CHAPTER (IV)

MEDITATION IN BUDDHISM

FOR INNER PEACE

Introduction

The original Pāli term for the word ‘meditation’ in Buddhism is ‘bhāvanā’ which means ‘developing’ or ‘producing’, i.e., developing mental qualities, or producing mental culture.

Ultimately, Buddhist meditation aims at purifying the mind, cleansing its impurities and disturbances, such as lustful desire, greed, anger, hatred, ill-will, sloth, indolence, torpor, languor, restlessness, worry, sceptical doubt; at cultivating mental qualities such as calmness, awareness, tranquility, concentration; and at attaining the insight which sees the true nature of things, leading to the complete destruction of mental defilements and to the realization of Ultimate Truth, i.e. Nibbāna.

Furthermore, Buddhist meditation is the method of mental training to stop worry, grief and anxiety and to lead a life of bliss here and now. It is also a technique to relax mental tension and to overcome mental depression. It gives relief from sorrow and pain, thereby, offering inner peace in this present life.

There are basically two types of meditation (bhāvanā) in Buddhism. The first one is Tranquility meditation (samatha-
bhāvanā) which emphasizes the development of concentration, leading to the attainment of absorption or trance (jhāna) and the second one is Insight meditation (vipassanā-bhāvanā) which emphasizes the development of Insight-wisdom (vipassanā-ñāṇa), leading to the liberation of mind from its defilements, and to the realization of Ultimate Truth, Nibbāna.

These two types of meditation respectively correspond to the second and third groups of the Noble Eightfold Path which are the concentration group and the wisdom group. It means Tranquility meditation is conducive to concentration while Insight meditation enables wisdom.

Concentration means one-pointedness of mind. It promotes the ability to fix the mind on a single object to the exclusion of all else. Concentration is not an end in itself, but to be developed primarily because it is the basis for wisdom which promotes the ability to see things exactly as they really are. It is this wisdom that frees the mind from the bondage of defilements.

Regarding the practice of Buddhist meditation, excess in any direction must be avoided as it is dangerous and moderation must be observed. In order to observe moderation it is necessary to have strength (viriya) on the one side, and mindfulness (sati) on the other side.

Buddhist meditation is a medium practice between two extremes of severity and leniency. In other words, it is the Middle Way (Majjhima Paṭipadā), avoiding the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification.
In this connection, we can find in the formula of the Noble Eightfold Path, Right Concentration is well supported by the two principles of Right Effort and Right Mindfulness. Of these two principles, Right Effort gives rise to a defense against the extreme of self-indulgence while Right Mindfulness provides a safeguard against the extreme of self-mortification.

It is also very important to build a strong foundation of morality (siḍḍha) to practise Buddhist meditation. Morality is essential to the development and purity of the mind. It makes the mind clear and free from remorse, tension and anxiety due to guilty feelings resulting from wrong doings and helps the mind to become concentrated easily and quickly. According to Buddhism, one who practises Buddhist meditation will have to keep at least the five precepts.

Buddhist meditation is a simple and practical way to achieve real and lasting happiness and peace of mind by seeing things as they really are and cleansing the mind.

**Meditation Subjects (Kammaṭṭhānas)**

As consciousness cannot arise without a subject, it needs suitable subjects for mental training. The Buddha prescribed forty kinds of meditation subject (kammaṭṭhānas) for Tranquility meditation, known as ‘Samatha-bhāvanā kammaṭṭhānas’.
They are designed in accordance with the temperaments (caritas) of individual to overcome mental problems and to develop psychological states. They are classified as follows:

(I) Ten Whole subjects (Dasa Kasiṇas):
1. Earth whole (Pathavī-kasiṇa)
2. Water whole (Āpo-kasiṇa)
3. Fire whole (Tejo-kasiṇa)
4. Air whole (Vāyo-kasiṇa)
5. Brown whole (Nīla-kasiṇa)
6. Yellow or Golden whole (Pīta-kasiṇa)
7. Red whole (Lohita-kasiṇa)
8. White whole (Odāta-kasiṇa)
9. Light whole (Āloka-kasiṇa)
10. Space whole (Ākāsa-kasiṇa)

(II) Ten Loathsome subjects (Dasa-Asubhas):
11. Bloated corpse (Uddhumātaka)
12. Livid corpse (Vinīlaka)
13. Festering corpse (Vipubbaka)
14. Corpse cut open (Vicchiddaka)
15. Gnawed corpse (Vikkhāyitaka)
16. Scattered corpse (Vikkhittaka)
17. Hacked and scattered corpse (Hatavikkhittaka)
18. Bleeding corpse (Lohitaka)
19. Worm-infested corpse (Puḷuvaka)
20. Skeleton (Aṭṭhika)

(III) Ten Recollection subjects (Dasa Anussati):

21. Recollection of the Buddha (i.e., of His virtues) (Buddhānussati)
22. Recollection of the Teaching of the Buddha (Dhamma) (i.e., of its virtues) (Dhammānussati)
23. Recollection of the Disciples of the Buddha (Saṅgha) (i.e., of their virtues) (Saṅghānussati)
24. Recollection of Morality (i.e., of its quality) (Sīlānussati)
25. Recollection of Generosity (i.e., of its quality) (Cāgānussati)
26. Recollection of Divine Beings (i.e., of their qualities) (Devatānussati)
27. Recollection of Death (Maraṇānussati)
28. Recollection (or Mindfulness) of the Body (i.e., organs and tissues of the body) (Kāyagatāsati)
29. Recollection (or Mindfulness) of Breathing (Ānāpānassati)
30. Recollection of Peace (i.e., Nibbāna)  
(Upasamānussati)

(IV) Four Sublime Abodes (Cattāro Brahma-vihāras):
31. Loving-kindness (Mettā)
32. Compassion (Karuṇā)
33. Sympathetic joy (Muditā)
34. Equanimity (Upekkhā)

(V) Four Formless Spheres (Cattāro Āruppas):
35. Boundless space (Ākāsānañcāyatana)
36. Boundless consciousness  
(Viññānañcāyatana)
37. Nothingness (Ākiñcaññāyatana)
38. Neither-perception-nor-non-perception  
(Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana)

(VI) 39. Perception of Repulsiveness on Food (Āhāre-pañcikūla-saññā)

(VII) 40. Analysis of the Four Elements (Catudhātu-vavatthāna)\(^\text{162}\)

These forty kinds of meditation subject for the Tranquility meditation should be compared with six types of temperaments or natures (cha-caritas).

According to the Visuddhimagga Pāli, there are six types of persons according to their temperaments natures. They are:

1. Rāga-carita, the lustful-natured person
2. Dosa-carita, the hateful-natured person
3. Moha-carita, the ignorant or dull-natured person
4. Saddhā-carita, the faithful-natured person
5. Buddhi-carita, the intelligent-natured person
6. Vitakka-carita, the ruminating-natured person

The lustful-natured person who indulges in sensual pleasures should exercise meditation on Ten Loathsome subjects (Dasa Asubhas) and Recollection or Mindfulness of the Body, i.e., of its organs and tissues (Kāyagatāsati), as these meditation subjects can suppress passion effectively.

The hateful-natured person who gets angry easily even over trivial things should practise Four Sublime abodes (Cattāro Brahma-vihāras) and four colour-whole subjects, namely: Brown-coloured whole (Nīla-kasiṇā), Yellow or Golden-coloured whole (Pīta-kasiṇā), Red-coloured whole (Lohita-kasiṇā) and White-coloured whole (Odāta-kasiṇā) as these meditation subjects are pure and can delight one’s mind.

The ignorant and dull-natured person as well as the ruminating-natured person should practise the Recollection or Mindfulness of Breathing (Ānāpānassati). The minds of these persons are restless and distracted. The Recollection (or Mindfulness) of Breathing (Ānāpānassati) can control and calm down the restless and distracted minds.

The faithful-natured person should practise Recollection or Mindfulness of the Buddha’s virtues (Buddhānussati), Recollection or Mindfulness of the virtues of the Teaching of the Buddha (Dhammānussati), Recollection or Mindfulness of the virtues of the Disciples of the Buddha (Saṅghānussati), Recollection or Mindfulness of the quality of Morality (Sīlānussati), Recollection or Mindfulness of the quality of Generosity (Cāgānussati) and Recollection or Mindfulness of the qualities of Divine beings (Devatānussati). Faith is already strong in this person and it will be further strengthened by practising these meditation subjects.

The intelligent-natured person should practise Recollection or Mindfulness of Death (Maraṇānussati), Recollection or Mindfulness of Peace, i.e., Nibbāna (Upasamānussati), Perception of Repulsiveness on Food (Āhāre-paṭikūla-saṅnā) and Analysis of the Four Elements (Catudhātu-vatthāna). These meditation subjects are deep and subtle, and thus they can stimulate and strengthen the wisdom of the intelligent-natured person.

The meditation subjects which are suitable for all types of persons are the whole of Earth (Pathavī-kasiṇa), the whole of Water (Āpo-kasiṇa), the whole of Fire (Tejo-kasina), the whole of
Air (Vāyo-kasiṇa), the whole of Light (Āloka-kasiṇa), the whole of Space (Ākāsa-kasiṇa) and Four Formless Spheres (Cattāro Āruppas) that is included Boundless space (Ākāsānañcāyatana), Boundless consciousness (Viññāṇañcāyatana), Nothingness (Ākiñcaññāyatana), and Neither-perception-nor-non-perception (Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana).  

Practising forty kinds of meditation subject for Tranquility meditation results in mental calmness that leads to a state of absorption or trance (Jhāna).

The meditation subject for Insight meditation (Vipassanā-bhāvanā kammaṭṭhāna) is the triple symbol of all mental and physical phenomena of existence, i.e. impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha) and unreality (anatta), called ‘Tilakkhaṇa’.

Exercising meditation subject for Insight meditation produces the attainment of wisdom and right understanding of the true natures of mental and physical phenomena as they arise in our minds (nāma) and body (rūpa) that lead to the realization of Nibbāna.

**Benefits of Buddhist Meditation**

The benefits of Buddhist meditation are invaluable and innumerable. They range from the enjoyment of happiness and inner peace in this very life here and now to the experience of

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profound peace that results from the ultimate release of tensions which takes place when the true nature of existence is fully understood through the insight.

Buddhist meditation ultimately aims at freedom from the burden of suffering and the realization of the destruction of moral defilements— that is to say Nibbāna, which is the ultimate goal in Buddhism.

Through the practice of meditation, the five hindrances to the progress of mind (pañcanīvaraṇa), namely- sensual desire (kāmacchanda), ill-will (byāpāda), sloth (thina) and torpor (middha), restlessness (uddhacca) and worry (kukkucca) and doubt (vicikicchā) will be completely suppressed and delight (pāmojja), rapture (pīti), serenity of the sense (kāyapassaddhi), pleasant feeling (sukha-vedanā) and concentration (samādhi) will become distinct. Then, the states of absorption (jhānas) and insight-wisdom (vipassanā-ñāṇa) will be attained and in the end, the destruction of moral defilements, i.e. Nibbāna, will be realized.\footnote{Dīgha Nikāya, Sīlakkhandhavagga Pāli, pp-68/69/70/72/80.}

The brief description of benefits of Buddhist mediation mentioned above is embodied in the discourse on the fruits of the life of a monk (Sāmaññaphala Sutta), stated by the Buddha.

In this connection, one who practises Buddhist meditation first will attain the concentrated mind (samādhi) as his mind does not flow into the channels of greed, hatred, and delusion and does not sink into the mud of the thoughts of sensual desire, ill-will, sloth, torpor, restlessness, worry and doubt.
With the attainment of the concentrated mind, he turns this pure, steady and clear mind to the contemplation of existence itself. It means he mindfully investigates his own compound of the five aggregates (pañcakkhandhas), namely: the aggregate of form (rupakkhandha), the aggregate of feeling (vedanākkhandha), the aggregate of perception (saññākkhandha), the aggregate of mental formations (saṅkhārakkhandha) and the aggregate of consciousness (viññāṇakkhandha).

He sees that the aggregate of form is made up of changing physical qualities while the aggregates of feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness are fleeting mental factors. He also sees that all these aggregates occur in mutual dependence and are in a flow, and that there is no substantial self, no immortal soul within them to be called “I” or “mine” As the impermanence, the unsatisfactoriness, and the selfless nature of the five aggregates become manifest to him, he realizes that nothing conditioned is worth clinging to for everything conditioned is fleeting and in the fleeting it is impossible to find stable happiness. In this way, he will develop Insight-wisdom (vipassanā-ñāṇa).

With the development of Insight wisdom, Ignorance (avijjā) and Craving (taṇhā), which are regarded as the fuels for the flame of becoming, from Buddhist point of view, are exhausted, and no more fresh fuels are supplied. Hence, the flame of existence burns out for him through lack of fuels, and after death, he no longer takes rebirth in any realm of becoming. In this way, he will realize
the emancipation from suffering and will experience the bliss of Nibbāna.

Although Buddhist meditation mainly aims at the realization of the destruction of moral defilements, it also helps to achieve peace of mind, calmness, stillness, relaxation, concentration and tranquility; to acquire the mental equilibrium to face life’s daily difficulties; and to develop mental abilities and capabilities which contribute to success and health in life.

One who practises Buddhist meditation will view everything that he encounters in his personal life- persons, objects, events and experiences realistically and objectively as transient phenomena which is arisen through conditions and will reflect upon them in terms of three characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-self. Doing so, he will reduce the attachment and clinging to these phenomena, and thereby will experience greater happiness, deeper calm and more durable peace of mind even amidst the chaotic situations of life.

Furthermore, he is able to make correct decisions and sound judgment even under intense pressure and cope with day to day problems more efficiently as his mind is calm and clear. With the development of the purity and the power of mind, backed by the insight into the ultimate truth of nature, he is less likely to feel depressed and able to do things in the right direction. As he works in a relaxed frame of mind, he can accomplish more work and better work.
At the same time, by the deep energy radiated from within, physical strength and fitness is ensured. As tensions are released at the root, his posture is relaxed and his movements become more active. By the processes of purification and peace of mind, his skin texture is soft and his face glows with inner light.

Meditation also helps to improve physical and mental health situations. Through the practice of meditation, those, who suffer from diseases, which are exacerbated by tension, such as high blood pressure and migraine, will be better and those, who suffer from mental illnesses, such as depression, and desperation, will find relief.

Meditation is widely used as an effective treatment for physical and mental health by doctors, physicians, psychiatrists and psychologists today.

Meditation is now accepted as having a highly therapeutic effect upon the mind and is used by many professional mental health workers to help induce relaxation, overcome phobias and bring about self-awareness. The Buddha’s insights into the human mind are helping people as much today as they did in ancient times.166

Meditation also helps to develop the awareness and energy that are needed to transform ingrained mental habit patterns and to change the mind’s works. For example, a person, who is usually impatient and has got a quick temper, will become patient and restrain his anger, practising meditation.

These are some of the benefits of Buddhist meditation both in our material and spiritual life. However, the proper atmosphere, self-confidence, frequency and regularity of practice are needed to realize these benefits of Buddhist meditation.

The practice of meditation is essential for our mental health and well-being so as to lead a happy and peaceful life. Although a short period of regular daily practice of meditation is unlikely to produce stunning benefits, in effect, it can certainly help us to maintain mental equilibrium and to enter into the peace within at any time. Buddhist meditation is suitable for all human beings to attain inner peace.

Mindfulness of Breathing (Ānāpānassati)

Mindfulness of breathing (Ānāpānassati) is one of the best meditation subjects for developing concentration as well as insight. It is a convenient meditation subject for everyone as it is simple and easy. As long as we live, breathing exists all the time and what is required is just to be mindful of it.

Mindfulness of breathing covers three of the four types of mental training, namely: (a) The practice leading to Happiness here and now; (b) The practice leading to “Knowledge and Vision” (ñāṇa and dassana), of the sort called divine, namely: Divine Ear and Divine Eye (dibba-sota and dibba-cakkhu); (c) The practice leading to Awareness and Clear Comprehension (sati-sampajañña); (d) the practice leading directly to the Extinction of the Inflows.
Mindfulness of breathing covers completely the first, the third and the fourth of these types of mental training, but not the second, which has in any case nothing at all to do with the overcoming of suffering.\textsuperscript{167}

Here, the Pāli word ‘Ānāpānassati’ is combined with three words- ‘Āna’, ‘Apāna’ and ‘Sati’. ‘Āna’ means out-breath; ‘Apāna’ means in-breath; and ‘Sati’ means mindfulness or awareness. Therefore, the literal definition of Ānāpānassati is the Mindfulness or Awareness of out and in breath. In other words, Ānāpānassati means repeated reflection or constant mindfulness of out-breath and in-breath.

To practice this type of meditation, according to the original Pāli text, one should find a quiet and silent place where he is not affected by any disturbance and sit with his legs crossed, kept the body straight and established mindfulness in front.\textsuperscript{168}

But, sitting cross-legged is not comfortable and easy for some people. Therefore, those, who find it difficult to sit cross-legged, may sit on a straight-backed chair that enables them to hold upright the upper part of the body. It is very necessary for this practice that one should sit erect, but not stiff; his hands should be placed comfortably one over the other on his lap; (For those who sit in a chair, the feet should rest on the floor ;) and his eyes should be closed.

\textsuperscript{167}Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, \textit{Anapanasati (Mindfulness of Breathing)}, pp-89/90.

\textsuperscript{168} “Idha, Bhikkhave, bhikkhu araṇṇagato vā rukkhhamūlagato vā suññāgāragato vā niśidati pallāṅkāṁ ābhujitvā; ujjinā käyinā paṇidhāya parimukhaṁ satirīṁ upaṭṭhapetvā;” (Majjhima Nikāya, Uparipaṇṇāsa Pāli, pp-124/125.)
It is true that to achieve peace of mind, we must make sure our body is at peace. So it is important to choose a position that will be comfortable for a long period of time. The reason for sitting straight is not difficult to see. An arched or crooked back will soon bring pain. Furthermore, the physical effort to remain upright without additional support energizes the meditation practice.\(^{169}\)

One should then breathe normally and naturally, without any effort or strain, and focus his attention on the respiration.\(^{170}\) It means one should just observe the breath coming in and going out, without doing anything, i.e., trying to regulate the breath or doing something else. This can be done by the method of fixing the attention on the tip of the nose or of watching the rise and fall of the abdomen.

For the first method, the mindfulness or awareness should be placed at the tip of the nose where the breath touches and pushes itself in and out. It means one must be mindful or aware of the in-going breath and the out-going breath, mentally following the whole breath-in and breath-out without a break in attentiveness. It is like sitting at the gate of entrance and checking the people going in and coming out.

When we breathe, we sometimes take long breaths, sometimes short breaths, sometimes deep breaths, sometimes light breaths. This does not matter at all. The only thing is that when we take long breaths, short breaths, deep breaths or light breaths, we

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\(^{169}\)Sayadaw U Pandita, *In This Very Life*, p-14. 
\(^{170}\)“So satova assasati satova passasati.” (Majjhima Nikāya, Uparipannāsa Pāli, p-125.)
should be aware that they are long breaths, and so on. In other words, our mind should be so fully concentrated on our breathing that we are aware of its movements and changes.

Just observe the breath as it is. If it is deep, it is deep. If it is shallow, it is shallow. If it is passing through the left nostril, it is passing through the left nostril. If it is passing through the right nostril, it is passing through the right nostril. Just observe. Do nothing. Don’t interfere with the natural flow of respiration. As it naturally comes in, you are aware. As it naturally goes out, you are aware.  

For the second method, the mindfulness or awareness should be placed at the abdomen which rises when breathing in and falls when breathing out. It means one must be mindful or aware of the rising and falling movements of the abdomen that happen as he breathes in and breathes out.

At the outset, while practising this meditation, certain problems and difficulties will surely arise. One might experience physical discomforts, such as bodily pain, numbness, etc. When those physical discomforts happen, he should has a patient mind with them; he should keep the body relaxed without moving very often for it breaks his concentration and he should keep focusing his attention on the breath.

Patience is quite essential in this practice (i.e., the practice of mindfulness on the breath). Patience means staying in a state of

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balance, regardless of what is happening in the body. Staying easy, relaxed and alert.\(^{172}\)

He will also find it extremely difficult to bring his mind to concentrate on his breathing. Many different thoughts that distract his attention from the breath will probably come into his mind, or his mind may be wandering here and there. His mind is disturbed and distracted. At that time, he should not be disappointed. He should patiently keep returning his attention to the breath.

If he goes on practising this exercise daily and regularly, he will gradually be able to concentrate his mind on his breathing. After a certain period, his mind is fully concentrated on his breathing; his attention will be steady on his breath; and he will lose himself completely in his mindfulness of breathing. As a result, physical discomforts will disappear and coming of different thoughts into his mind will decrease, or wandering of his mind will be less. Eventually, his concentration will become stronger and deep mental calm and tranquility will result in his mind. He will therefore experience inner peace and happiness.

If he carries on this practice earnestly and intensely, his mind will become more and more deeply concentrated. When the strong concentration of mind is developed, very soon he may attain the states of absorption (jhānas). Based on the absorbed concentration (jhāna-samādhi) he may carry on the Insight meditation (vipassanā-bhāvanā) which aims at gaining insight into the true nature of existence, investigating the mental and the physical phenomena in

mind and body in detail. Then by contemplating on the triple symbol of all mental and physical phenomena of existence, i.e. impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha) and unreality (anatta), he may develop Insight-wisdom (vipassanā-ñāṇa), leading to the realization of Ultimate True, Nibbāna.

Apart from these ultimate benefits, the practice of mindfulness of breathing gives one immediate results and values that can be seen in his daily life. It is conducive to healthy and relaxed living. It makes the mind light when the mind is a prey to distress. It induces calmness and tranquility of mind. It purifies and strengthens the mind. It promotes efficiency in his daily work. It makes him calm and tranquil and helps him to make wise decisions in the countless difficulties of daily life. It brings him self-control. It makes him feel light in his body and peaceful in his mind.

It is good to practise mindfulness of breathing twice daily, morning and evening, at least for about thirty minutes at a time. Through the regular daily practice of this meditation, our concentration will gradually get better; there will be less thought; and we will experience happiness and peace of mind that he has never experienced before.

Here, it should be noted that the method of practising this meditation is exclusive and independent system of Buddhist meditation. It is by no means identical with the method of non-Buddhist systems.
Loving-kindness Meditation (Mettā-Bhāvanā)

Loving-kindness meditation (Mettā-bhāvanā) in Buddhism means developing feelings of love and thoughts of good-will towards oneself and others, wishing for one’s own happiness and that of others.

In practising Loving-kindness meditation, at the beginning of the practice, the meditator should not develop loving-kindness (mettā) towards four kinds of persons. They are: (1) persons who are disagreeable for the meditator (appiya-puggala), (2) persons who are dearest to the meditator (atippiya-sahāyaka), (3) persons who are neutral to the meditator (majhatta-puggala) and (4) persons who are hostile to the meditator (verī-puggala).

The reasons why loving-kindness should not be developed at the beginning of the exercise towards such persons are that it would be incongruous, or rather, difficult to send the feeling of loving-kindness first to disagreeable persons because the meditator dislikes them; it is also rather awkward to transmit loving-kindness first to dearest persons for the meditator has intense and deep love or affection for them, and if they are found to have become a bit miserable or have suffered trouble and misery, the meditator would probably become highly depressed or dejected; it would also be difficult to radiate to neutral persons for they are not familiar with the meditator and indeed, it is wellnigh impossible to radiate to strangers; and as regard hostile persons, leaving emitting loving-kindness to them aside, the moment the meditator remembers them, feeling of anger or hatred will arise, recalling the past
incidents or memories of their wrong doings or faults. For those reasons, the meditator should not radiate loving-kindness towards such four kinds of persons at the beginning of the practice.\textsuperscript{173}

The meditator should also know persons towards whom loving-kindness should not be developed in particular, and persons towards whom loving-kindness should never be developed. They are: (1) persons who do not belong to the same sex- loving-kindness should not be developed in particular towards such persons, and (2) persons who are dead- loving-kindness should never be developed towards such persons.\textsuperscript{174}

The reason for the prohibition of developing loving-kindness in particular towards a person of the opposite sex is that between the two persons- the person who transmits loving-kindness and the person to whom loving-kindness is transmitted, who are not of the same sex, it has a tendency towards the upsurge of sensual or passionate desire (rāga) that may appear under the guise of loving-kindness.\textsuperscript{175}

For example, if a male or a man is particularly developing loving-kindness towards a female or a woman, or, conversely, if a female or a woman is especially developing loving-kindness towards a male or a man, sensual desire (rāga) is likely to occur. Therefore, loving-kindness should not be developed in particular towards persons of the opposite sex. However, transmission of loving-kindness towards persons of the opposite sex for the

\textsuperscript{174} Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, p-287.
\textsuperscript{175} Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, p-288.
purpose of performing meritorious deed (kusala-kamma) and of gaining perfection (pāramitā) for about five or ten times appears not prohibitive.

The reason why loving-kindness should never be developed towards a person who is dead is that if loving-kindness is developed towards such person, neither boundless and perfect concentration (appanā-samādhi) nor inferior type of proximate concentration (upacāra-samādhi) can be achieved.\textsuperscript{176}

First and foremost, loving-kindness (mettā) should be developed towards one’s own self. It means one should first turn his attention to himself and wish his own well-being and happiness with the thoughts: ‘May I be well and happy (Ahaṁ sukhitohomi).’; ‘May I be free from suffering and pain (Ahaṁ niddukkho homi).’; ‘May I be free from enmity (Ahaṁ averohomi).’; ‘May I be free from affliction (Ahaṁ abyāpajjho homi).’; ‘May I be free from trouble (Ahaṁ anīghohomi).’; ‘May I care for myself with ease (Ahaṁ sukhī attānaṁ pariharāmi).’\textsuperscript{177}

It should not be misunderstood here that cultivating loving-kindness towards one’s own self, wishing one’s own well-being and happiness is selfish desire. In fact, it is meant to serve as an example by comparison that others also wish to gain well-being and happiness like he himself wishes to.

If one is developing mettā for his own well-being expressing his own sentiment, “May I be happy.”, it would serve as an

\textsuperscript{176} Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, p-288.
\textsuperscript{177} Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, p-288.
evidence, or rather, stand witness to the fact that others would also wish to be happy, or, to live happily and be alive and also be free from misery as he himself wishes to be so. That is the reason why instruction has been given to develop mettā towards one’s own self, or one’s own well-being initially when beginning with the exercise.178

Furthermore, no one who hates or despises himself consciously or unconsciously can feel true loving-kindness for others. To each of us the self is the nearest object. If one cannot love oneself, he cannot love others as well. Therefore, developing loving-kindness should begin with oneself.

After developing loving-kindness towards one’s own self, it should be developed to the same degree, one by one, or group by group, towards one’s agreeable persons (piya), beloved persons (atippiya), natural persons (majjhatta), and hostile persons (verī), if there is any179, wishing them well and happy with the thoughts: ‘May he (she or they) be well and happy.’; ‘May he (she or they) be free from suffering and pain.’; ‘May he (she or they) be free from enmity.’; ‘May he (she or they) be free from affliction.’; ‘May he (she or they) be free from trouble.’; ‘May he (she or they) care for himself (herself or themselves) with ease.’180

179 If the meditator has no hostile person or enemy, he need not develop loving-kindness towards an enemy after he has developed loving-kindness towards a natural person. Therefore, it is stated here as ‘if there is any’. This is in accordance with the statement of Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, p-290.
In radiating loving-kindness one after another towards such persons—agreeable persons, beloved persons, natural persons and hostile persons, loving-kindness should be developed toward another only after firm and gentle mind is has been brought about and feeling of love is fully developed towards one.181

Naturally and normally, it is not difficult to develop loving-kindness towards agreeable persons, beloved persons and even natural persons, but it is not easy to subdue a hostile attitude and enmity towards the enemy, and to develop benevolent attitude and loving-kindness towards him without difficulty.

While the meditator is developing loving-kindness towards his enemy, anger is likely to occur, remembering wrongs and faults done by his enemy. When such an incident happens, several methods and techniques to subdue anger are described in the Visuddhimagga Pāli.

Among those methods and techniques, one is not to think of and ponder upon the bad points in the physical, or verbal, or mental behaviour of the enemy, but instead, to consider and reflect on the good points in his physical, or verbal, or mental behaviour. By doing so, anger should be suppressed.182

As regards this method, if the enemy is good in his physical behaviour, but bad in his verbal and mental behaviour, or if he is good in his verbal behaviour, but bad in his physical and mental behaviour, or if he is good in his mental behaviour, but bad in his

182 “Yo yo dhammo tassa puggalassa viññāsanto hoti parisuddho, anussariyamono pasādaṁ āvahati, taṁ taṁ anussaritvā āghāto paṭivenetabbo.” (Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, p-291.)
physical and verbal behaviour, the meditator should subdue anger and develop loving-kindness towards him, considering his good behaviour- physically, or verbally, or mentally, without thinking of his bad behaviour.\textsuperscript{183}

However, if the enemy is bad in all behaviour- physical, verbal and mental, the meditator should suppress anger and develop loving-kindness towards him, regarding him with compassion, thinking as follows:

‘Kiṇcāpi esa idāni manussaloke carati, atha kho katipāhassa accayena aṭṭhamahānirayasolaussadanirayaparipūrako bhavissati. - Although this person lives in the human world now, he will have to go to the hell after death.’,

or thinking thus: ‘Aho vata ayamāyasmā kāyaduccaritaṁ pahāya kāyasucaritaṁ bhāveyya, vacīduccaritaṁ pahāya vacīsucaritaṁ bhāveyya, manoduccaritaṁ pahāya manosucaritaṁ bhāveyya! Taṁ kissa hetu? Māyaṁ āyasmā kāyassa bhedā parama maraṇā apāyaṁ duggatiṁ vinipātaṁ nirayaṁ upapajji.- Oh! It will be good if this person develops physical good behaviour, dispelling physical misbehaviour; develops verbal good behaviour, dispelling verbal misbehaviour; and develops mental good behaviour, dispelling mental misbehavior! What is the reason? May he not go to the hell and be born in a state of loss and woe after death.’\textsuperscript{185}

\textsuperscript{184} Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, p-292.
\textsuperscript{185} Aṅguttara Nikāya, Pañcakanipāta, Dutiyaāgāhātapattivinaya Sutta, p-166.
Contrary to the mention above, if the enemy is good in all behaviour-physical, verbal and mental, the meditator should develop loving-kindness towards him, reflecting on his all good behaviour, or any of them. Indeed, it is not difficult to develop loving-kindness towards such enemy since anger can be subdued by reflecting on his respectable and admirable behaviour.\(^{186}\)

The other method is to admonish oneself, considering the enemy in terms of non-self (anatta).

In respect of this method, the meditator should first consider the enemy in terms of non-self (anatta) thus: “He is nothing, but combined with matter (rūpa) and mind (nāma) which are void of self and there is no meaning in being angry with those matter and mind.”

And then, the meditator should admonish himself thus: “Matter (rūpa) and mind (nāma) are transient by nature and are occurring only for a moment, followed by dissolution instantaneously. Such matter and mind of the enemy, that are considered as having done wrongful act or harm to you, have already vanished into thin air in an instant. They no longer exist. They have disappeared altogether. Thus, at the present, what matter and mind are angry with? New matters and minds, which have subsequently occurred, are not doing any wrongful act or harm to

you. Hence, there is no ground for enmity towards those matter and mind.”

Considering the enemy in terms of non-self (anatta) and admonishing himself in the manner mentioned above, the meditator should subdue anger and develop loving-kindness towards the enemy.

The other method is to reflect that one has kamma, the resultant effects of all good and bad actions, whether physical, verbal or mental, done by oneself on one’s own volition, as one’s own property in possession.

With regard to this method, the meditator should first reflect on having kamma for his own property in possession thus: “Oh meditator, by being angry with him, what benefit will you get? Is it not true that whatever action that you have done based on anger, will in consequence bring about bad effects which are detrimental to your interests? Indeed, kamma, the resultant effects of good and bad actions, whether physical, verbal or mental, that you have done on your own volition, is the only property which you really own or possess. You are the inheritor of your own kamma. Your own kamma is the only cause or origin of your happiness and pain. Only your own kamma is your real relative and refuge. If you do whatever action, whether physical, verbal or mental, either good or bad, you will surely have to inherit the resultant effects of that action. The kammic effect which occurs or takes place depending

187 “Khaṇikattā ca dhammānaṁ, yehi khandhehi te kataṁ, amanāpaṁ niruddhā te, kassa dānīdha kujjhasi.” (Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, p-293.)
upon anger will neither contribute to your achieving well-being and happiness here, nor help you to be reborn in happy states or to go to heaven. Actually, it will only cause you to suffer misery and pain, and to be reborn in miserable states or to go to hell. Based on anger, if you do bad action for the purpose of causing the other misery and pain, you will first suffer misery and pain. It is just like a person who is going to hit the other with burning hot coal or disgusting excrement to get him the burns and an awful smell, holding and carrying them in his hand, first gets the burns and an awful smell.”

Then, the meditator should also reflect on having kamma for the enemy’s own property in possession thus: “By being angry with me, what benefit will he get? Will not the action that he has done based on anger generate his own disadvantage? Indeed, he too has his own kamma, the resultant effects of good and bad actions, whether physical, verbal or mental, done by himself on his own volition, as his possession. He is the inheritor of his own kamma. His own kamma is the only cause or origin of his happiness and pain. Only his own kamma is his real relative and refuge. If he does whatever action, whether physical, verbal or mental, either good or bad, he will surely have to inherit the resultant effects of that action. The kammic effect which occurs or takes place depending upon anger will neither contribute to his achieving well-being and happiness here, nor help him to be reborn in happy states or to go to heaven. Actually, it will only cause him to suffer misery and pain, and to be reborn in miserable states or to go to hell. He, who does bad action for the purpose of causing the other man misery
and pain, based on anger, will cause himself misery and pain, just as a person on whom the dust fall back by the force of wind as he sprinkles or shower the other man with the dust, standing against the wind on the leeward side from an adverse position.”188

Reflecting upon having kamma for his and his enemy’s won property in possession in the manner mentioned above, the meditator should consider thus: “As both of us have kamma for our own property in possession, we are subject to the law of cause and effect. Whatever evil we do, we must suffer for that. Why then should I be angry with him? Rather than, I should purify my mind and avoid doing evil action.”

Making consideration like that, the meditator should suppress hostility and develop loving-kindness towards the enemy.

If anger or hostility cannot be suppressed as yet by employing the methods cited above, the meditator is advised to analyze the constituents of human body (dhātus) for the sake of extinguishing anger or hostility.

The manner of analyzing to be made is as follows:

“Oh, meditator, what are you feeling anger at in that person with whom you are angry? Are you feeling anger at his hair on the head, or at his hair on the body, or at the nails of his fingers and toes, or, at his urine? Putting it in another way, are you feeling anger at the element of earth (pathavī-dhātu), or at the element water (āpo-dhātu), or at the element of fire (tejo-dhātu), or at the

element of air (vāyo-dhātu), comprised in the hair of the head, the hair of the body, the nails of fingers and toes, etc? In other words, being dependent upon the five aggregates (pañca-khandhas), the twelve spheres of sense-organs and sense-objects (dvādasāyatanas), and the eighteen elements (aṭṭhārasa-dhātus), that person, who is regarded as your enemy, is called Mr or Mrs So and so. Among those five aggregates, twelve spheres of sense-organs and sense-objects and eighteen elements, are you angry with the aggregate of form (rūpakkhandha), or with the aggregate of sensation (vedanākkhandha), or with the aggregate of perception (saññākkhandha), or with the aggregate of volitional activity (saṅkhārakkhandha), or with the aggregate of consciousness (viññāṇakkhandha)? Or, are you angry with the sphere of eye (cakkhāyatana), or with the sphere of sight (rūpāyatana), or with of sphere of mind (manāyatana), or with the sphere of ideas (dhammāyatana)? Or, are you angry with the element of eye (cakkhudhātu), or with the element of sight (rūpadhātu), or with the element of eye-consciousness (cakkhuviññāṇadhātu), or with the element of mind, (manodhātu), or with the element of ideas (dhammadhātu), or with the element of mental consciousness (manoviññāṇadhātu)?”

If a close and careful analysis of the constituents of the body (dhātus) is made, it will be convincingly realized that anger has no abode to dwell in the human body, just as a tiny grain of mustard
seed has no place to rest upon the tip of a very small pin, or, just as there is no place in the sky for painting.\textsuperscript{189}

By analyzing the constituents of human body (dhātus) in the manner mentioned above, the meditator should extinguish anger or hostility and develop loving-kindness towards the enemy.

If the meditator is incapable of making an analysis of the constituents of the body (dhātus), he should make sharing or giving. He should give his own personal property or any other thing to the enemy. He should also accept in return property or goods given by the enemy. However, if the enemy does not observe the proprieties and good conducts in making his livelihood, or in other words, if the enemy acquires his property by unjust and illegal means, he should only give his property or goods to the enemy. If such a ‘give and take’ policy is adopted, feeling of animosity towards the enemy will surely be vanished. Resentment or hatred borne in the mind of enemy will also be extinguished. Yes indeed, sharing or giving has such great power.\textsuperscript{190}

It is also stated thus: “Adantadamaṇaṁ dānaṁ, dānaṁ sabbatthasādhakaṁ, dānena piyavācāya, unnamanti namanti cā.- Sharing or giving makes a rude person civilized. It makes all the advantages accomplished. By giving with a feeling of generosity and by speaking sweetly in a gentle manner, one’ reputation and

\textsuperscript{189} Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, p-299.
\textsuperscript{190} Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, pp-299/300.
prestige will be enhanced. And also, the receiver and the hearer will be cordial and friendly.”

After subduing anger or hostility towards the enemy through the method of ‘give and take’, the meditator should develop loving-kindness towards the enemy.

The meditator, who has suppressed anger or hostility towards hostile persons by using one of the foregoing methods, should develop loving-kindness towards hostile persons, wishing them well and happy, as he develop loving-kindness towards agreeable persons, beloved persons and natural persons, wishing them well and happy.

Loving-kindness should be developed, to such an extent that it is exactly the same in quality and degree, for all four kinds of persons, viz.: oneself, the beloved person, the neutral person and the hostile person. It means one should impart equally a spirit of good-will to all those four kinds of persons, wishing each to be well and happy, without making discrimination between oneself and others, between beloved ones and hostile ones.

While developing loving-kindness, one’s mind should be bent upon the recipient of loving-kindness, whoever he may be, and then one should transmit the feeling of loving-kindness to him deeply and profoundly.

However, at the outset, one’s mind may wander or flirt with many different thoughts. But, if he continues to go on developing

192 Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol-I, p-300.
loving-kindness regularly and daily, thoughts will gradually lessen and he will steadily be able to concentrate his mind on the person to whom loving-kindness is transmitted.

After a certain period, his mind is fully concentrated on the recipient of loving-kindness and ceases to wander. When his mind remains fixed completely on the recipient of loving-kindness, his mental concentration will become strong. When the concentration of mind is fully strengthened, he will experience peace of mind.

If he carries on developing loving-kindness earnestly and intensely, his mind will become more and more deeply concentrated on the recipient of loving-kindness. When the strong concentration of mind (samādhi) is fully developed, very soon he may attain the states of absorption (jhānas). Based on the absorbed concentration (jhāna-samādhi), he may carry on the Insight meditation (vipassanā-bhāvanā), which aims at gaining insight into the true nature of existence, investigating the mental and the physical phenomena of the recipient of loving-kindness in detail. Then by contemplating on the triple symbol of all mental and physical phenomena of existence, i.e. impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha) and unreality (anatta), he may develop Insight-wisdom (vipassanā-ñāṇa) leading to the realization of Ultimate True (Nibbāna).

Apart from these ultimate benefits, Loving-kindness meditation brings about advantages here and hereafter.

One, who is equipped with the thought of good-will through the practice of loving-kindness meditation, never feels restless, but
usually sleeps easily and soundly with an undisturbed mind, when he goes to sleep. He awakes pleasantly and actively, when he wakes up. He does not have bad and frightful dreams during a sleep, but has pleasant and sweet dreams. He is loved by humans and non-humans, viz: gods, deities, giants and ghosts. Even animals are also attracted to him. He is protected from dangers by deities. He is not affect by either fire, or poison, or sword, or any other lethal weapons. In other words, accidents and injuries will not befall him. His mind quickly becomes calmed and concentrated. His face is bright and clear. He dies unconfused, when death takes place and he will be born in a blissful state or will go to heaven, after death.¹⁹³

Furthermore, the practice of Loving-kindness meditation gives one immediate results and values that can be seen in his daily life. It brings about inner peace, purified the mind of antagonistic feelings towards others through the permeation of impersonal and universal love; reduces feelings of ill-will or resentment; improves interpersonal relationships at home and in the workplace; promotes racial accord and amity; helps the development of an even mind; and increases calm and inner peace.

This form of meditation (i.e., Loving-kindness meditation) is especially suitable for those who intend to overcome anger or anger-related problems (e.g. bad temper, jealousy, cruelty, fear, worry and anxiety). It is also very practical as it creates good

relationship between and among people. This makes life and work in society easy and happy.\textsuperscript{194}

One, who practises Loving-kindness meditation regularly with the right attitude, will be able to be more accepting and forgiving towards others and make friends with them, and thus his loved ones will increase. He will be able to gradually lessen and eventually dissolve ill-will or resentment which he has towards some people. He will also be able to pull out anger or hatred that is deep-rooted in his heart and thus he seeks no retaliation against anyone.

Sometimes, if he radiates his loving-kindness towards those who are unhealthy, unhappy and encountering difficulties and problems, wishing them healthiness, happiness and ease, he will find their situations obviously improving.

This Loving-kindness meditation should be practised every day after practising Mindfulness of Breathing in our daily lives. Through the regular daily practice of this meditation, our minds will be freed from anger, hatred, ill-will or resentment, and we will therefore experience inner peace within our minds.

The more we focus on sending and radiating loving and kind thoughts, the more we affect the world around us in a positive way. As a result, our minds become uplifted and happy at the same time.\textsuperscript{195}

\textsuperscript{194} Ven. Sujiva, Loving-kindness Meditation, p-11.
Conclusion

According to Buddhism, the mind is of primary importance. It is the most important element in man. It is the forerunner of all actions and the chief of all things. The mind should be therefore refined and trained. The pure refined and well trained mind brings real happiness and permanent peace to the individual life and the world.

Buddhist meditation helps refine and train the mind for it is the way to control the mind; the way to calm the mind; the way to concentrate the mind; the way to purify the mind; the way to strengthen the mind; the way to sharpen mental faculties; and the way to improve mental health.

Today’s life is full of stress and strain. We need peace of mind to avoid stress and strain. The best means of attaining peace of mind is meditation.

Meditation is a necessary ingredient of inner peace. By the practice of meditation, we can live calmly and serenely even in the midst of strenuous activity.

Furthermore, we are conditioned to a very great extent by our emotions, such as love, hate, joy, fear, etc. Emotions are states of deep feeling that stir our blood. We are passionate, impulsive and quick to anger by emotions. We cannot find peace of mind without some degree of emotional control. Without deliberate effort, emotions will not be under the direct control of the will.
Meditation helps with mastering the emotions. When our emotions are repressed through the practice of meditation, we become cool, reflective and patient, and we can find peace of mind in our daily lives.

Generally, we, human beings, are driven by intense desires; or frantic with worry; or raged with anger. We want to achieve our goals, such as wealth, power, position and prestige, so eagerly and avidly that we simply cannot rest until we reach them; or we are so fearful of losing something we prize that we cannot relax and enjoy the present moment; or we are so filled with anger at obstacles that obstruct our thirsts that we can never be completely at ease. Our minds are scattered and distraught due to desires, worry and anger, thereby making us unhappy and our life a misery.

The mind is the most valuable asset we possess as human beings. Neglecting its welfare is to neglect all the potentials in our life.

By practising meditation, we can control sense-desires, overcome worry and avoid anger. As a result, our minds become calm and settled and we can experience peace of mind in our lives.

Besides, our mind is constantly attracted to pleasant objects and repelled by unpleasant objects. In other words, we are naturally attached to pleasant objects and averse to unpleasant objects. Actually, both attachment and aversion defiles our minds and make our minds disturbed. When we lose pleasant objects that we are

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196 Ven. Dhammasami; The Dhamma Made Easy, p-35.
attached to and when we meet with unpleasant objects that we are averse to, we will feel anxiety, grief, sorrow, heat, irritation and rage. Therefore, we cannot experience inner peace.

Through the practice of meditation our mind gradually becomes purified and cleansed, and as our mind is purified and cleansed, we can see the true natures of objects with greater clarity. We then are not attached or averse to anything, and we develop cheerful equanimity that cannot be shaken by like and dislike. Consequently, our mind becomes calm and we can enjoy peace of mind.

Just as it is essential to do physical exercise regularly every day to keep our body healthy and strong, it is essential to do mental exercise regularly every day to keep our mind healthy and strong. Not doing physical exercise might be harmful to our physical health, and likewise, not doing mental exercise can cause us mental suffering. Therefore, if we want to be healthy and strong physically and mentally, we need to do our physical and mental exercise every day.

Meditation is a good form of mental exercise. If we meditate every day, we can maintain our mind calm and firm, and as a result, we do not undergo mental suffering and we can experience peace of mind.