas* are also here and now. They can appear any time. Love, hatred and delusion can appear any time whenever there is an opportunity for them to appear. They are not subjected to time or ritual. In practising *Dhamma*, you shouldn't pick the time, consult an astrological chart, choose the postures of your exertion or perform rituals. You should concentrate your investigation at the place where the *kilesas* appear. What are they thinking about? *Paññā* must find out exactly what's going on. When you've investigated repeatedly, you'll see it clearly. This was how I practised. I have great concern for all my students because our living together is not certain. We are all *aniccāṃ*, *dukkhāṃ* and *anattā*, and we are living in a world of *aniccāṃ*, *dukkhāṃ* and *anattā*. So how can we find any certainty? There must always be parting from one another, either while we're still alive or when we pass away.

So while we are still living together, you have to really exert yourself, putting all your efforts into it and get something out of it. Don't let our living together be in vain. There's nothing in this world that can be a greater memorial than the enlightening *Dhamma*. All you have to do is to get the *Dhamma* into your *citta* to completely extinguish the fires of the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavas*, which drive the *citta* recklessly and uncontrollably. You'll then have completely rid yourself of all burdens and accomplished your most gruelling endeavour, which the Lord *Buddha* proclaimed as *vusitaṃ brahma c ariyaṃ*, and your *citta* will have realised absolute

freedom. You'll no longer have to seek happiness, be bothered with the past, the future, birth, death or rebirth, because you'll be absolutely contented.

But right now, your *citta* is very hungry, restless, agitated and constantly seeking and grasping due to the influence of the *kilesas*. Can't you see their harm? After you have completely eliminated the *kilesas*, this grasping, restlessness and agitation will all disappear. Then you won't have to waste your time worrying about the past or the future, about birth, death and rebirth, or about happiness and sadness, because you've become enlightened, perfectly contented and you've purified your *citta*. This is the reward of your toilsome undertaking that has come to completion. From this point on, your meditation practice will be for recreation purposes only. Your body can get tired but your purified *citta* won't. It won't gain or lose, or be afraid of birth or death, because it isn't born and doesn't die.

The Lord *Buddha* and his enlightened disciples practised walking or sitting meditation for rest and recreation to minimise the burden of the body on the *citta*. They would meditate as they liked. Some could enter into the various levels of mental absorption or *jhāna samāpattis*, like the Venerable *Mahā Kassapa*, who could enter into *jhāna samāpatti* for seven days at a time. He could enter into the deepest absorption called *nirodha samāpatti* or complete cessation of all mental activities. For those who couldn't do this, they just calmed their *citta*. They meditated not to eliminate the *kilesas*. What *kilesas* are there to be eliminated when all of them have been completely removed?

The *citta* is now purified. What is there to purify? This purified *citta* is no longer affected by time and place. It doesn't matter how the body should die, by accident or illness, or if the *citta* has entered into *samādhi* before the body dies or not, because nothing can affect or destroy this purified *citta*.

The reason why the Lord *Buddha* entered into *jhāna samāpattis* before his final passing away or *parinibbāna* was to show his accomplishments as the world's greatest teacher. After his enlightenment, he taught the world with the wisdom and compassion of a great spiritual teacher and made himself a perfect role model. Therefore, before he was to finally pass away, he showed his accomplishments by entering the first, second, third, and fourth *jhāna*, which are the *rūpajhānās*. He then entered the four *arūpajhānās* and *nirodha samāpatti*, the complete cessation of all mental activities. At that time, some of his enlightened disciples wondered whether he had already passed away. So they asked the Venerable *Anuruddha* who had the ability to read the minds and thoughts of others. No one could surpass the Venerable *Anuruddha* in this respect. Some of the enlightened disciples also possessed this ability, but they were not as good as the Venerable *Anuruddha* who was able to follow the *citta* of the Lord *Buddha* going through the various stages of *jhāna*.

When the Lord *Buddha* entered the level of *saññā-vedayita-nirodha*, the complete cessation of all mental activities, the other disciples couldn't tell whether the Lord *Buddha* had already passed away. So they asked the Venerable *Anuruddha*, who was constantly monitoring the Lord *Buddha's*

citta. He said, 'No, not yet, he's in the level of *saññā-vedayita-nirodha*'. The Venerable *Anuruddha* continued to tell the other disciples the movement of the Lord *Buddha's citta* that went through the various levels of *jhana* and finally passed away between the *rūpajhānas* and *arūpajhānas*. He didn't pass away in any of the *jhānas*, because he wasn't attached to them. The Venerable *Anuruddha* then told the others, 'He has now passed away and entered *nibbāna* where nothing more can be said'. This is like flying in an aircraft in the sky that is totally empty of any clouds, where it's not possible to tell how fast the plane is actually going if not looking at the speedometer. It seems like the aircraft isn't moving at all.

It's the same with the purified *citta* that's free from all conventional truths or *sammati*. All the *jhānas*, from the first through the eighth and *nirodha samāpatti*, are *sammati*. The purified *citta* that's completely free from all conventional truths is called *vimutti*. Whilst the *vimutti citta* or purified *citta* of the Lord *Buddha* entered any level of *jhāna*, it was possible for the Venerable *Anuruddha* to track. He could tell the other disciples about the *citta* of the Lord *Buddha* as it entered and exited the various levels of *jhāna*. But when this purified *citta* exited *sammati*, it was like an aircraft flying in empty space with nothing to serve as a point of reference. You can't tell how fast you're going. But if there're some clouds you can. It's the same with the *citta* that passes beyond *sammati*.

You have to investigate thoroughly to see that the five *khandhas* are merely the *citta's* embodiment or avatar. When the *citta* is detached from this

embodiment or avatar, it will be detached from all *sammatti*. So it's not possible to describe this *citta* with the language of *sammatti*. You can't say that it's here or there. Where does the purified *citta* originate from if not from your *citta* that is currently being shrouded by the *kilesas*? Where are the *kilesas*? They're in your *citta*. And where are the *magga*, *phala*, *nibbāna* and purity, if not in your *citta*? This is what you have to purify. You mustn't go after other things, because you'll be wasting your time. Don't speculate but go straight to the truth in your *citta*. Why do you only hear about the other practitioners attaining to freedom from *dukkha* and attaining to *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* at this place or that place? Why can't you attain freedom? They're human beings just like you are.

The *Dhamma* teaching that they used to eliminate the *kilesas* are the same *Dhamma* teaching that you're using. Their *kilesas* and your *kilesas* are the same *kilesas*. Why can't you eliminate them? The problem is really in your ability. The *Dhamma* teaching is not the problem, because it's complete and perfect. It can always eliminate the *kilesas*. The problem is with you, the practitioner, who applies this *Dhamma* teaching. How do you apply it? Do you apply it with weakness and fear of pain and hardship? If this is the case, you'll not succeed. Even when you're fully armed your enemies can still destroy you if you don't fight them with your weapons. Even when you can memorise all the *Dhamma* teaching, it'll be useless because the *kilesas* are not afraid. They're only afraid of your practice of *saddhā*, *virīya*, *satī*, *samādhi* and *paññā*. The *kilesas* are always afraid of the *Dhamma*. They were afraid during the Lord *Buddha's* time, they are afraid now and they will be

afraid in the future. So y ou have t o really commit yourself to the practice. Don't ever relent or give up.

Exposition on the Buddha

October 13th, 1979

Buddhism was founded by the Lord *Buddha*, a mentor in spiritual and philosophical topics who was renowned for his profound wisdom and insight. As a prince, he ruled his father's kingdom for 13 years before relinquishing his power to pursue his spiritual goal. For six gruelling years he meditated before attaining enlightenment. If his wisdom hadn't been up to the standard of a *sabbaññū*, one who is all-knowing, he wouldn't have been enlightened and a great spiritual and philosophical teacher.

The *kilesas* are very cunning. In the three realms of existence, nothing can be as clever as the *kilesas*, rulers of these three realms. How did the Lord *Buddha* manage to vanquish all the *kilesas* from his *citta*? It was through his ability to apply common sense and insight. How else could he have neutralised the *kilesas* and become the world's greatest mentor? How could an ignorant person do it? The intrinsic quality of a *Buddha* is profound and immeasurable wisdom that is boundless like the sky. The teaching of every *Buddha* is always complete and perfect in every respect -- mental or physical or *sīla*, *samādhi* or *paññā* -- and could be easily understood by the monks and the laity.

Although the Lord *Buddha's* teaching which was successively transmitted down to us might not be as complete and perfect as when the Lord *Buddha*

taught it, it can still serve as an excellent guide. He taught his followers to be rational, especially those who practise mental development such as the *kammaṭṭhāna* monks. That's why I have always emphasised the development of *sati* and *paññā* as well as being thorough, observant, judicious, contemplative and rational to keep you from practising incorrectly. This is the way to develop wisdom as taught by the Lord *Buddha*. Although you won't be as wise as the Lord *Buddha*, at least you'll be his wise, faithful student.

I love to listen to the results attained from practice of my students. Some have been here for quite some time. I have consistently taught them and have never neglected this responsibility. I consider teaching the monks and novices more important than teaching the laity because the monks are better prepared for the practice than the laity since they aren't encumbered by the laity's livelihood. The monks' principal task is walking or sitting meditation. It's something they have to do themselves. There are plenty of lay Buddhist devotees who admire monks who practise faithfully and are always ready to support and provide them with the four requisites of living. You're well aware of this fact. So what are you lacking other than exerting yourself in the practice for the *magga* and *phala*? You're not lacking in the four requisites of living. What you lack is exertion and the results from your practice beginning with calm and culminating in enlightenment. So how are you going to resolve this issue other than putting in your effort? If you don't, you'll never achieve any result.

No other vocation is more suited for enlightenment than a monk's vocation. But how can you expect to become enlightened when you merely toy with your practice and your chores. Whatever you do, you must never forget the *Buddha*, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha*. You must always keep them close to your heart, recalling how the Lord *Buddha* and his disciples practised and achieved their goals, to keep you from falling into evil ways and be boosted with diligence and energy. The Lord *Buddha* and his enlightened disciples demonstrated how hard and earnest they practised. Were they ever involved with mundane matters? Their worldly experiences were similar to yours. But when they turned their hearts towards enlightenment, they were really earnest and resolute to the end. They were totally committed to their practice. Their corresponding results were also total. Means and ends are inseparable. The reason why you haven't come across any results is because you haven't applied yourself. You only have yourself to blame.

I'm teaching you with the utmost of my ability and have never hidden anything from you. When it's time to reveal my practices and accomplishments, I do it fully. I make clear every aspect of *Dhamma* that I know, not holding anything back from you. Why can't you apply them in your quest for enlightenment? One who has gone forth is a fighter who doesn't flinch or retreat. Where are the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*? I have told you many times before not to speculate about the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* being in this place or that place, at this time or that time, in the sky or on the ground, because they are all *sammati*, or conventional reality. Everything that surrounds you, the five *khandhas* and the entire world, is *sammati*. The *magga*, *phala*

and *nibbāna* are not in these places, but are in the Four Noble Truths.

The First Noble Truth is *dukkha*, that of the body and the *citta*. The Lord *Buddha* called *dukkha* a noble truth because it's absolute. The Second Noble Truth is *samudaya*, the origin of *dukkha*, which are the *kilesas* and created by the *citta*. This origin of *dukkha* is comprised of three kinds of cravings: craving for sensuality, craving for becoming and craving for not-becoming. Craving for sensuality means not being satisfied with visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavours and tactile sensations that you experience from birth. This is the most troublesome *kilesa*. The more you glut yourself with food and sleep, the more you'll increase and strengthen your sex drive.

You have to identify *dukkha*. Where is *dukkha* now? It's in your body and *citta*. What generates *samudaya*? It's *saṅkhāra* (thought-formations) and *saññā* (act of memory or recognition), as well as the objects of the five physical senses and the feelings and emotions in the *citta* that are created by your attachment to past experiences that consume you with burning desires. This is the way of amassing the *kilesas* and *dukkha*. This is the work of *samudaya* that the Lord *Buddha* exhorted you to relinquish. He said you have to identify *dukkha* and abandon *samudaya*. How do you let go of *samudaya* if not by the *magga*, the path of practice leading to the elimination of *dukkha*? What comprises the *magga*? It's principally comprised of *sati* and *paññā*, the most vital components that will enable you to completely let

go of *samudaya*.

Regarding your craving for sensuality, you have to identify the objects of your desires. Why are you obsessed with this man or that woman. Are they really men or women? Are they worth cherishing? *Paññā* has to analyse and reveal their true nature before you can let go of your attachment. Regarding *dukkha*, you have to identify it, for example, *dukkhavedanā* or painful feeling which arises from sitting for a long time or from illness. There is a cause for this *dukkha* to appear. You have to look for the cause of this *dukkha*. Where does it come from? Who says it's *dukkha* and bears this *dukkha*? Who rounds up the *dukkha* of the body into the *citta* to afflict the *citta* with two layers of *dukkha*? Who can this culprit be if not *saññā*, memory or recognition, the master of *samudaya*? The Lord *Buddha* said you must study the nature of *saññā* to see that it's just a mental phenomenon.

The body is a physical phenomenon. *Vedanā*, feelings - good, bad or neutral; *saññā*, act of memory or recognition; *saṅkhāra*, thought-formations; and *viññāṇa*, sense awareness: all are mental phenomena. *Viññāṇa* will appear when the sense objects come into contact with the sense organs. When there is no contact, *viññāṇa* will disappear. These four mental phenomena originate from the *citta* while the body is the *citta's* avatar. The *citta* is tenaciously attached to the body by the powerful *samudaya* and delusion that mistakenly view the combination of the four elements of earth,

water, air and fire as one and inseparable. If you don't apply *sati* and *paññā* to reveal their true nature, you won't be able to separate the body from the *citta*.

It's similar with physical pain. When you say physical pain is hurting you, you'll also create mental pain, because you're not using *sati* and *paññā* to see it as it is. How can you say that you're relinquishing *samudaya*? You have to apply *sati* and *paññā* to separate the physical pain from the mental pain and study the true nature of pain. When pain appears, does it ever say I'm painful? Does it know it's painful? No, it doesn't! It's just a phenomenon that appears and will eventually disappear. That's all there is to it. It doesn't say it's painful or explain why it appears and disappears. It's the *citta* that says it's painful and as a result produces another layer of pain, namely mental pain.

For this reason, the Lord *Buddha* had to teach you to study the nature of mental pain with *paññā*. What causes mental pain to appear? It's *samudaya* that's formed by the *citta's* unfounded opinion of the nature of pain. When the *citta* thinks that the physical pain is hurting it, it will also produce mental pain, because it will want the physical pain to disappear. The more it wants the physical pain to disappear, the more will be the mental pain. The way to eliminate this mental pain is not to have any desire for the physical pain to disappear. No matter how intense the physical pain may be, you have to calmly and unflinchingly study the nature of this mental pain.

When you have let go of your desire for the physical pain to disappear, the mental pain will disappear. Sometimes the physical pain will also disappear. If it doesn't disappear, like during illness, it won't disturb the *citta*, because the *citta* has eliminated its mistaken opinion of the physical pain. This is the way of understanding the nature of pain through the Four Noble Truths, and of realising that it's the *citta's* erroneous opinion of the nature of pain that's to blame. Who will have to bear the consequences of this mistaken opinion if not the *citta*? And it's in the *citta* where you'll have to study the Four Noble Truths.

I have already told you that the components of *magga* are *sati* and *paññā*. It's only *magga* that can remove *samudaya*. As soon as *samudaya* is eliminated, *dukkha* will disappear. There is no need to talk about *nirodha*, which is the disappearance of *dukkha*, because *nirodha* is the outcome of *magga*. *Nirodha* will gradually appear as *magga* gradually removes *samudaya*. When *samudaya* is completely eliminated, complete *nirodha* will appear. This is the ultimate *nirodha*, because *magga* is now the ultimate *magga*, and *satipaññā*, the ultimate *satipaññā*. *Nirodha* is now complete and perfect. The Four Noble Truths - *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha* and *magga* – will each be undeniably true. When pain appears in your body, you'll accept that your body is the home of pain. If you can live in this body, why can't pain? But there'll be no *dukkha* and *samudaya* in your *citta* because they've been completely eliminated by *magga*.

What am I talking about? I'm talking about the *magga, phala* and *nibbāna*, and about the four noble truths. Do you have the Four Noble Truths? You're constantly being bombarded with *dukkha*, both of the body and of the *citta*. Why can't you see this *dukkha*? You can't make stew out of *sati* and *paññā*, but you can apply them in your contemplation. It's only *sati* and *paññā* that can eliminate the *kilesas*. You must always use *sati* to supervise your practice. This is vital for your enlightenment. After your enlightenment, you'll never be shaken by anything. What you know, you'll confidently tell others like the Lord *Buddha* who after his enlightenment boldly propagated his complete and perfect *Dhamma* teaching to the world, the *Dhamma* that was previously unknown to others. He was a true sage who would fearlessly teach the timeless truth, the *Dhamma* that's still alive and well today. If the *Dhamma* isn't timeless, it would have disappeared a long time ago. What is this *Dhamma*? It's the Four Noble Truths: *dukkha, samudaya, nirodha* and *magga*.

Dukkha disappears because *samudaya* ceases. *Samudaya* is comprised of craving for sensuality, craving for becoming and craving for not-becoming - *kāma taṇhā, bhava taṇhā* and *vibhava taṇhā*. You have to relinquish your cravings with *magga*. When you see that your cravings produce your *dukkha* you'll relinquish them. What is *magga*? It's *silā, samādhī* and *paññā*.

Right views and right thoughts are the components of *paññā*. Right speech, a component of *silā*, is to talk about getting rid of the *kilesas*,

taṇhās, and *āsavas*, not talking politics or mundane matters. There are ten topics that conform to right speech and are called *sallekha dhammas* or purifying talks. They are the following:

1. *Appicchatākathā* - wanting little.
2. *Santosa* - being contented with whatever is given.
3. *Asaṁsaggakathā* - not socialising or interacting with others.
4. *Vivekathā* - delighting in seclusion.
5. *Viriyārambhakathā* - practising diligently.
6. *Silā* - being morally and ethically pure.
7. *Samādhi* - mental calm and stability.
8. *Paññā* - contemplating on the three characteristics of impermanence, stress and not-self that will eventually lead to enlightenment.
9. *Vimutti* - freedom from stress.
10. *Vimutti ñāṇadassana* - realising *vimutti*.

These are the ten topics of the *sallekha dhammas*. If you want to talk, you should talk about these topics because they're uplifting and entertaining.

Right action is another component of *siḷā*. Walking and sitting meditating to eliminate the *kilesas* are right actions. There are other actions that seem to be right, like building temples, but if monks take them up they can unknowingly promote the growth of the *kilesas* and destroy the *Dhamma* in their *cittas* - if they have any. If they don't have any *Dhamma*, then these tasks will totally ravage their *cittas* and are not right actions for meditators.

There are four kinds of right exertion: 1. The exertion to prevent evil from arising. What is evil? It's the *kilesa*-driven actions that produce stress. 2. The exertion to eliminate evil that has already appeared. 3. The exertion to do good and virtuous actions. 4. The exertion to maintain and nurture good and virtuous actions that you already have.

Right mindfulness is the establishing of mindfulness at the body, feelings, *citta* and *Dhamma*.

Right *samādhi* is making the *citta* calm and stable. Wrong *samādhi* is to have visions of heaven or hell and mistake them for the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*. These are the components of *magga*, the weapon for the total destruction of the *kilesas*.

It's normal for the *citta* to accumulate the *kilesas*, because it's still under the spell of the king of the *kilesas*, which is *avijjā* that continually instigates *saṅkhāra* to think about the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavas*. *Avijjā* will never let *saṅkhāra* think about *Dhamma*. Only you can. In the beginning stages of practice, it's necessary to push *saṅkhāra* to think about *Dhamma* or *magga*. *Saṅkhāra* that thinks about *samudaya* is for the amassing of the *kilesas*. *Saṅkhāra* that thinks about *Dhamma* and eliminates the *kilesas* and *āsavas* is *magga* and is in your *citta*.

So why don't you ever come up with any results from your practice? When are you going to get serious with your practice instead of being weak and lazy? How are you going to become enlightened if you're weak, lazy, foolish and incompetent? Are these the qualities for attaining the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*? If they are, all living beings would have already attained the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*. There wouldn't be any need for them to strive with diligent effort, endurance and perseverance. But in truth, your exertion is your only weapon that will destroy the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavas*, and achieve the freedom from *dukkha*.

Therefore, you must really put in your effort. Don't be complacent. The practice community is getting smaller with every passing day. Don't blame me for not warning you. The number of enlightened teachers who truly know the way are steadily decreasing. Some day you'll be like a loose kite in the sky with nothing to hold it from being blown away by the wind. You should now accumulate as much *Dhamma* whilst you still can, because those who can truly teach *Dhamma* are nearly extinct and you

can actually count them. There are not many role model monks left for you to follow and those that are left are getting older with each passing day. If you don't accumulate the *Dhamma* now when it's conducive and favourable, when will you do it?

You're studying with your teacher now because you can't practise on your own. After you've learned how to practise, you should practise and should at least accomplish *samādhi*. Then you'll have to investigate with *paññā*, which is very extensive and profound. It's not possible to explain *paññā* to make every listener understand at the same time. But it's possible to explain to each individual practitioner who has specific questions arising from his investigation, because there are specific issues to be resolved. It's rather difficult to explain *paññā* in general terms.

The Four Noble Truths

October 19th, 1979

The words of the Lord *Buddha* are not ordinary because they originated from a brilliant and profound mind. If they had not been so, how could they destroy the *kilesas* of countless sentient beings, free them from *dukkha* and enlighten them right in his presence? In fact, his transcendent teaching is indispensable and vital for the removal of the *kilesas* and instantaneous enlightenment. Such is the power of experiential truth. Memory has no such power. Not a single *kilesa* can be eliminated by memory.

For example, you can recite *nibbāna* is the supreme happiness, *nibbāna* is the supreme emptiness, but it can't get you to *nibbāna*. Talking about *nibbāna* doesn't get you to *nibbāna*. But practising mental development will. When you do, you can distinguish truth from falsehood. The *citta* of a person who memorises the scriptures is still tainted with the *kilesas*. The *Dhamma* realised in the *citta* from practice is the real *Dhamma*. *Sati* and *paññā* appear in the *citta*. Ignorance and the *kilesas* also appear in the *citta*. It's in the *citta* where you destroy the *kilesas* and realise freedom from *dukkha*, nowhere else.

As a practitioner, you should always watch your *citta* if you want to remove the *kilesas* with the *Dhamma* teaching. You should investigate everything that the *citta* is involved with. Find out why it has to get involved

with these things and identify the trouble and pain that follow with *sati* and *paññā*. You can't run away from the Four Noble Truths. The Lord *Buddha* said *dukkha* is a reality although no one in the world has any desire for it. Why did he say *dukkha* and the origin of *dukkha* are noble truths? Because they are real. If you don't remove the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavas* with *magga*, you'll never eliminate *dukkha*.

It is, therefore, necessary to develop *magga*, which is also a noble truth, so that *nirodha* (the cessation of *dukkha*) can appear. *Nirodha* -- the cessation of *dukkha* is also a noble truth. These Four Noble Truths are in the *citta*. The *citta* is the container for the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavas*, the endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth, and every form of *dukkha* and enlightenment. Wisdom originates in the *citta*. The *kilesas* are neutralised in the *citta*. Freedom from *dukkha* is realised in the *citta*. The transcendental and blissful experience occurs in the *citta*. Having attained enlightenment, the *citta* can either be called *Dhamma* or the purified *citta*. The term *citta* is used whilst it's still in possession of the five *khandhas*, because they are *sammatī* (conventional reality) and the purified *citta* has to abide with the norms of *sammatī* despite being an absolute reality. After the *citta* has realised absolute reality, it doesn't matter what it is called.

The problem is with the *kilesas* which are extremely tenacious. No other task is more gruelling than the elimination of the *kilesas* that are deeply embedded in the *citta*. The *kilesas* are as infinite as the *citta* is infinite, as deep as the *citta* is deep, and they are capable of dragging the

citta to wander endlessly in the various realms of existences. If you had to display the existences and *dukkha* that you've gone through, it would fill the whole world. If everyone had to display his or her *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, *āsavas*, *dukkha* and existences, there wouldn't be enough room to show them. To eliminate the *kilesas*, you mustn't do it lightly. If you aren't earnest with your practice, you'll never become enlightened.

When you've earnestly developed *magga*, the weapon that will destroy the *kilesas*, to full maturity, you'll see the true nature of the *kilesas*, which are *magga's* opponents, and eliminate them with an earth-shattering bang like the Lord *Buddha* and his enlightened disciples did. What they achieved still rings true today. Their illustrious achievements are celebrated by Buddhists of all nationalities. How could they be so highly esteemed if they were not enlightened? You have to have faith in them before the absolute truth can materialise.

The task of neutralising the *kilesas* is an arduous one. I can confidently attest to this fact. It's a lot more difficult to discipline human beings than to train animals, because human beings are more sophisticated than animals. Correspondingly, the development of human beings takes more effort than animals. It requires a lot more effort, forbearance and know-how. Disciplining and developing human beings is the most difficult task. Who are these human beings? I'm referring to the Lord *Buddha* who strived in disciplining himself until he

passed out. Is this difficult or not? I have also read from the scriptures how hard it was for the enlightened disciples to discipline themselves also.

When I say how hard it is to train human beings, I mean you. You're responsible for training yourself to become good and virtuous, by removing all evils which are the products of the *kilesas* from your *citta*. This task is very arduous and requires a lot of effort. Otherwise you won't be able to come up with any results. You have to fight the *kilesas* blow for blow and must not be afraid of death, which follows you like your shadow. When the time comes, everybody, good or bad, still possessed with the *kilesas* or not, will have to die. Once you've acquired a body, you've also acquired death. Before you die, you should achieve the task of training yourself, completely eliminate the *kilesas*, and realise the supreme happiness. As long as the *kilesas* are still embedded in your *citta*, there won't be any supreme happiness. Though you might look happy, you're just putting up a front, because you're still full of greed, hatred and delusion. This kind of happiness is not your goal. Your goal is the supreme happiness of enlightenment that can only be realised through strenuous exertion.

You should take the Lord *Buddha* as your role model. When you're discouraged, you should recollect the Lord *Buddha's* virtues. If the discouragement still remains you should recollect the *Dhamma's* and the *Saṅgha's* virtues; then your discouragement will disappear. This is the way to muster up your courage. The Lord *Buddha* is the victor. When you think of

him you'll become courageous. You should always look at the way he practised.

The *citta* can't freely do what it pleases because it's under the *kilesas*'s controls, like a prisoner who is always watched by guards. It's also true of the activities of *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* which are always supervised by the *kilesas*. The *citta* is like a buffalo held on a leash whilst left grazing in the pasture. We're all completely ignorant of the *kilesas*' harmfulness. As a result, the *kilesas* are having a great time amassing their power and influence over the *cittas* of all sentient beings. None of these beings can escape from their grip except those who take up the *Dhamma* teaching with strenuous exertion, which is the only way for them to be free. You must, therefore, strive for the total elimination of the *kilesas*. After the *kilesas* have been completely eliminated by *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya*, the *khandhas* - such as thoughts and perceptions - will all be free from the *kilesas*' influences and become the *Dhamma*'s assistants in propagating the Lord *Buddha*'s teaching to others. The Lord *Buddha*, after having attained enlightenment, used the *khandhas* to teach the *Dhamma* to the world for forty-five years.

How happy will you be after you're freed from the prison of the *vaṭṭa citta*, which is the *citta* that is still under the *kilesas*' influences and controls, and the prison of the *vaṭṭa cakka*, which is the endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth? The *vaṭṭa cakka* and the *vaṭṭa citta* have now been destroyed by the middle way of practice, the *majjhimā paṭipadā*. You can now see very clearly that the *kilesas*, regardless of how many there were, were the

master puppeteers that supervised every activity of the *khandhas*. The one who had to reap the *khandhas'* actions driven by the *kilesas* was the *citta*, which was like a toilet bowl for the filth of greed, hatred, delusion, lust and suffering. When all of this filth has been removed, you'll see clearly that there is nothing left to oppress the *citta*. Throughout the day and night, you can freely see, hear, taste, smell, touch and think about anything without having any love or hatred for them. Previously, you were driven by the *kilesas* to think endlessly, aimlessly and emotionally. Now you think rationally, purposely and without any stress. This is the result of training human beings.

You have to earnestly exert yourself, even if it's difficult. The Lord *Buddha* and his enlightened disciples all seriously exerted themselves and are now your role models. You're the Lord *Buddha's* follower and a frontline soldier, how can you be weak and relent in your exertion? As a *bhikkhu* or Buddhist monk you're a frontline soldier. Furthermore, you're a *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu* who is intent in the practice for the realisation of the Four Noble Truths. If you're weak and discouraged, you're not following the *Dhamma* teaching. Therefore, you must be earnest and resolute. Don't ever dismiss from your mind that the training of human beings is extremely hard. This is a very vital point to remember.

Every type of *kilesa*, from the coarse to the intermediate to the subtle ones, are all harmful like fire. Be it the fire itself or the sparks from the fire, they are all hot and only differ in their intensity. All of them are detrimental. It's

best to extinguish all of them. Then it will be *natthi santi param sukham* - no happiness can be greater than the happiness of the absolute peace which follows the total extinction of the *kilesas* that the practitioner of mental development will come to possess. There is no need to ask anybody for confirmation regarding this attainment. It doesn't matter how long ago the Lord *Buddha* passed away. I speak with the greatest respect for the Lord *Buddha*, not out of contempt. For whom did the Lord *Buddha* teach *sandiṭṭhiko* - *Dhamma* is self-evident? For whom did he teach *paccattam veditabbo viññūhi* - *Dhamma* realised here and now by the wise? For whom did he teach the *majjhimā paṭipadā tathāgatenā abhisambuddhā* - the middle way, if not for all of us practitioners?

To neutralise the *kilesas*, you have to do it right here in your *citta*. How can you not know when the *kilesas* gradually disappear and happiness subsequently appears? The virtue of *sandiṭṭhiko*, or being self-evident, isn't solely preserved for the Lord *Buddha* and his enlightened disciples because it's the result from following the middle way, the *majjhimā paṭipadā*. When you earnestly practise, you'll experience this result right in your *citta* and you'll be totally rid of all doubts.

I'm very concerned for my students. I'm getting older with each passing day. Eventually, I'll have to lay down my teaching responsibility. Taking care of my body will eventually take up all my strength and energy. I'll have to let go of everything else like Tan *Ajaan* Khao who can only watch his breath until it expires. But crucially his *citta* is never

weakened. To him, his body is just a puppet he plays with. *Parā have pañcakkhandha* - the five *khandhas* are very heavy burdens. You play with them until they expire. After you're separated from them, you'll be free from all responsibilities, worries and anxieties. The numbers of enlightened teachers are steadily decreasing and close to extinction. Now is the time to really concentrate on your exertion.

You must never see anything in the entire world to be more valuable and greater than enlightenment. If there were, the *citta* would definitely not let it go. It would not abandon its wrong views, love, hatred and anger that are relished by everybody. We all like anger and love though we know they hurt. According to the *Dhamma* teaching, there's nothing better than the *citta* freed of love and anger. When you realise this fact, you'll relinquish everything and develop mental calm because the happiness derived from mental calm is far superior to all other happiness. The calmer your mind becomes, the more blissful you will be, the more you will be able to relinquish and eventually let go of everything.

You'll relinquish visible objects, sounds, aromas, flavours, tactile sensations and the five *khandhas* - *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, because they aren't satisfactory. All that is left for you to let go of is the *citta*. What makes you love it and remain attached to it? Who is this perpetrator? You'll keep on investigating until you find it and let it go. You'll then have relinquished everything. This sounds rather easy. But looking back at the way I had to exert myself, it wasn't

that easy because I had to wager my life for it. When you have fulfilled all the prerequisites, you'll definitely become enlightened. So you have to be resolute and earnest with your practice.

Don't ever make any trouble here. From the time this monastery was established, there has never been such an incident. There has never been any quarrel amongst the monks, because everyone respects the *Dhamma*, thus making it easy for everyone to live in harmony. You're here to eliminate the *kilesas*. So you mustn't let the *kilesas* incite you to make any trouble because it's really shameful. As a practising monk, you must never think you're better than others, because this is morally wrong. When you act like you're better than others, you're just showing your dark side for others to see. If you're really good, you don't have to show off, because it will be obvious. If you're good and don't flaunt it, you're really good.

As a *Dhamma* practitioner, you have to be rational, not emotional. If you want to be good but don't have any goodness in you, you can't be good. You're not good simply because you want to be. And when you try to impress others with how good you are, it will be futile, shameful and vulgar. This is the work of the *kilesas* that you're supposed to eliminate. How can you allow them to incite you to quarrel with other monks like dogs do? Monks are not dogs, and this monastery is not a doghouse. When monks quarrel, it's like dogs fighting and the worst thing that can happen to a monastery. Here, I'm merely illustrating a point. It doesn't mean that the monks here

quarrel. I'm merely pointing out the differences between good and bad, benefit and damage.

You're here to develop moral excellence. So you have to be always mindful of your actions. When you're mad at someone, you have to remind yourself that this is the work of the *kilesas* that you must neutralise, not nurture. The more you think about the object of your displeasure, the more you will nourish the *kilesas* and your delusion. Instead, you must look at your *citta* which is being consumed by the fire of anger that you must extinguish before spreading out to burn others. As a practitioner, you must always *opanayiko* -- look at your *citta*.

The Importance of Correct Behaviour

November 7th, 1979

Some practitioners are confused and lost because they don't faithfully follow the *Dhamma* teaching. If they did, how could Buddhism ever decline? The problem is with the Buddhist followers who don't strictly follow the *Dhamma* teaching, but not with the teaching because the teaching is always complete and perfect. It is, therefore, imperative for monks living in a monastery to be always mindful of their actions. They must not allow the *kilesas* to direct their conduct so as to create friction amongst themselves that will at least cause resentment, and at worst, division or a schism. When you have resentment, it'll be difficult for you to meditate. This is crucial. It'll be good for you if you strictly adhere to the *Dhamma* teaching that will prevent the *kilesas* from directing your selfish behaviour. Why can't you do it when it's so simple?

You and the other monks are grown-ups and are good friends, you should be able to settle your differences amicably. When a monk talks or acts improperly, he should be grateful when the other monks admonish him. This is *pavāraṇā*, to gratefully accept criticism. The monks will do this *pavāraṇā* every year on the last day of *vassa*, the rains retreat. Each monk will say to the assembly of monks *saṅghaṃ bhante pavāremi*, I gratefully submit myself to your criticism. Monks should, therefore, admonish other monks when they misbehave. But if monks aren't sincere about letting other monks criticise them, it will be useless and pretentious. An insincere monk is not a real monk, whose only aim is

enlightenment, who will not instigate any trouble. The world, however, is usually full of clashes, clashes for happiness, money and power. Occasionally, these conflicts grow to catastrophic proportions. But monks are not affected by these clashes because they are constantly eliminating the cause of these clashes.

When you have to eliminate the cause of your stress, it's usually hard. The hardship that arises from restraining and removing the *kilesas* is an unavoidable by-product that you have to experience in your quest for freedom from stress. But this hardship is not for promoting the *kilesas* that create more stress; it's for boosting the *Dhamma* that generates more happiness. The Lord *Buddha* undoubtedly serves as an excellent example in this regard. Had he not faced up to the pain of the body and the mind, he wouldn't have become enlightened and a great spiritual mentor. It's the same with all the enlightened disciples who also had to confront hardship in their quest for enlightenment. They never relented or quit. They all had to experience hardship right from the beginning.

There isn't much opposition in other tasks. But in the task of eliminating the *kilesas*, there are lots of *kilesas* opposing you, sometimes to the point where you can't put up with them and unknowingly fall for their tricks that'll put you to sleep. This occurs in many practitioners. For this reason, you have to constantly be on your guard. Mindfulness or *sati* is indispensable and

when you're continually mindful, *sati* becomes *sampajañña*. It's hard when you have to force yourself to be mindful. But you have to constantly watch your mind and pull it inside. When you're not watching, your mind will go outside and will harm and burn you.

The *kilesas* are never relenting or lazy. It's normal for a practitioner to sometimes feel weak or strong especially during the beginning stages. But the *kilesas* are never weak - not until the time when your *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* are fully developed. Then the *kilesas'* opposition will diminish because they will become weakened by the power of *Dhamma* that will attack and completely destroy them. Then there will be no *kilesas* left to turn the *citta* against the *Dhamma*. I would really love to see you become enlightened after all the efforts I've put in teaching you. I have never kept any *Dhamma* secrets from you but have always been ready to explain any *Dhamma* that will benefit you because I want you to become enlightened. But you have to be resolute, wise, tough and strict with yourself.

As soon as you have realised mental calm, you'll immediately see the value of your practice. The happiness from this mental calm is far superior to all other happiness. After you have realised mental calm, you'll discover your true worth and the harm of your restlessness. You'll be enthusiastic to practise harder. These were the results of my practice. There are two types of mental calm. The first type which most practitioners experience is mild and gradual. The second type which few practitioners

experience is sudden and dramatic, like suddenly falling into a deep well or an abyss and then starting to experience psychic events, such as heavens and hells. This second type needs the supervision of an experienced teacher. But the first type can be practised safely without any supervision.

When the *citta* enters into calm, it should be left alone until it exits from calm before it'll be ready for the work of investigation. The elimination of the *kilesas* must be done with *paññā*, not *samādhi*. *Samādhi* only rounds up the *kilesas* inside and subdues them but doesn't destroy them. When *samādhi* weakens, the *kilesas* will become active and aggressive again. Your emotions can also diminish your *samādhi*. When you investigate with *paññā*, the *kilesas* will gradually decrease. This is the proper way of practice that will eliminate delays caused by your addiction to *samādhi*. In investigation with *paññā*, you should use the methods that suit you, on any object and within the framework of the Four Noble Truths. After you've understood the nature of that object, you'll also understand the nature of other similar objects.

You should also concentrate your investigation on the body, using it to lock up your *citta* by making the skin like a prison wall. You should force your *citta* to take a tour of the body, such as the flesh, sinews, bones, liver, kidneys, intestines, stomach, newly eaten food and digested food, going from top to bottom. If you investigate *paṭikkūla*, filth and *asubha*, loathsomeness, you'll see impurity and unattractiveness. If you investigate the four

elements, you'll see that every body part is composed of the four elements. They're not I or mine. The body is not attractive as the *kilesas* lead you to believe. The *kilesas* are deceptive. Whatever they tell you is not true. Is there any part of your body that is really beautiful? There is none, but the *kilesas* keep telling you that there is, which contradicts the *Dhamma* teaching, which is true. As a result, they make you suffer.

You have to force the *citta* to investigate the various parts of the body, because they're the truth, in terms of *asubha*, elements, or *aniccā*, *dukkha* and *anattā*. You can investigate whatever aspect you like. When you investigate *asubha*, it'll lead you to the elements as well. You can also investigate any one of the *ti-lakkhaṇa*, be it *aniccā*, *dukkha* or *anattā*, or you can investigate all three of them as they are all inter-related. This is investigation with *paññā*. You should also compare your own body parts with other people's body parts to see that they are all the same. How then can your *citta* become deluded or obsessed? Your *citta* will gradually become calmer. Your unfounded perception of beauty will gradually decrease. After repeated investigation with *paññā*, you'll eventually gain insight, dispel your delusion and sever your attachment to the body.

After having investigated with *paññā* for some time, your *citta* can become tired, similar to performing a physical task. It's then time to take a rest in *samādhi*. You should solely focus your attention on your meditation object to draw the *citta* into calm. After your *citta* has rested and restrengthened, it will exit from calm and resume investigating. When you investigate, you shouldn't speculate on the

outcome but let it happen naturally. You should devise your own investigating methods based on what you've heard from your teacher. This is the way of developing wisdom. The investigation with *paññā* will only cease after all the *kilesas* are eliminated. When your *sati* and *paññā* have reached the level of *mahāsati* and *mahāpaññā*, you'll no longer have to force *paññā* to investigate but you'll have to restrain it from investigating when it goes overboard and becomes exhausted. The *citta* can get tired like the body if it doesn't take a rest. But the *citta* at this stage is happier investigating than taking a rest. So you have to force it to take a rest. The way to rest the *citta* is to enter into *samādhi* or calm, which is the correct thing to do, because it's relaxing and soothing.

I'd really love to hear my students telling me about the results of their practice. Who will become enlightened? Who will do the investigation? Who will destroy the *kilesas*? Where are the *kilesas*? What are the methods used to eliminate the *kilesas*? These are the things that you have to see clearly from your practice, which is a lot better than hearing from your teacher. Don't pay any attention to the affairs of the world and *saṃsāra*. They are the *kilesas*' creations that have for a long time afflicted you with immeasurable stress and suffering. You shouldn't have any doubt about this by thinking that you'll be good, happy and at ease by letting the *kilesas* drag you around or by believing the *kilesas*.

You should always look up to the Lord *Buddha*, who also used to be the *kilesas*' storehouse like the rest of us. He had already experienced the stresses created by the *kilesas*. If he could have

been enlightened with the *kilesas*, he wouldn't have had to practise mental development. He would have remained a prince. You should take the Lord *Buddha* as your role model. You shouldn't doubt the *kilesas'* ability to hurt you; be it greed, hatred, delusion or lust, they're hurting you all the time except when you fall asleep. When you wake up, the *kilesas* also wake up and start to hurt you with your eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and thoughts. This happens to every unenlightened person without any exception. As long as the *citta* is not purified, you'll never be free from stress.

The *kilesas'* activities occur at the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and *citta*. So you have to make the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and *citta* activate the *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*. By practising mental development, you're changing the creator from the *kilesas* to the *Dhamma*, investigating with *paññā* whatever you see or hear. The result from this investigation is happiness. The result from the *kilesas'* action is stress. The *kilesas* pay no attention to time, race, class or colour of people. They will always crush and ruin them. You have to change this by replacing the *kilesas* with the *Dhamma*. When you see, hear, smell, taste and touch, let *satipaññā* supervise you. When you think, let *satipaññā* direct you to think rationally.

If this is hard to do, so be it. Don't be deterred by hardship because it will hinder your progress, weaken and discourage you, which is just the *kilesas'* way of deceiving you. *Dhamma* never makes you weak. If you follow the *Dhamma*, you have to be rational. The *kilesas* are never rational because they despise logic. They love desire and craving which are their

heart and soul. So how can you be ignorant of human nature after you've understood the *kilesas'* nature? The *cittas* of all people are the same. All human beings are created by the *kilesas* and their own good and bad *kammas*. Consequently *dukkha* is unavoidable. How can this human body avoid being the home of *dukkha*? Your house is not the home of *dukkha*, but your body is. It's an aggregate of *dukkha*.

Khandha means aggregate. Every *khandha* or aggregate is *dukkha*. *Rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* are all *dukkham*, *aniccam* and *anattā*. So how can these five *khandhas* not be aggregates of *dukkha*? The *citta* is also the home of *dukkha*. If you don't apply *satipaṇṇā* to eliminate this *kilesa*-induced *dukkha*, the *citta* will always be the home of *dukkha*, will never be free from *dukkha*, and will never be purified. If this is the case, what are you waiting for? How can you remain weak, lazy and inactive? You should fight the *kilesas* to the last breath. You should die fighting. If you don't die fighting, you'll surely reach the shore of freedom, the shore of *nibbāna*, like a true follower of the Lord *Buddha* who is not obsessed with this world of cemeteries, births and deaths.

As long as you're under the shadow of birth, ageing, sickness and death, you'll never find contentment. Speculation and theory is not the truth, but realising *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* is. When you've reached this level, your doubt in your practice will disappear and your diligence will increase. You'll enjoy practising and fighting the *kilesas* for your freedom from *dukkha* without any concern for your well-being. When your *citta* becomes strengthened by your investigation with *pañṇā*, it will be very

powerful. No power in this world can be greater than the *citta's* and *paññā's* combined. You must, therefore, develop *paññā*. Don't be weak or heedless and never neglect your practice. Be always mindful. Don't crave food but eat with moderation, just enough to sustain your body and support your practice. You have to be thorough and meticulous with your investigation, leaving no stone unturned, because it's the only way to become enlightened. The development of *paññā* requires careful contemplation, investigation and analysis in order to beat the *kilesas*, which are extremely clever and versatile, and to experience the enlightened bliss that was discovered by the Lord *Buddha*, whose sole purpose was to share it with all living beings.

As followers of the Lord of *Buddha*, you have to keep practising, having the Lord *Buddha*, the *Dhamma* and the *Saṅgha*, as your guide, not the *kilesas* that are constantly hurting you. Don't be lazy. If you put in a lot of effort you'll be skilful like a boxer who has to do a lot of training before going into the ring and becoming a champ. It is likewise with the *citta*. When you practise a lot of *samādhi*, you'll be skilful with *samādhi* and become a *samādhi* expert. It's the same with *paññā*. You'll practise relentlessly when you're completely certain of the *magga*, *phala*, and *nibbāna*. The *citta's* strength will become formidable and you'll practise very hard without having any mercy for yourself. During the time of my intense training, my body was very fit for this kind of exertion. It was also in its prime sexually, so I had to fast in order to curb it and to keep the practice going smoothly.

When I fasted, my practice went on smoothly, efficiently and easily. My

citta was totally committed to the practice and paid no attention to my body. It wasn't concerned how gruelling the practice might be. All it wanted was to achieve results. My dogged determination generated an intense diligent effort. My aspiration was the main driving force; the stronger my ambition, the stronger was my exertion. This will undoubtedly be obvious to every practitioner. I couldn't remain still because I was very eager and hopeful. I couldn't help but put in an all-out effort. Today, I can't do that kind of exertion anymore. My body is a lot weaker now and needs assistance to keep it from falling over and my *citta* no longer has that kind of determination. I no longer have any aspiration for the *magga*, *phala*, *nibbāna* and the desire to become an *arahant* anymore. They have all unquestionably disappeared. So what is there to aspire for? Why do I have to practise when there're no goals for me to aim for? If I had to do that kind of exertion today, I wouldn't be able to do it. I would die before I got started.

After my *citta* had reached the ultimate goal, it stopped exerting right away. My *satipaṇṇā* that had been working around the clock like a *Dhamma* Wheel stopped immediately, like shutting down a machine or a factory. I had finished my task and became an entirely different person. As soon as *mahāsati* and *mahāpaṇṇā* came to an abrupt halt, they disappeared, because there was nothing for them to destroy. Thereafter, I still practised meditation, casually not seriously, when I felt like meditating for mental and physical relaxation. This was how I came to see the immeasurable benefits of the *Dhamma* that had fully taken control

of my *citta*. At the same time I also saw the harm done by the *kilesas* that used to dominate my *citta*, tyrannising and hurting it for countless aeons.

What, then, is there to be doubtful about? All the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavours, and tactile sensations have existed since prehistoric times. It's you who imagine and fantasise about them. When you see or hear something, it's your *citta* that imagines or forms opinions about them, fooling you by telling you that they're good or bad, pretty or ugly when they themselves don't even know it. Your *citta* is deluded by believing the *kilesas*. You don't know the danger posed by your imagination. Only *satipaṇṇā* knows this and is capable of beating the *kilesas*. As soon as the *kilesas* start to form opinions, *satipaṇṇā* will know it right away. So how can the *kilesas* ever deceive you when you always know of their deceptions?

For instance, when you think of a tiger. As soon as you think about it, it will disappear. You'll know right away that this tiger is the product of *saṅkhāra* or thought formation. Or when you think that a woman is pretty, you'll know immediately that it's you who thinks. The woman doesn't say anything about herself. She is just a visual object formed by the four elements of earth, water, wind and fire. It's you who form the opinion that she is pretty. As soon as this opinion is formed, *satipaṇṇā* will know immediately, and the opinion will disappear right away. This notion of beauty or ugliness is the product of *saṅkhāra* which deceives you. This is where you'll see the deception of the *kilesas*, not out there, but here inside your mind. This is the way of

realising insight by knowing that you're fooled by the *kilesas* which use *saṅkhāra* to do it.

You have to keep on investigating until you've destroyed all the *kilesas* and experienced true peace and true happiness. Then the years, the months, the hours, the minutes, and all the conventional realities or *sammati* will not affect you anymore because you have let go. Previously it was the *kilesas* that dragged you to cling to them. But after all the *kilesas* have been destroyed, the *citta* becomes entirely *Dhamma*. The question as to where the *Dhamma* is will disappear. Where are you going to look for the *Dhamma*, when you have found and experienced the *Dhamma* in yourself? What is the *Dhamma*? You already know this. How can you ever be deluded again? After you've found the real thing, why would you follow its tracks? The tracks will lead you to the real thing you're looking for, like following the foot tracks of an ox. After you've found the ox, you don't have to follow the tracks anymore. When you've acquired the genuine *Dhamma*, your endeavour comes to an end. After following the tracks of truth until reaching the real truth, the tracking is over.

As a practitioner, you have to be resolute and earnest. When your train of thought becomes worldly and pierces your *citta* like an arrow, you must immediately take out the arrow by stopping your worldly thoughts, no matter how intensely your desire to think might be. You have to understand that this is your enemy mounting an offensive. You must suppress these thoughts. Don't cherish them. Then it will be possible for you to stop them. You have to subdue them with

satipaṇṇā, which will not only curb them, but will also search for them, round them up, and destroy them. This is the way to take care of yourself and free yourself from harm and danger. You've already experienced lots of births and deaths and should be completely chastised by them and should have learned your lessons by now. When you are born, you'll also die. When you take up birth, you'll also take up *dukkha*.

The Lord *Buddha* said, '*Dukkhaṃ natthi ajjha tassa*' - *dukkha* doesn't befall one who doesn't take up birth. *Saṅkhāra* not only causes you to take up birth, but it also causes you to experience *dukkha* by creating craving. For this reason, '*Dukkhaṃ natthi ajjha tassa*' also means *dukkha* doesn't befall one who doesn't crave. '*Tesaṃ vupasamo sukho*' - the extinction of *saṅkhāra*-created craving is supreme bliss. This *saṅkhāra*-created craving is now destroyed by the *Dhamma* Wheel, which is the middle way of practice, the *majjhimā paṭipadā*.

Investigating Avijjā

December 5th, 1966

Tan *Ajaan Mahā* Boowa gave this *desanā* in response to an enquiry made by an Elder *Bhikkhu* concerning the *citta* and *avijjā*. This is what he said:

As long as one still doesn't know, one will then always go wide of the mark, for even while one is doing the investigation, one doesn't know that one is investigating *avijjā*. One can only guess and wonder to oneself as to what this thing really is. To oneself, it is still a perplexing question. One, therefore, focuses the *citta* with undivided attention to investigate in order to find out what exactly is happening right at that point. One will then eventually hit at the right spot, although one might not know what one has run into. This is because the name of *avijjā*, and the true and genuine *avijjā*, are two different things. The flow of *avijjā* that spreads throughout the whole world is merely its branches. It is like when we go and chase after a band of bandits - when we catch the bandits, they usually turn out to be the followers. We are totally in the dark as to the whereabouts of the leader of the bandits. We must keep up our pursuit and keep on arresting these bandits. Then we must surround them. When we have many people helping and cooperating with us in chasing these bandits, then we will have mustered up an enormous strength. We must then surround their hideout. Then we must keep on catching and arresting them. Normally, if we question any of these followers, they will not tell us who their

commander is. So whichever bandits we come across, we must arrest them and tie them up until all of them are caught and accounted for. The last of the bandits that we have captured will be the leader. The chief will be found in a very important hiding place which is well secured and protected, and guarded by the members of the band. We will keep on arresting the bandits until we arrive at the cave where the chief is hiding. When we have totally eliminated all the bandits hiding in that place, then we will know clearly.

But this is just a simile. So long as the *citta* is still involved with anything, then it is still deluded. Whether it is delusion in the way of good or evil, it is a branch of *avijjā*. But the *citta* doesn't know what the real *avijjā* itself really is. Therefore, all the techniques of investigation have a purpose which will be illustrated by the following simile. It is like emptying the water from a pond so that we can catch the fish in it. When there is plenty of water in the pond, we will not be able to make out how many fish there are, so we must first bail out the water. When the pond becomes steadily drier, then the fish will steadily converge together. All the fish will have to swim to where the water is, while at the same time the water is being continually bailed out. All the fish will steadily come together. As the water level decreases, one will get to see the fish swimming here and there. In the end, when all the water vanishes, then the fish will have no place to hide, and then one will be able to catch them. The sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches, that intermingle and mix with the conditions of the *citta*, are like the water that covers up the fish and which the fish depend on as their living environment. The purpose of our investigation into these things is

similar to the man who is bailing out the water; his objective is not the water, but the fish themselves. The objective of our investigation is not these objects either. We just want to get to know about these things steadily, because as soon as we get to know about them, then the *citta* will lose its anxiety and worry. The *citta* will get to know about those things that it is involved with, and it will also get to know itself, the one which is involved with these things, and it will know that it is in the wrong. It will know that it is its own misperceptions that cause it to be obsessed with loving and hating these things. Then the scope of the investigation will become steadily narrower and narrower as it steadily draws inwards.

This is similar to the water that becomes steadily dried up. When one investigates the body, which is an element aggregate of earth, water, air and heat, one will see that it is similar to all of the other external material things. There is no difference between them. This is the aspect of materiality. They are all made up of the four elements. What is abnormal or unnatural is the perception of the *citta* that has preconceptions about these things. It is a branch of *avijjā* that leads towards the principal part. The more one investigates and sees clearly the things that come into involvement with oneself, the more clearly will one see the one who goes out to be involved with them. It is likewise with the water level. The more it decreases, the more clearly will one come to see the fish. The more one can see clearly from the investigation into the natural processes - both those outside and inside the body - and one's *cetasika Dhamma*, the mental concomitants, then the more one will see clearly the point or origin, or the principal

determinant that gives rise to these things. The more we keep driving inwards, the more restricted will be the field of knowing inside the *citta*. Correspondingly, the anxiety of the heart will become less and less. The scope of the flow of the heart that is being sent outwards will become narrower. Whenever it stirs itself up to become involved with other things, it will investigate those things that it is involved with, as well as investigating its stirring up.

In this way, it gets to see both aspects of things. One gets to see the truth of both sides - that is, the things that come into involvement, and the one who becomes involved with them. One then keeps on progressively driving inwards. Once having got to the real *avijjā*, for most practitioners who do not have a teacher to forewarn them, they will take it as the real thing, since they have investigated everything else, and know clearly within their heart that they have truly realized the truth of all these things, and have truly let go of all of them. But the one who knows all of these things - what is it? One now becomes possessive and protective of this thing. This is the convergence of *avijjā*, and one now becomes deluded with it. This *avijjā* is the delusion of oneself. Concerning the delusion for the external things, this is just a branch of *avijjā*. It is not the real *avijjā* itself. This is what one becomes deluded with. One is now deluded with the one who knows about all of these things. But who is this one? What is it? This is what one has forgotten to investigate and analyse. Once the *citta* has been restricted into a very close and small sphere, it will gather into a point. This nucleus of the *citta* that appears at that time is very bright and luminous. It is rapturous, joyful, bold and courageous. It seems that all

of the happiness has gathered into that point.

What are all of these things the results of? If we want to speak in terms of cause and effects, then this is a result. We can say, that this is the result of our *patipadā* - our mode of practice. This is correct as long as we are not deluded in it. But if we are deluded, then this is *samudaya*. This is the core, or the heart, of *samudaya*. But for the practitioner who is interested in investigating everything that comes into contact with him, he will then inevitably be drawn towards this point, because everything else that one has investigated and realised the nature of, will no longer attract one's attention. And whenever one turns the *citta* to investigate these things, the *citta* will take no interest in them, for it is already satiated with these investigations. But the thing that can attract its attention will draw its interest towards it. It will now become interested at that point. All the mental conditions arise from this point. The concoctions of the *citta* arise from this point. The *sukha* that arises appears at that point, but the *sukha* that appears also exhibits its changes. It then becomes a cause of one's investigation, because at this level one is extremely watchful. This *sukha* is not constant. The *avijjā*-contrived *sukha* is not stable. Sometimes it manifests its changeability by becoming slightly dull enough to indicate that it is fluctuating. And this is how it keeps on changing. This process of change is as subtle as the subtlety of the *Dhamma* of this level.

This is the point which can cause one to become complacent. This is the point where an intent and indefatigable practitioner can

become complacent if he doesn't have anyone to forewarn him and exhort him about this. However, in spite of this complacency, if he still keeps up his interest and scrutiny, he will still be able to know, for this is the only place which can attract the heart. It is the cause of the attraction and the cause of one's satisfaction in doing the investigation, and of the gratification in that experience. Such is the way it was with my investigation. It can really bewilder one, to the extent where one cannot make out what *avijjā* really is. One then ends up with the understanding that it is this thing, which is all the time brilliant and luminous, that will be *nibbāna*. When I say all the time, I refer to all the time of one who is constantly exerting, and one who is continually doing the work of purification. One is extremely protective and possessive, not allowing anything to touch or impinge upon it. One is extremely vigilant and mindful. As soon as anything comes into contact with it, one will immediately try to remedy it. But the thing that one is being possessive of - one doesn't know what it is. This protectiveness and possessiveness is a burden to the *citta*, but during that time one doesn't know this.

It is not until the time is ripe that one becomes interested in doing the investigation at this point. One now raises the question: "What is this thing? I have investigated everything else, but what is this thing?" The *citta* then begins to concentrate at this point, while *paññā* is also being directed and focussed right at it. What really is this thing? Is this the truth, or not yet the truth? Is this *vijjā* or *avijjā*? All of these are the perplexing questions that arise out of one's investigation. One then keeps on

with the investigation with the following approach: Why is there protectiveness and possessiveness? If it is really the truth, why is there the need for protectiveness or care? Taking care of it is also a burden and a responsibility. If this is the case, then this thing must be one form of harm to one who still has protectiveness and care or a thing that one should not put one's trust upon although one still doesn't know what this thing is - whether it is the real *avijjā* or not - since one has never experienced or seen the difference between the true genuine *vijjā* and *avijjā*, or in other words, between *vimutti* and *sammati*.

This is how *paññā* can arise. That is, one has now become interested at that point. One then investigates at that point. Looking in retrospect at what I have investigated, this thing is really quite involved and unusual. But what I have said here is brief, precise, and right to the point, and enough to bring the point across in as much as it is appropriate to do so. This can be summarised as follows: Whatever manifests itself, that is what one must investigate. Whatever appears, it all has to do with *sammati*. This refers to the subtle *Dhamma* that appears within the heart. Finally, the point that is very bright and luminous is precisely the spot of *avijjā*. One must concentrate right there with *paññā*. This particular nature is also one form of a natural process, similar to all of the other *sabhāva-dhammas* everywhere. One cannot take it as 'I' or 'mine', but one's possessiveness and protectiveness indicates that one is taking it as 'I' and 'mine'. Consequently, it means that one is going on the wrong path. This is how *paññā* keeps probing and moving in. What is this

thing? It is like looking back at oneself. When one looks outside, one can see the earth, the sky, and everything else that comes within the field of one's vision. But when one doesn't look at oneself, one will not be able to see oneself.

The *paññā* of this level is the *paññā* that turns around to look at the termination point or the end. When *paññā* contemplates and investigates, it does so in the same way that it did with all the other things - that is, not for the purpose of holding on to them. This is the investigation to see according to the truth of these things that appear as they are. When this particular thing ceases, it doesn't go out like all the other things. As far as the cessation of all the other things is concerned, they happen at the time when one can feel within oneself that one has now understood them. That is the way that it is with these things. But it is not so with this particular thing. This thing just dissolves suddenly. It is similar to a lightning flash. It happens just at one instant. Or it can be said that it just turns over and then vanishes. It is only after the disappearance of this thing that one realises that this thing was *avijjā*. This is because once this thing has disappeared, then there is nothing left behind. There is nothing to appear as *sammatti* anymore. What remains is not like the other things - it is the nature that is purified. Even though one has never come across it before, once it appears, one does not have any doubt. This is when the burden is totally shed off.

It was this thing that was taken as 'I' - this was when it was still unbroken. Whatever one investigated, it was for this thing. As

far as 'knowing' was concerned, it was this 'I' that knew. Brightness - it was this 'I' that was bright. Being light, it was this 'I' that was light. Being happy, it was this 'I' that was happy. This 'I' refers specifically to this thing. This is the real *avijjā*. Everything was done for this thing. Once this thing has dissolved, there is nothing to strive for anymore. Finish! This can be compared to a pot whose bottom has fallen out. No matter how much water is poured into it, none can be retained. Everything that is concocted up following the natural way of the *khandhas* can still be created, but there is nothing to retain them. This is because that particular container or vessel has already been dissolved away, leaving nothing behind. As soon as they are concocted up, they will immediately cease, pass away and disappear, for there is nothing to retain them and there is no one to possess them. The nature that knows that there is no longer a possessor is fully contented within itself. This is the nature that is completely satiated. It has got rid of all responsibility and care. This is the state of contentment, or the absolute state. It was this *avijjā* that concealed this nature, and which prevented one from seeing the natural wonder of the *citta*, which is the true and natural thing. Instead, one took and saw this *avijjā* as a natural and wonderful thing. One, therefore, becomes obsessed, protective and possessive of this *avijjā*, and has the understanding that this thing is 'I' and 'mine', by thinking that 'My *citta* is bright and luminous; my *citta* is bold and courageous; my *citta* is happy; my *citta* knows everything'.

But this nature doesn't know itself. The Lord *Buddha* called this the genuine *avijjā*, but as soon as one turns around and realises this, then this thing just dissolves away. As soon as one knows it, then this thing cannot remain

standing. It will then disintegrate. As soon as this thing fades away, it is like opening the cover of a pot and being able to see all the things contained within it. It was only this thing that covered everything up. The ultimate truth, which is a part from the Four Noble Truths: *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha* and *magga*, is the state of purity. It is the truth that is distinct from the Four Noble Truths. Among these Four Noble Truths, two of them bind, and two of them unbind. What do they unbind or bind? They bind this pure *citta* by enshrouding it. To unbind means to reveal it, by removing the veil of concealment, so that one can see the true and natural state of purity. For the truth of it has always been so. But the two truths of *dukkha* and *samudaya* cover up like the cover of a pot, covering the pot so that it is not possible to see the things contained within it. The *magga*, which is one's mode of practice, reveals or exposes. *Magga* and *nirodha* uncover it, so that one can see what is contained within the pot, seeing clearly what they are. Even though the state of purity has always existed, it is blotted out by *dukkha* and *samudaya*. But on the other hand, *magga* and *nirodha* are on the correction side, and they will expose it. That which they reveal is this state of purity. It is this state of purity that *dukkha* and *samudaya* conceal. Once it is exposed, then that is the end of the problem.

These two truths are phenomena - they are *sammati*. The *magga* is *sammati*. *Nirodha* is *sammati*. Once having manifested themselves, they then pass away. *Dukkha* and *samudaya* are also *sammati*. Once the two *sammatis* have overcome and corrected the other two *sammatis*, then that nature becomes an absolute or unconditioned nature, which is called *vimutti*, and this is what is revealed.

This is the unveiling of *vimutti*, the natural state of purity. This is where the burden is shed off. That is the end of it. Once one has attained to the state of purity, one no longer conceives up the illusion of self. But externally, all the external *Lokha Dhammas*, the external worldly things, still remain as they are. The internal *Lokha Dhamma*, which refers to the good and evil and the *dukkha* and *sukha* within oneself, ceases to be a problem when this point finally dissolves away. One who has investigated up to this level will find that the scope of his work is not wide. Once he has learned the way of tackling it from a teacher who has known, experienced, and passed beyond it, he will be able to progress on very quickly. But the crucial point is that he must not engage in speculating or imagining about it, as this is not the way. Instead he should investigate whatever appears within the field of his awareness, and get to understand them, going on like this step by step; this is the correct way to do it.

Avijjā refers specifically to this thing. This is the genuine *avijjā*. All the other things are just its branches and divisions. It is like vines and creepers that grow in one place but can spread anywhere. They can extend very far and wide. As soon as one takes hold of them, and traces them back to the root, they will then lead one back to this one point. This is where the main stem is, and where the root is. Once the root has been pulled out, then they will all wither away. The branches and divisions of *avijjā* are involved numerous and expansive. So when one has got to the real *avijjā*, one doesn't know what it is. But one keeps on investigating. One has *paññā*, so one keeps on investigating. Even though one doesn't know that this thing is *avijjā*, if one still keeps on investigating, then this is the correct way of doing it. Consequently, it will be revealed. It is like when one is

eating. The state of fulfilment will steadily appear so that one can see it very clearly. What I have related to you here is a summary of *avijjā*.

Avijjā is the origin of birth, the origin of *kamma* and the origin of the *vaṭṭa cakka*, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. The *citta* under the control of *avijjā* perpetually builds up births and existences right within itself. It is the nature of this *citta* not to remain still, but to be constantly creating births and existences. It goes in pursuit and accumulates things for itself. Usually it collects things to push itself down morally. To destroy the wheel of *kamma* is to exterminate *avijjā*. Once it is obliterated, there will be no rebirth.

All the external things that one used to be involved with will still come into contact, but they just come and go, and do not get in to take up roots and residence right within this point anymore. They merely pass by, come and go. One can also see with absolute clarity that this nature does not continue on with anything. One has seen previously, step by step, how this nature used to carry on with things. Once this nature no longer goes on with anything, one then knows. So concerning birth and existences, as to whether one will be born again or not, it will not be necessary for one to speculate about it, because one's present state has clearly indicated to one. Once it no longer continues on or goes on building up any more lives or existences, then there is no birth or life to follow in the future, since the generating source has been destroyed. It will no longer build up itself, nor erect any cause for itself, like it used to do in the past. This is the demolition of the generating source. This is when the *khandhas* become entirely *khandhas*. The *khandhas* are now entirely pure, having nothing to

do with the *kilesas*. When that particular *citta* is without any *kilesas*, then these *khandhas* are also free of the *kilesas*. They are now just instruments. But if the heart is tainted by the *kilesas*, then correspondingly, all the *khandhas* will be equally defiled. *Rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* will then become the factors that will enhance and strengthen the *kilesas* within the heart. If the *citta* is pure, then the *khandhas* are also pure. Nothing is defiled by the *kilesas*. But as long as the *citta* is still tainted with the *kilesas*, then the *khandhas* will always be defiled. That is the way it is.

The ceaseless building up of lives and existences is the way of the *citta*. It cannot remain still. Such is the nature of the *citta* that is still possessed by the revolving wheel as the prime mover. It will still have to turn round continually, because all of its turning around is solely geared towards lives and existences. But once that nature has disintegrated, then there is no longer a builder. One then knows that one will not take up birth anymore. It was the same way when the Lord *Buddha* made his utterance. One knows right within the present, that there is nothing to build itself up anymore. Good is one kind of virtue and it does not intermix. One also knows that evil is another thing, while this one, which is the *citta*, is also another different thing. They are not connected. This separation is not forced, but is something that happens naturally. But when they merge together, then one does not force this either. There are causes that bring them together. When these causes disappear, then they consequently dissociate by themselves. From my own experience and investigation, there was a particular instant when this thing came to cease. It happened at a single moment. It was a time that one had never thought of before. It was an instant that attracted one's

attention. At the time when *avijjā* ceased, it happened in a single moment. It was as if it had turned itself over into another world - that is, if one uses the world as a simile. It turned into a new world by suddenly turning itself over. It just suddenly flipped over. *Avijjā* then ceased at that moment. It was not foreseen or anticipated that it would turn over - it just happened of itself. This is the subtle aspect.

In following the Buddhist path of practice; for the purpose of freeing oneself from *dukkha*, there are two tricky points. During the time when the attachment, the *upādāna*, between the body and the *citta*, is being cut off, and they are going their separate ways, there is a twist to it. Another trap is at this point. These are the two places that a practitioner can misperceive. Apart from these, there should not be any doubt. It is only at these two places. I used to spend the time developing my practice at Wat Doi Dhammachedi, of Tan *Ajaan* Kong Mar. It was there where I was puzzled by the question of *avijjā*. During that time the *citta* was so bright that I was amazed and awe-stricken by it. All the radiance, luster splendour, and marvel, had all gathered within it. I was lost in the wonder of the magnificence of the *citta*. Looking at my body, I could not see it at all. Everything that I looked at seemed to have turned into the space element. Everything was all empty. The *citta* was at its brightest. While I was lost in amazement and awe-struck, I was actually lost in delusion unknowingly. Speaking in terms of the subtle *Dhamma*, this is one form of delusion. But fortunately, while I was admiring the magnificence of the *citta* and murmuring to myself how fantastic this *citta* could become, there unexpectedly arose the *Dhamma* within me. It was as if someone was talking to me inside.

This is what it said: 'Wherever there is a centre or nucleus of the one who knows, that is where the source of birth is'. That nature actually has a focus. There actually is a nucleus of this knowing and brightness. But then I was not considering what this point was, so I was really dumbfounded. Then I concentrated in contemplating and meditating on this question. It was in hind-sight; after I had turned my investigation to this point, and had finally solved this problem, that I realised the implication of this guidance that had foretold that wherever the spot or nucleus is, that is where the source of birth is. Indeed, it referred to this very thing. Before, I could not comprehend this. It was, in fact, a spot. No matter how wonderful it is, it is still the nucleus of that wonder. It is a spot that is readily discernable. But once that thing disintegrates, then there is no longer a spot, because this spot is also *sammatti*. Regardless of its subtlety, it is still *sammatti*. This is what I call the true and genuine *avijjā*. Whenever I exhorted my fellow *bhikkhus*, I always told them that when they have got to this point, they must not be protective of anything. They must not cherish, but they must investigate. Even if the *citta* should be exterminated from this investigation, then let it happen. Let's get to see what will be the thing that will realise and experience the state of purity. Should everything be totally annihilated, without anything to experience this state of purity, let's find that out. But just don't hold on to anything.

This is for the purpose of preventing them from becoming protective of this thing. If this drastic measure is not applied, then they will unavoidably become attached to it. All that is needed is just to get to know. If anything should cease, then let it cease. Even if the *citta* should cease due to the

power of the investigation, then let it be. Don't cherish it. This is what one has to commit oneself to while doing this investigation. But nothing can escape from the truth. Whatever arises must cease. Whatever is real and in its natural state, will not cease. That is, this pure *citta* will not cease. Everything else ceases, but the one who knows these cessations does not cease. The one who knows that all of these things have ceased does not cease. That is just the way it is. Now if one wants to say that one has withheld this, one can. Or if one wants to say that one hasn't retained this, how can one assert this when one knows within oneself? But one must not be possessive, for if one should cling, then it is similar to holding on to *avijjā*, because *avijjā* is subtle and it is inside the *citta*. If one cherishes the *citta*, it is similar to clinging on to *avijjā*. So if the *citta* should be exterminated along with *avijjā*, let it be. One should go right ahead and cut them down. Don't leave anything behind. Wipe them all out, for this is the most fitting way to do it. If there is any hesitation, one will definitely be attached to it. This refers to the practice at this stage. One must not waver, but must wholly commit one's effort into revealing and uncovering it all. Whatever should cease, let them cease. This is the right and proper approach to it. The part that does not cease will not cease under any circumstances. Regardless of what one may assert, it will not cease.

Consider the following example: When a bandit has taken refuge in a house, if we want to save the house, then that will allow the bandit to shoot at us. But if it is deemed necessary to burn down this house, then we must do it. If we want to save the house and consequently allow the bandit to go on living, then it will cause more damage to things that are much more valuable than the house. So

we have to sacrifice this house and set fire to it. In like manner we should set fire to *avijjā*. Should the *citta* cease, then let it cease. But in fact the *citta* does not cease. But one only gets to know this after *avijjā* has been totally burned down. One now realises that this precious state of purity has been covered up by *avijjā*. Once *avijjā* has ceased, then this state of purity is revealed. Instead of disappearing with *avijjā*, this state of purity does not vanish. But if one becomes possessive of *avijjā*, then one will become attached to it and will not make it through. From what I have investigated, that is the way it is. All of the *sāvakas* who had seen the truth of the Lord *Buddha* had all accepted the Lord *Buddha*. They accepted him on the basis of the principle of truth, and not based on appearances or concepts. Their acceptance was based on the living truth that they had similarly experienced, just like the way that the Lord *Buddha* had experienced before them. It is an acceptance that has never faded away. Whether one is near or far away from the Lord *Buddha*, this will never diminish, as the truth is identical. Even the fact that the Lord *Buddha* had passed into *parinibbāna* over two thousand five hundred years ago, is not in conflict with this truth, since that has to do with *sammati*, with the time and place, or with the element aggregate.

But the truth principle itself is unchanging. That state of purity always remains to be the state of purity, both during the time when one is still alive, and when one has finally passed away into *nibbāna*. This is the absolute truth. One who has known the principle of truth will believe in the principle of truth. The important point is that one should not hold anything back. When it is the time to exterminate, one must get rid of all of them. Don't cherish anything. One must investigate

so that one gets to know everything. Whatever appears, one must take that appearance as the object of one's investigation. If nothing becomes manifest, then one doesn't know what to investigate. When good arises, one must be aware of it. Evil, *sukha* and *dukkha*, all arise within the heart, and nowhere else. One must keep track of them and know them all, because all of these things arise and cease. They are the things that deceive and cause one to be deluded. There is nothing else but these things - the things that arise and cease. They fool one and make one become deluded. Apart from these things, there is nothing else that deceives. But we take it as I and Self. Just as you said earlier, this *citta* has a thousand and one faces. It can really manifest as 'I' and self. Even without using any device, it can easily deceive us. It does this right in our presence. This is the way we deceive ourselves. Other people might fool us some of the time, but we fool ourselves all of the time. This is really sad.

Once one has corrected one's own deception, then all the harm is eliminated. Then there will be nothing to fool oneself anymore. Everything is true. All the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches, will not deceive one anymore. It was only oneself who threw dust into one's eyes. Before, when one saw things, one began to imagine that they were such and such, and thus began the process of forming pictures and images. One used one's own *ārammaṇa* to deceive oneself, while the object had already disappeared into the blue. Like when one had seen something or witnessed some event which subsequently passed away and disappeared: the mental images that were drawn within the *citta* did not vanish. This was the thing that deceived oneself,

constantly fooling one. Stepping on a twig and thinking that it was a snake, one then jumps into the air. Checking it and seeing that it was not a snake, one then loses one's apprehension. But if one was still uncertain, one would jump again. But once having examined it and realised that it was a piece of wood, one would then have overcome one's doubt.

It is likewise with one's practice when one has investigated, and known what it is, one then loses, one's doubt. When one knows within oneself that such and such is so and so, one then will have got rid of one's uncertainty. If one doesn't know what these things are, one will hang in suspense. The alarm and anxiety of the *citta* is boundless - it can only be curbed by the *Dhamma*. Nothing else in this whole world can do it. It is therefore good to be inclined to meditate and contemplate - one will inevitably find a way out. Even if one is blocked by a mountain, one will still be able to make it through. It can be achieved by the power of investigation. When one keeps on probing and examining, one will eventually come across the solution to the problem. Having comprehended the cause and effect relationship, one will then see through the riddle. In the beginning stages, these puzzles will be gradually solved. Finally, at the climax, when *avijjā* is uprooted once and for all, this will happen all in one instant.

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** [*abhiññāa*]:

Intuitive powers that come from the practice of concentration: the ability to display psychic powers, clairvoyance, clairaudience, 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, achaaan, 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 unskillful 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 a bout 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 *saṃyojana*), whose heart is free of mental effluents (see *āśava*), 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; of ten 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 man (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-dhammā*]:

‘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** [*dhutaanga*]:

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 bypassing 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 *āsava*.

- **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 unskillful 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), *saṃādhi* (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; unskillful 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** [*lokaviduū*]:

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 the 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 root is a re t heir o pposites. 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; a ssembly. 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** [*paaṭimokkha*]:

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 with 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*.

- **sakadāgāmi** [*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-diṭṭhi* 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, uninvolved 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 *sati*.

- **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-diṭṭhi*), uncertainty (*vicikicchā*), grasping at precepts and practices (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*); 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 (*sammati*) 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*.

- **sāsana** [*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 unskillful 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, sereneity, pleasure, extreme conviction, excessive effort, obsession, indifference, and contentment.

- **virīya** [*virīya*]:

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 (*yakkhinī*) is

generally considered more treacherous than the male.

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