Chapter Four:

ERADICATION OF ANUSAYA

4.1. The possibility of eradicating anusaya

When saying that *anusaya* are the latent tendencies of mental defilements that lie dormant in the life – continuum (*bhavaṅga*) and arise at any time, it does not mean that they are permanent and unchanging. They are also conditioned *dhamma*, and can be abandoned, as the Buddha has said:

“Abandon what is unskillful, monks. It is possible to abandon what is unskillful. If it were not possible to abandon what is unskillful, I would not say to you, “Abandon what is unskillful.” But because it is possible to abandon what is unskillful, I say to you, “Abandon what is unskillful.” If this abandoning of what is unskillful were conducive to harm and pain, I would not say to you, “Abandon what is unskillful.” But because this abandoning of what is unskillful is conducive to benefit and pleasure, I say to you, “Abandon what is unskillful.”

Cultivate the good. One can cultivate the good. If it were not possible, I would not ask you to do it. If this cultivation were to bring harm and suffering, I would not ask you to do it. But as this cultivation brings joy and happiness, I say cultivate the good.”

The difficulty people get into is they make a duality out of this. They think that to abandon means to pick up a knife and stab it, and to cultivate means grasping. So this instruction is partially about right effort. To abandon simply means that opening of the hand, letting it be, offering the intention not to be in a relationship with it.
We are beings of strong, ancient conditioning. But one moment’s clarity breaks through so much conditioning. The difficulty is not that these mind states arise; they simply arise out of conditions. The difficulty is that we twist an identity around them, condemn ourselves for them out of our great desire to purify the self. Then we give the negative thought more energy. We hate the negative thought and as the *Dhammapada* says, “Hate never dispelled hate.” To abandon does not mean to hate, simply to bring awareness to it, to understand this arose out of conditions. It is a result. We do not have to be afraid of it nor do we have to enact it in the world.

The morally bad and detrimental habits can be effectively removed by gradually developing another habit: that of attending to them mindfully. If we do deliberately what had become a mechanical performance, and if before any action we pause a while for bare attention and reflection; this will give us a chance to scrutinize the habit and clearly comprehend its purpose and suitability. It will allow us to make a fresh assessment of the situation, to see it directly, unobscured by the mental cloud that surrounds a habitual activity with the false assurance: “It is right because it was done before.” Even if a detrimental habit cannot be broken quickly, the reflective pause will counter its unquestioned spontaneity of occurrence. It will stamp it with the seal of repeated scrutiny and resistance, so that on its recurrence it will be weaker and will prove more amenable to our attempts to change or abolish it.

When we get to know how habitual tendencies arise and fall away, and that they are like something floating on the water, ready to blow off at the first gust of breeze, there is no more war with them. Let them be

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1 *Dhp.*, verse 5
and deepen the intention, not to enact them in the world, and notice that right there in impatience is patience. Right there with anger is kindness. Right there with greed is generosity. Stop giving the negative qualities so much weight.

In practice we understand that so long as there is mindfulness in our mind, so long as mindfulness is standing guard at the doors of eyes, ears and so on, no undesirable, unwholesome mental state can enter our mind. We can keep our mind pure by the practice of mindfulness. The moment we lose mindfulness, the moment mindfulness leaves the doors, then these mental defilements come in. Through practice we can easily accept that mindfulness is the only way for the purification of mind or to keep mental defilements away from our minds.

4.2. The difficulties of eradicating anusaya

As we may observe in ourselves, habitual reactions generally have a stronger influence on our behaviour than spontaneous ones. Our zealous impulses may disappear as suddenly as they have arisen. Though their consequences may be very grave and extend far into the future, their influence is in no way as long lasting and deep reaching as that of habit. “Habit spreads its vast and closely meshed net over wide areas of our life and thought, trying to drag in more and more. Our passionate impulses, too, might be caught in that net and thus be transformed from passing outbursts into lasting traits of character.”2 A momentary impulse, an occasional indulgence, a passing whim may by repetition become a habit we find difficult to uproot, a desire hard to control, and finally an

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2 The Power of Mindfulness, p.48
automatic function we no longer question. Repeated gratification turns a desire into a habit, and habit left unchecked grows into compulsion.

It sometimes happens that, at an early time, we regard a particular activity or mental attitude as without any special personal importance. The activity or attitude may be morally indifferent and inconsequential. At the start we might find it easy to abandon it or even to exchange it for its opposite, since neither our emotions nor reason bias us towards either alternative. But by repetition, we come to regard the chosen course of action or thought as “pleasant, desirable, and correct,” even as “righteous”; and thus we finally identify it with our character or personality. Consequently, we feel any break in this routine to be unpleasant or wrong.

Thus the lack of conscious control can turn even the smallest habits into the accepted masters of our lives. “It bestows upon them the dangerous power to limit and rigidify our character and to narrow our freedom of movement - environmental, intellectual, and spiritual. Through our subservience to habit, we forge new fetters for ourselves and make ourselves vulnerable to new attachments, aversions, prejudices, predilections, and to new suffering. The danger for spiritual development posed by the dominating influence of habit is perhaps more serious today than ever before; for the expansion of habit is particularly noticeable in our present age when specialization and standardization reach into so many varied spheres of life and thought.”  

The latent tendencies (anusaya) or predispositions to negative patterns of mind lie dormant in the mind and are the source of one’s
addictions and deep clinging, holding the mind in a state of attachment and, as a result, in suffering. These defilements can be compared with fire. Fire will flare up when there is a cause; for example, it springs from a match, from electricity or a cigarette butt. Fire when it appears for the first time is a small extent of fire or a tiny little fire. To stifle it is surely not difficult. But if that fire has much fuel and burns for a longer time then it is a big blaze. So, it is difficult or even impossible to extinguish it. The same is true of the fire of mental defilements which burn in our minds. As a tiny little fire when it springs up for the first time, if we know it quickly we can easily stifle it, if we know it slowly it is difficult to extinguish because the fire burning inside has already spread to the outside.

For this reason, people can also be seen as volcanoes: active volcanoes, dormant volcanoes and dead volcanoes. When you are in a fit of anger, consumed by lust, or buried by delusion, you are undergoing an eruption. It strikes terror in and around you, and you may lose some good things in life. Although it may not take lives, it can, and may even be, more lethal than an actual volcano. “Look at all the other walking volcanoes around you, and at the instability of the world, and you will be convinced. The fires of greed, hatred and delusion run deep in everyone’s veins. A dormant volcano can sleep through centuries, but these defilements spew out dirt every day. What is it that can quell these fires? The answer is found where the problem began - hidden underground, where there are veins of hot molten lava, can also be found the cool refreshing springs of life, that is, in the Mind itself - the cooling waters of mindfulness!”

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For the stilling of volcano, p.8
In order to put out the fire one must have the right equipment to extinguish or a course that is correct and suitable for the extinction of fire. Water is something one can use to put out fire. The Eightfold Path or the four satipaṭṭhāna which are the Single Way are the items to be put into practice or made to work to extinguish mental defilements or the fire.

Unfortunately, not many people are aware that these ingrained unwholesome patterns of mind are harmful to their wellbeing. However, while we have to acknowledge that it is not an easy matter, it is possible through Vipassanā meditation to detoxify the mind just as it is possible to detoxify the body.

*Vipassanā* is a Pāḷi term, composed of the prefix vi which means ‘clearly, specially, into, through’; and the verb *passati* which means ‘to see’; and is often translated as “inward vision”, “insight”, “intuition”, or “introspection”.

*Passanā* means to look, to see with open eyes, in the ordinary way. But *vipassanā* is to observe things as they really are, not merely as they seem to be. Apparent truth has to be penetrated until one reaches the ultimate truth of the entire mental and physical structure. It is a logical process of mental purification leading gradually towards full enlightenment. *Vipassanā* meditation is the essence of what the Buddha practised and taught. It is a straightforward, practical way to achieve peace of mind and to live a happy, useful life.

In its classical Buddhist usage *vipassanā* (insight) means full awareness of the three characteristics of existence, i.e., impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and impersonality (*anatta*). In other words,

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5 PED., p.1141
this means full realization of the fact that all things in the universe are temporary and changing; the human mind is no exception and thus is not an immortal soul; and as a consequence suffering is always inevitable, for no state of mind, pleasant or unpleasant, can endure forever. Here “awareness” should be distinguished from mere conceptual knowledge, which is usually insufficient to have lasting effect upon one’s feelings and values.

In its psychiatric usage insight means gaining awareness of those feelings, motives, and values which have previously been unconscious. Repressed feelings of guilt, fear, lust, and hatred may lurk in the hidden recesses of our minds and unconsciously shape our lives until such time as they are brought into awareness. And unless they are brought into awareness, we cannot effectively deal with them. In Buddhism this version of insight is included under the heading of mindfulness.

The Vipassanā Research Institute calls Vipassanā “a scientific method of self-observation that results in total purification of the mind and the highest happiness of full liberation.”

Our mind is normally fragmented. It is in the habit of wandering and thinking about things of no account, worrying about this or that, being anxious, fearful etc. We often go about our daily activities preoccupied with our thoughts. Thus, we do not live in the present, in the moment. We cannot do what we are doing now well if our mind is not paying full attention but wandering here and there. Habits are hard to change and all our lives we have been conditioned in living with a wandering mind that flits here and there every now and then. Thus when

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we first begin to discover and apply mindfulness, we see how difficult it is to exercise such a simple thing as mindfulness. We cannot stay aware and pay full attention to whatever we are doing. Repeatedly we have to bring the mind back to the present. Previously we did not even know when our mind wandered. We just allowed it to go where it liked but now we are checking that unhealthy trend, that “runaway mind syndrome.” It is apt here to quote a verse from the Dhammapada.

“Formerly this mind wandered about as it liked, where it liked, as it pleased. Today with wisdom I will control it as a mahout controls an elephant in rut.”

4.3. The methods of eradicating anusaya

As mentioned in the previous chapters, mental defilements (kilesa) are said to be present in three stratified layers in the mind: 1) dormant (anusaya) 2) manifest (pariyuțṭhāna) and 3) expressed (vītikkama). These defilements can be dealt with in three ways: first their expression can be restrained by harmonising one’s behaviour (sīla); secondly, when they manifest in the mind, for example as angry thoughts, then they can be skillfully suppressed through concentration practices in serenity meditation (samādhi); eventually when they are seen at their primary source or dormant level then they can be eradicated through insight meditation (paññā or vipassanā).

Ven. Pannyavaro calls this “the three-fold strategy” and gave an example of how to deal with our most troublesome negative emotion - anger. “First, restrain your behaviour in a situation where anger arises, thus not giving it a chance to be expressed; as soon as anger surfaces in

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7 Visuddhacara. *Invitation to Insight Meditation*, Penang: BDEAI, 1991, p.16
the mind as negative thoughts then a serenity meditation technique will calm the anger in the mind. But it is only through insight meditation where the ego-illusion is seen at its primary source, as the notion of ‘me’ and ‘mine’, that the anger at the dormant level can be seen with the possibility of eradicating it at its source.”

4.3.1 Temperaments and proper meditation objects

As the latent tendencies are dormant in many types of consciousness, a passing urge may grow into a relatively constant trait of character. If not satisfied with its position, it may break away entirely from the present combination of life forces until finally, in the process of rebirths, it becomes the very centre of a new personality and forms beings’ temperaments. According to the *Visuddhimagga*, “there are six kinds of temperament, that is, greedy temperament, hating temperament, deluded temperament, faithful temperament, intelligent temperament, and speculative temperament.”

Among these six kinds, three are positive and three are negative. However there is a parallel between the positive temperament and the negative one. As the commentator Buddhaghosa explained:

“Herein, one of faithful temperament is parallel to one of greedy temperament because faith is strong when profitable [kamma] occurs in one of greedy temperament, owing to its special qualities being near to those of greed. For, in an unprofitable way, greed is affectionate and not over-austere, and so, in a profitable way, is faith. Greed seeks out sense desires as object, while faith seeks out the special qualities of virtue and

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8 Ven. Pannyavaro, *The Art of Attention*, BDEAI., p.15
9 PP., p.96
so on. And greed does not give up what is harmful, while faith does not give up what is beneficial.

One of intelligent temperament is parallel to one of hating temperament because understanding is strong when profitable \([kamma]\) occurs in one of hating temperament, owing to its special qualities being near to those of hate. For, in an unprofitable way hate is disaffected and does not hold to its object, and so, in a profitable way, is understanding. Hate seeks out only unreal faults, while understanding seeks out only real faults. And hate occurs in the mode of condemning living beings, while understanding occurs in the mode of condemning formations.

One of speculative temperament is parallel to one of deluded temperament because obstructive applied thoughts arise often in one of deluded temperament who is striving to arouse unarisen profitable states, owing to their special qualities being near to those of delusion. For just as delusion is restless owing to perplexity, so are applied thoughts that are due to thinking over various aspects. And just as delusion vacillates owing to superficiality, so do applied thoughts that are due to facile conjecturing.\(^{10}\)

These temperaments affect the likely outcome of meditation. So, for example, one of greedy temperament is advised to surround himself with discomforts in clothing and lodging, people who are physically disfigured or otherwise unpleasing in appearance, and lake food that is ill-prepared and impure.

The *Mahāniddesa* says that the Buddha can discern the potential of different individuals as if looking at a lotus pond where some lotuses

\(^{10}\) **PP., p.97**
remain submerged in the mud, some emerge a little and some manage to rise right above the water. He discerns six character types (carita): desire (rāga), hatred (dosa), delusion (moha), the one who applies the mind (vitakka), faith (saddha) and wisdom (ñāṇa). To the one disposed to desire he teaches the foul meditations; and to the one disposed to hatred loving-kindness. For the ignorant or deluded person he recommends asking questions at the right moment, listening to dhamma talks at the right moment and conversation about dhamma as well as living near a teacher. To the one who applies his mind he teaches breathing mindfulness, to the one who has faith he teaches the sign that inspires confidence: the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha and one’s own sīla or good conduct. For the one with wisdom, he teaches the three signs of existence: impermanence (anicca), unsatisfactoriness or suffering (dukkha) and not-self (anatta).11

Again, in the Visuddhimagga, it is said: “first, the ten kinds of foulness and mindfulness occupied with the body are eleven meditation subjects suitable for one of greedy temperament. The four divine abidings and four colour kasiṇas are eight suitable for one of hating temperament. Mindfulness of breathing is the one [recollection as a] meditation subject suitable for one of deluded temperament and for one of speculative temperament. The first six recollections are suitable for one of faithful temperament. The remaining kasiṇas and the immaterial states are suitable for all kinds of temperament. And anyone of the kasiṇas should be limited for one of speculative temperament and measureless for one of deluded temperament.”12

11 Dr. Sarah Shaw, Buddhist Meditation: An Anthology of Texts from the Pāli Canon, New York: Routledge, 2006, p.9
12 PP., p.109
The various meditation subjects that the Buddha prescribed on different occasions for the development of serenity have been systematized in the commentaries into a set called the forty kammatṭhānas. “The word kammatṭhāna means literally a place of work. It is applied to the subjects of meditation since these are the places where the meditator undertakes the work pertaining to his calling, the work of meditation. An equivalent term occurring in the texts is ārammana, meaning “object” in general, but in this context, the object focused on is developing concentration.”\(^{13}\)

The forty meditation subjects are distributed into seven categories. They are enumerated in the *Visuddhimagga* as follows: ten kasiṇas, ten kinds of foulness (*asubha*), ten recollections (*anussati*), four divine abidings (*brahmavihāra*), four immaterial states (*arūpa*), one perception (*saññā*), and one defining (*vavatṭhāna*).

A *kasiṇa* is a device representing a particular quality used as a support for concentration. The ten kasiṇas are the earth *kasiṇa*, water *kasiṇa*, fire *kasiṇa*, wind *kasiṇa*, blue *kasiṇa*, yellow *kasiṇa*, red *kasiṇa*, white *kasiṇa*, light *kasiṇa*, and limited space *kasiṇa*. “The word *kasiṇa* has the meaning of “entirety” (*sakalaṭṭhena*). It is extended to these ten objects of meditation in that each represents the entire quality appropriate to itself. The *kasiṇa* can be either a naturally occurring form of the element or color chosen, or an artificially produced device such as a colored or elemental disk that the meditator can use at his convenience in his meditation quarters.”\(^{14}\)

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\(^{13}\) Henepola Gunaratana, *The Path of Serenity and Insight: An Explanation of the Buddhist Jhānas*, p.22

\(^{14}\) Ibid., p.23
The ten kinds of foulness are ten stages in the decomposition of a corpse. These are: the bloated, the livid, the festering, the cut-up, the gnawed, the scattered, the hacked and scattered, the bleeding, the worm-infested, and a skeleton. The primary purpose behind these meditations is to reduce sensual lust by gaining a clear perception of the repulsiveness of the body. In order to gain the “sign” of the corpses, actual dead bodies have to be seen. Thence these subjects are also known as the cemetery meditations.

The ten recollections are: the recollections of the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, morality, generosity, and the deities, mindfulness of death, mindfulness of the body, mindfulness of breathing, and the recollection of peace. The first three are devotional contemplations on the sublime qualities of the “three jewels”, the primary objects of Buddhist veneration. The second three are reflections on two cardinal Buddhist virtues and on the devas inhabiting the heavenly worlds, intended principally for those still intent on a higher rebirth. Mindfulness of death is reflection on the inevitability of death, a constant spur to spiritual exertion. Mindfulness of the body involves the mental dissection of the body into thirty-two parts, undertaken with a view to perceiving its unattractiveness. Mindfulness of breathing is awareness of the in-and-out movement of the breath, perhaps the most fundamental of all Buddhist meditation subjects. And the recollection of peace is reflection on the qualities of Nibbāna.

The four divine abidings are the development of boundless loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. These meditations are also called the “immeasurables” (appamāna) because
they are to be developed towards all sentient beings without qualification or exclusiveness.

The four immaterial states are the base of boundless space, the base of boundless consciousness, the base of nothingness, and the base of neither perception nor non-perception. These are the objects leading to the four corresponding meditative attainments called the aruppas or immaterial jhanas (arūpajjhāna).

The one perception is the perception of the repulsiveness of food. The one defining of the defining is the four elements, that is, the analysis of the physical body into the elemental modes of solidity, fluidity, heat, and oscillation.

“The forty kammatṭhānas are treated in the Pāṭī commentarial texts from two important angles—one their ability to induce different levels of concentration, the other their suitability for different temperaments.”

Six characteristic temperaments (Carita) and their main characteristics can be narrated in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperament</th>
<th>Main Characteristic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Lustful (Rāga-carita)</td>
<td>Sensual desir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hating (Dosa-carita)</td>
<td>Hot tempered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Deluded (Moha-carita)</td>
<td>Forgetfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Faithful (Saddha-carita)</td>
<td>Gullibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Intelligent (Buddhi-carita)</td>
<td>Over-confident, only believes own knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Speculative (Vitakka-carita)</td>
<td>Lack of confidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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15 Henepola Gunaratana, op.cit., p.24
Similarly the suitable kind of meditation recommended for each type of temperament is given in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperament</th>
<th>Recommended Meditation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Lustful</td>
<td>Meditations on Corpses and Mindfulness of the Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hating</td>
<td>Four Color <em>Kasiṇa</em> and Four Divine Abidings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Deluded and Speculative</td>
<td>Mindfulness on breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Faithful</td>
<td>The first six Recollections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Intelligent</td>
<td>Mindfulness of Death, Recollection of <em>Nibbāna</em>, Contemplation of the Four Elements and Contemplation of the Loathsomeness of Food.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each temperament is suitable for some kinds of mediation, but it does not mean that one is not to practice other types of meditation. The statement is made because the meditation and the temperament stated to be compatible are very suitable types of meditation for that particular temperament. It does not mean that that meditation is not good for people of other temperaments.

Whatever temperament we have, we practice *Vipassanā* meditation and if we do it in a correct way and if we make necessary effort, then we will not fail to see the true nature of things and this seeing of true nature of things will lead us to seeing the four noble truth and at the same time eradicating mental defilements.

There are various methods of *Vipassanā* meditation but they are all based on the same principles of observing mental and physical processes.
that occur in the mind and body, and at the six sense doors, i.e. seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking. In Myanmar, for example, there are various popular methods taught by renowned teachers such as Mahasi Sayadaw, Mogok Sayadaw, Sunlun Sayadaw, U Ba Khin and others. (These teachers had passed away but their disciples are continuing teaching their methods which have become widely practised.) The methods may differ in the initial primary objects that the meditator starts off with but they are all based on the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness) taught by the Buddha.

In the Pāli - English Dictionary, Sati is defined as memory, recognition, consciousness; intentness of mind, wakefulness of mind, mindfulness, alertness, lucidity of mind, self-possession, conscience, or self-consciousness.¹⁶

The Buddha defined sati as the ability to remember, illustrating its function in meditation practice with the four satipaṭṭhānas, or foundations of mindfulness.

“And what is the faculty of sati? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones, is mindful, highly meticulous, remembering, and able to call to mind even things that were done and said long ago. He remains focused on the body in and of itself — ardent, alert, and mindful — putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in and of themselves... the mind in and of itself... mental qualities in and of themselves — ardent, alert, and mindful — putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world.”¹⁷

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¹⁶ PED, p.1230
¹⁷ S. V. 197
In this Sutta, the two most important factors when doing Vipassanā are sati (mindfulness) and sampajañña (awareness) which are usually combined together and mentioned repeatedly. Thus, the familiar formula found in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta is:

“He remains focused on the body in and of itself — ardent, alert, and mindful — putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in and of themselves... the mind in and of itself... mental qualities in and of themselves — ardent, alert, and mindful — putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world.”

Sampajañña is derived from the word ‘sam’ meaning ‘correctly’, ‘fully’, ‘clearly’, ‘personally’, ‘pa’ meaning ‘distinctly’ or ‘unusually’ and ‘jañña’ is ‘knowing’.

Pa + jañña means awareness or comprehension of phenomena and their characteristics. Hence, sampajañña means full awareness or clear comprehension through personal experience. One should act consciously with full knowledge of what one is doing (sampajaññakari).

In the commentary to the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, it is said:

Sampajano = Clearly comprehending, endowed with knowledge called circumspection [sampajañña].

Clearly comprehending = Discerning rightly, entirely and equally [sammā samantato samañca pajānanto].

Rightly = Correctly [aviparitam].

Entirely = By knowing in all ways [sabbakarapajānanena].

18 M. I. 55
Equally = By reason of proceeding through the conveying of higher and higher spiritual attainments [uparupari visesavaha-bhavena pavattiya].

Again, according to the Commentaries, sampajañña is of four kinds:

1. Satthaka sampajañña: clarity of consciousness regarding the purpose, the progress of dhamma and benefit;
2. Sappāya sampajañña: clear comprehension of suitability;
3. Gocara sampajañña: sphere or domain of clear comprehension;

Sayadaw U Pandita further explained about this important factor of Vipassanā as follows:

- Satthaka sampajañña:

  When we are going to do something, we will first ponder whether it is beneficial or not and not suddenly do it. After we have reflected we should act only when it is beneficial. Thus, prior reflection on the benefit or loss of an act is satthaka sampajañña.

- Sappāya sampajañña

  This means comprehension as to the suitability or appropriateness of an action. After clearly comprehending the purpose, we judge whether it is both beneficial and appropriate. For instance, giving a dhamma discourse is beneficial for both the speaker and the...
listener. But if the place is noisy and crowded it is not suitable to hold the dhamma desanā. Going on a pilgrimage is a noble deed. But if the place is crowded or dangerous, it will not be proper, especially for monks. Contemplation of the impurification (foulness) of the body or asubha-bhāvana is beneficial. But, if the yogi happens to contemplate on the body of the opposite sex, lust (rāga) may arise. So, it will not be appropriate. Thus, one must weigh one’s actions and possess the quality of prudence (nepakka paññā or parihariya paññā), a kind of rationalism to reason whether an action is both beneficial and appropriate.

These two sampajaññas serve as the foundations for human reason and behaving in a manner befitting a human life, they also serve as a groundwork for the development of the other two sampajaññas.

Knowing the benefits one can achieve through the practice of satipaṭṭhāna is satthaka sampajañña. Exerting vigorously while there is a teacher and we are young and healthy is an opportune and suitable moment. If we grow past this period, it will not be proper. Knowing this is sappāya sampajañña.

❖ Gocara sampajañña

Gocara is that whereby anything is limited, wherein it abides, lives, moves or expatiates, or upon which it operates: its sphere, domain, range, function, object or attributes. Thus, form is the gocara of the eye, ideas or knowledge the gocara of the mind, and so on. The sense-fields or objects of sense which serve as supports for the sense-cognitions to arise (gocara-rūpas) are the six, namely, form, sound, odour, taste, body-impression and mind-object. Full awareness of these objects is gocara sampajañña.
To comprehend clearly, one must note the nāma-rūpa gocaras as they arise. Note the rise and fall of the abdomen, note the sensations, note every movement of your body when you are walking, note every phenomenon that arises. Note continuously without omission. Full awareness of these objects means gocara sampajañana. Slackness in noting will not bring about gocara sampajañana.

❖ Asammoha sampajañana

As we apply viriya and samādhi and as these faculties gain strength, we will know the true nature of nāma-rūpa phenomena. Doubts and confusion, if any, will be overcome (asammoha), because whatever we observe is empirical - neither imagined nor what the teacher or the book says. We will understand (pajaña) distinctly, thoroughly and accurately (sammā). We will observe the real characteristics such as impermanence and unsatisfactoriness. This is the fulfillment of gocara sampajañana.

Gocara sampajañana will accomplish asammoha sampajañana, the former being the action and the latter the result. Just as we have to supplement our food with vitamins to build our healthy body, we have to apply viriya, sati and samādhi in our meditative effort so that these faculties serve as mental nutriment or vitamins to attain bhāvanamaya pañña (wisdom based on mental development) or dhammoja pañña (wisdom based on dhamma practice).

Bhikkhu Buddhadasa gave quite a particular definition to Sampajañana: “Sampajañana is wisdom as it meets up with and immediately confronts a problem, as it deals with and wipes out that
problem — this is wisdom-in-action. It is only that wisdom specifically related and applied to a particular situation or event.”

Most of the time, people are doing things due to habit, without being aware of their actions. “Samskaras are mental formations related to habit-energy. These patterns are dynamic action traces. They tend to recur in different situations when conditions are similar. The focus in Buddhist psychology is on the current patterns of behavior, so it is often useful to explore how samskaras manifest themselves in the present. This can be done in many ways. First, we can work to understand the origin of patterns, thus developing more alertness to patterns that may arise in particular situations. This gives us more awareness and choice when the samskaras are activated again.”

It is important that at this point the person doesn’t simply go through the same pattern of behavior but finds a new course of action. For this reason Buddhist approaches place a lot of emphasis on encouraging people to do things differently, rather than placing the primary emphasis on understanding or expressing feelings. Furthermore, importance is placed on current action rather than understanding past experiences per se.

Theoretically, sati or mindfulness is the process of recognizing and sampajañña or awareness is the recognition itself. Sati is the work that is done to stabilize the mind on an object and sampajañña is the resulting stability of mind, or clear awareness of the object. Sati is like the hand that grasps the stalks of wheat and sampajañña is like the scythe that cuts

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21 Bhikkhu Buddhadasa, Natural Cure for Spiritual Disease, accessed at http://www.what-buddha-taught.net/Books/Bhikkhu_Buddhadasa_Natural_Cure_for_Spiritual_Disease2.htm

22 Caroline Brazier, Buddhism on the Couch: from Analysis to Awakening Using Buddhist Psychology. California: Ulysses Press, 2003, p. 112
them. “These two factors (sati-sampajañña) are ‘helpers’ (upakāraka) for any meditator, in any subject of meditation and at any time because they remove obstacles and enhance spiritual development.”

“With mindfulness we can become aware of the impulses of greed or pride or anger and release some of their powerful effects. But we soon discover that even if we let go of our entanglement in them for a moment, they will return. This is because their unconscious roots remain untouched. Buddhist psychology describes how deep and powerful these roots can be. As Freud and his Western colleagues have done, it endeavors to bring them into conscious awareness. But then, Buddhist teaching shows how human development can take a significant step beyond the awareness and accommodation of drives that is the fruit of most Western clinical practices. It teaches that these deepest roots can be transformed in a way that brings a degree of freedom unknown to the West.

These deep drives, unconscious fears, grasping, and confusions are called the latent roots. Through profound insight and deep meditation, these latent roots can be released, bringing successive degrees of freedom, called stages of enlightenment. In the first enlightenment stage the confusions about the way, doubts about freedom, and misunderstandings about the self are released. In the next two enlightenment stages the instinctual roots of greed and aggression are weakened and then released. In the final stage the last unconscious clinging to refined states of consciousness and attachments to any sense of self are dissolved.

In this process, Buddhist practice directs awareness to penetrate to the very bottom of the individual psyche. In the forest monasteries, advanced meditators are instructed to deliberately investigate these unconscious forces and thus release themselves from their power. Meditators who have trained their mind to be concentrated, steady, clear, and transparent will examine the heart, search for the latent roots of suffering there, and release them. They will systematically bring up images of what they most deeply fear or hate or crave. In this practice, we can take any area of suffering in our life. We bring it to mind, then we carefully examine the unconscious roots of this suffering.

Mindfulness practice uncovers the patterns held in the individual unconscious. These become revealed through our body, our emotions, our images, our dreams. Sankharas that are unconscious can become conscious.”

The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, the Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness, is generally considered as the canonical Buddhist text with the fullest instructions on the system of Vipassanā meditation. It centers on the methodical cultivation of mindfulness, the capacity for attending to the content of our experience as it becomes manifest in the immediate present. “What the Buddha shows in the sutta is the tremendous, but generally hidden, power inherent in this simple mental function, a power that can unfold all the mind’s potentials culminating in final deliverance from suffering.”

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To exercise this power, however, mindfulness must be systematically cultivated, and the *sutta* shows exactly how this is to be done. The key to the practice is to combine energy, mindfulness, and clear comprehension in attending to the phenomena of mind and body summed up in the “four arousings of mindfulness”: body, feelings, consciousness, and mental objects. Most contemporary meditation teachers explain *Satipaṭṭhāna* meditation as a means for generating insight (*vipassanā*). While this is certainly a valid claim, we should also recognize that *Satipaṭṭhāna* meditation also generates concentration (*samādhi*). Unlike the forms of meditation which cultivate concentration and insight sequentially, *Satipaṭṭhāna* brings both these faculties into being together, though naturally, in the actual process of development, concentration will have to gain a certain degree of stability before insight can exercise its penetrating function.

In the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, *sati* and *sampajañña* are combined with *atapi*, or “ardency,” and the three together comprise *yoniso manisikāra* “appropriate attention” or “wise reflection.” “Ardency means being intent on what we are doing, trying our best to do it skillfully. This does not mean that we have to keep straining and sweating all the time, just that we are continuous in developing skillful habits and abandoning unskillful ones. In the eight factors of the path to freedom, right mindfulness grows out of right effort. Right effort is the effort to be skillful. Mindfulness helps that effort along by reminding we to stick with it, so that we do not let it drop.”

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Thus, if one wants to develop sati (mindfulness) and sampajañña (awareness) he should practice according to the methods described in the Mahāsatiṣṭhāna Sutta.

4.3.2. Contemplation of the Body. (Kayānupassanā)

In this method of contemplation, there are several ways to apply mindfulness on the body:

- Mindfulness of Breathing: There are many variations of this exercise. A very basic one is to focus on the sensation of the breath at the nose-tip and to be keenly aware of the entire breath; both in-breath and out-breath are to be watched from beginning through the middle to the very end.

- Mindfulness of Postures of the Body: The four basic postures are walking, standing, sitting and lying. The exercise here is simply to be aware at all times of the disposition of the body.

- Clear Comprehension of Reality: To see the three characteristics in all activities (i.e. impermanence, suffering, and not-self)

- Reflection on the Reality of Body: To see the body as a collection of parts; solid and liquid. The traditional list of thirty-two parts: hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, membranes, spleen, lungs, bowels, intestines, gorge, dung, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, snot, spittle, oil-of-the-joints, urine (and brain is added from the commentary).
Reflection on the Material Elements: To see the body as a physical process. The traditional physics is based on the four elements; earth (extension), water (cohesion), air (motility) and fire (energy).

Cemetery Contemplations: These are used to become keenly aware of the impermanence of the body and to break the illusion of immortality. The list given by the Buddha can be taken as a visualization exercise which goes through repulsiveness to tranquility.

- the festering body (a few days old)
- the corpse being devoured by birds, beasts and worms
- a skeleton held together by tendons, with some flesh and blood remaining
- a skeleton held together by tendons, fleshless, smeared with blood
- a skeleton held together by tendons, fleshless and bloodless
- loose bones scattered about
- bones bleached white by the sun
- bones a year old lying piled in a heap
- rotted bones crumbling to dust.

Worldly people tend to maintain their deep attachment to the body. They say that body contemplation is a way of fostering aversion to the body, which is an unhealthy mental state. “Some people think they can short circuit the process of attachment by going straight to their sense of self, thinking that by cutting out the sense of self they won’t have to work on contemplation of the body because the work they’re doing goes deeper, straight to the root. But attachment is like a vine: We can’t find
the root until we take hold of the nearest branch and trace it back. We can’t really get to the root of our attachment to self until we’ve looked at where our most blatant day-to-day, moment-to-moment attachment is: right here at the body.”

There is no other way to get over our attachment to the body than to look at it very, very carefully. We have attachment (rāga) in our body and others’ bodies because we do not look carefully. This is what the contemplation of the 32 parts of the body is all about: contemplating the body in terms of the elements, for that is all it is. What we cherish is nothing but physical elements: wind, fire, water, and earth. They do not belong to us but only part of the world. When it starts getting old and grows sick and dies, it doesn’t ask our permission. The only way to get out is to contemplate the body and uproot our attachments. As the Buddha said, mindfulness immersed in the body ultimately leads to the Deathless or Nibbāna.

4.3.3. Contemplation of the Feelings (Vedanānupassanā)

The Feelings (vedanā) are not to be confused with the more complex mental functions called “emotions”. Feelings in the technical sense used here are much more basic. They can be classified in several ways:

- pleasant, neutral, unpleasant (sukha, upekkhā, dukkha)
- bodily, mental (kāyika, cetasika)
- worldly, unwordly (lokiya, lokuttara)

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27 Thanissaro Bhikkhu, Contemplation of the Body, accessed at http://www.dhammatalks.org/Archive/Writings/CrossIndexed/Published/Meditations2/040301%20M2%20Contemplation%20of%20the%20Body.pdf
Whether people are aware or not, their lives are chiefly spent in an endless endeavor to increase their pleasant feelings and to avoid unpleasant feelings. All that is wanted is to have more and more of pleasant feelings, because they bring with them emotional satisfaction, called happiness. Such happiness may have various levels of coarseness or refinement, and may reach great intensity.

“Mindfulness should be maintained throughout the short duration of that specific feeling, down to its cessation. If the vanishing point of feelings is repeatedly seen with increasing clarity, it will become much easier to trap, and finally to stop, those emotions, thoughts and volitions, which normally follow so rapidly, and which are so often habitually associated with the feelings. Pleasant feeling is habitually linked with enjoyment and desire; unpleasant feeling with aversion; neutral feeling with boredom and confusion, but also serving as background for wrong views. But when bare attention is directed towards the arising and vanishing of feelings, these polluting additives will be held at bay; or when they have arisen they will be immediately cognized in their nature, and that cognition may often be sufficient to stop them from growing stronger by unopposed continuance.”

An ignorant person though distressed by his unpleasant sensation also delights in and craves for the sensual desire (kāmasukha) that he has created in his mind. Why can he not maintain a balanced, dispassionate state of mind when experiencing an unpleasant sensation? He is unable to do so because he becomes attached to the sensation and is overpowered by it. Out of ignorance, he does not comprehend the true transitory nature (anicca) of the sensation. He does not realize its arising (samudaya), its passing away

28 Thanissaro Bhikkhu, op.cit.
(atthaṅgama), the relishing of it (assada), the danger in it (ādinava) or the escape from it (nissarana). He is further unaware of his patighānusaya (tendency of repugnance) which he, out of ignorance, is also multiplying. Such an ignorant person is not only attached to the unpleasant sensation, he is also bound up with all types of sensations, and therefore, with all the miseries in the world-birth, decay and death, and so on.

When a pleasant contact arises in the body, an ignorant person experiences it as pleasant, as it apparently is. Not comprehending its true nature, he becomes involved and attached and starts taking pleasure in it. He does not understand that the pleasant sensation that has arisen due to bodily contact is transitory, ephemeral, impermanent, and sooner or later is bound to pass away. Being ignorant of it, he tends to develop craving for its continuance. He is also unaware of his dormant tendency of lust (rāgānusaya), the deep-rooted defilement in him. Because of his attachment, he keeps increasing his craving and continues to flow with it. Not understanding the true nature of a pleasant sensation as it really is; he is attached to it, and thus, is subject to lamentation and sorrow.

There arise situations in which an ordinary person experiences neither pleasant nor unpleasant sensations (adukkhamasukha vedanā) and is delighted and satisfied with this. Such an attitude indicates his avijjā (ignorance), as he does not know that this experience is also transitory, ephemeral and still within the sphere of nāma-rūpa (mind and matter). Being unaware of the dormant tendency of ignorance (avijjānusaya) within him, he acts in such a way as to multiply it, and continues to flow with it. He is deluded and therefore falls into despair and becomes unhappy.29

29 S. 2.4.260
“Yet, feeling by itself, in its primary state, is quite neutral when it registers the impact of an object as pleasant, unpleasant or indifferent. Only when emotional or volitional additions are admitted, will there arise desire and love, aversion and hate, anxiety, fear and distorting views. But that need not be so. These admixtures are not inseparable parts of the respective feelings. In fact, many of the weaker impressions we receive during the day stop at the mere registering of a very faint and brief feeling, without any further emotional reaction. This shows that the stopping at the bare feeling is psychologically possible, and that it could also be done intentionally with the help of mindfulness and self-restraint, even in cases when the stimulus to convert feelings into emotions is strong. Through actual experience it can thus be confirmed that the ever-revolving round of Dependent Origination (paticca-samuppada) can be stopped at the point of Feeling, and that there is no inherent necessity that Feeling is followed by Craving.”

Thus, feeling as a key factor on the path of liberation, and therefore, the Contemplation of Feeling has always been highly regarded as an effective aid on that path. There should be a mindful awareness of the feelings when they arise, and one should clearly distinguish them as pleasant, unpleasant (painful) or neutral, respectively. There is no such thing as “mixed feelings.”

The practice of Vipassanā is fulfilled only when a practitioner comes to realize perfectly the three characteristics of feelings (anicca, dukkha and anatta) and remains ever mindful (sato) with constant

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thorough understanding (sampajañño) of them. This is the ultimate aim of Vipassanā and this is the crux of the practice.

From the Contemplation of Feelings considerable benefits can be derived by those who devote reflection to their feelings and emotions. They will soon find that feelings and emotions are “separable.” This can save them from being carried away by the emotional cross-currents of elation and dejection. The mind will then gradually reach a higher level of firmness and equipoise, just by that simple procedure of looking, or looking back at, one’s feelings and emotions. A life lived in this way may well mature in the wish to use the Contemplation of Feelings for its highest purpose: mind’s final liberation from suffering.

4.3.4. Contemplation of the Mind (Cittānupassanā)

The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta gave the following instruction:

“When the mind has passion, discerns that the mind has passion. When the mind is without passion, he discerns that the mind is without passion. When the mind has aversion, he discerns that the mind has aversion. When the mind is without aversion, he discerns that the mind is without aversion. When the mind has delusion, he discerns that the mind has delusion. When the mind is without delusion, he discerns that the mind is without delusion….”

This contemplation starts with observing the characteristics of the mind. We are aware of some object and the mind that is aware of that object. “We know this mind as the noting mind. Then another consciousness arises which is aware, watches over the first one which is

31 M. I. 55
aware of object and arises with the object and because of the object. It knows what this first one is doing, knows its whereabouts object and behaviour. This consciousness is called watching mind, or one step up mind. Once an object hits the field of awareness the noting mind is automatically there. The watching mind is watching, knowing what the noting mind is doing or experiencing. Do not try to make our meditation experience better but be with whatever is happening completely. That is the most important aspect of meditation.”

When practicing this method, we experience there is a pair of an object and a knowing of it, there is no “I” there. We recognize that this knowing is not an I and that it is unstable. At first, it is very hard to see that it is not I who is ‘thinking’, ‘paining’, ‘wanting’, ‘planning’, and ‘feeling angry. So most people don’t know the knowing mind and very rarely they might get to the point where they can see the knowing mind that is aware of the object. The only way to go beyond this kind of understanding is to experience that knowing or noting mind as object. Only when we practice contemplation of mind can we clearly see that another knowing mind arises and becomes aware of the noting mind as its object. And yet another knowing mind arises and is aware of all of the above, and so on.

Bhikkhu Khemavamsa gave an example of how to apply this method in daily life:

“For example when we hear something and try to label: This is a ‘dog bark.’ To come to this conclusion we need a very complicated process in the mind. First, we hear the sound and recall from the past

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32 Bhikkhu Khemavamsa, BDEAI, Contemplation of the Mind, p.34
similar sounds that we heard, we put the two together, then the mind works very fast like a computer.

This is the same as that, and then we recall what it was called in the past, and we remember that, that was a dog barking in the past and we bring that past to the present: This sound is a “dog barking”. We go through four different processes, four steps, in order to get to that.

In this meditation we stop at the first step, no more.

Even to name something we go through many, many steps like when we hear one word, if the sound is one syllable we go four full steps, if it has two syllables we go though more than four, maybe six or eight sometimes and if the sound has three or four syllables we have to go through many-many steps to get to the conclusion. The mind works very fast very hard. In this meditation practice we stop all that process we stay with the first step.”

4.3.5. Contemplation of Mind Objects (Dhammānupassanā)

There are five groups of dhammas that can be used as objects of meditation in this method:

- Five Hindrances: mental states that lead one astray, namely sense-desire, anger, sloth-and-torpor, worry and flurry, skeptical doubt.
- Five Aggregates of Clinging: an analysis of all phenomena into five constituents to dispel the idea of a self-entity. The five aggregates are form, feeling, perception, mental-formations, and consciousness.
- Six External and Six Internal Sense- Bases

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33 Bhikkhu Khemavamsa, op.cit., p.22
All consciousness arises through one or the other of these doors:

- eye and form
- ear and sound
- nose and odour
- tongue and flavour
- body and touch
- mind and idea.

- Seven factors of Enlightenment: Investigation of Dhammas, Energy, Rapture (Joy), Mindfulness, Tranquillity, Concentration, and Equanimity.

- Four Noble Truths
  - The Noble Truth of Suffering: birth, sickness, old age, death, not getting what we want, in brief, the Five Aggregates of Clinging
  - The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering: craving
  - The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering: extinction of craving, *Nibbāna*
  - The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering: the eightfold path; right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

Man is always trying to gain wealth, and to enjoy sensual pleasures. Therefore, sensual desires arise perpetually in them. But, gratification of sensual desires is like drinking salty water; the more one drinks it, the thirstier he becomes. Passionate delight and craving arises again and again and man always has to be struggling in order to gratify
them. Craving arises for objects that are cognized by the five sense and doors; and this arising of craving and lust, floods or whirlpools of sensual desire pulls beings down to inferior existences. Sensual desire arises and becomes a hindrance that bars the way to the attainment of magga and phala. When mind is accompanied by sensual desire, magga, phala, and nibbāna cannot be attained. Why? It is because mind is overwhelmed by desire to enjoy sensual pleasures and is attached to those objects. There are six types of consciousnesses; seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking; at the six sense doors, viz. eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. Perceiving objects to be desirable, attachment for the five sense-objects arises.

If Dhammānupassanā is to be practised, when liking, desire, or craving arises with the arising of any of the six consciousnesses cognizing corresponding objects, it is to be known that there is; (appearing or arising of consciousness). When it is thus known, the passing away will also be known (passing away or disappearance of the consciousness that has arisen). When evil mind arises in oneself, one knows it is there, knows its arising. If it is thus known, the passing away will be known. “The arising of craving or clinging (that makes one attached to the object of desire or aversion), and kamma is samudaya sacca (the truth of the cause of suffering). Mind that arises associated with desire, lust, and aversion is dukkha sacca (the truth of suffering). When there is cessation or freedom from lust, desire, anger, and delusion; it is cessation of suffering; this is nirodha sacca (the truth of the cessation of suffering). The mind that is aware of the dhamma accordingly is magga sacca (the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering). There is peace and calm, there is no sensual desire, lust, anger, and
delusion. One knows how much sensual desire and lust remains (in oneself).”

4.3.6. Preliminary concentration meditations

There are, however, cases where these defilements are very stubborn. When defilements are very thick, we may have to tackle it with more seriousness. Take for example, people who are very troubled by certain problems. These problems are very nagging and if not taken care of, they may become psychological problems. Usually, it will not happen but if it does, we have to take special care. That is why it is recommended that in the beginning of the sitting meditation, one may do one or more of what we call the preliminary concentration meditations.

The four preliminary concentration meditations are firstly, *Buddhānusati*, the recollection on the virtues of the Buddha. This helps to overcome fear, skeptical doubts and instill confidence. Secondly, meditation on loving-kindness. This helps to overcome anger and ill will and to establish a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere around one’s sphere of meditation. Thirdly, meditation on impurities for those who have strong lustful tendencies or desires. Fourthly, meditation on death to overcome anxiety, laziness and complacency. Included in this category may be things like meditation on *Kamma* to overcome anxiety, fear, the loss of dear ones, sadness and so forth.

4.3.6.a. Recollection on the virtues of the Buddha (*Buddhānusati*)

Contemplation on the virtues of the Buddha is one which directly eradicates fear and downheartedness. One can recollect the virtues of the

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Buddha either in brief, or in detail. The brief recollection of the Buddha’s virtues can be performed with the chanting “Namo tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa” which means “Homage to the Exalted One, the Perfect One, and the perfectly Enlightened One”. “This chanting proclaims the significance of the Buddha’s virtues. In this chanting, it is apparent that three mains of His virtues appear. The first one is His great mercifullness which is revealed by the word, ”Bhagavato”, meaning that he is the analyzer of the Dhamma. The Buddha exercised extreme compassion when he analyzed the Dhamma for the benefit of worldly beings so that they could reach proper understanding. Otherwise they would have remained ignorant and would not have understood the Dhamma. The second is His Purification, which comes from the word, ”Arahato”, meaning that He is an Arahant who is far from defilements. The third one is His supreme wisdom, which appears in the word, ”Sammāsambuddhassa”, meaning that He is fully self-enlightened. In other words, He does not have any teacher; all His knowledge is a result of His self-enlightenment.”35

The Buddha possesses these three great virtues perfectly. Anyone who steadily and frequently reminds himself that ”Blessed is the Buddha who possesses the qualities of mercifulness, Purification, and supreme wisdom” will in turn be blessed with delight and tranquillity.

To recollect the Buddha’s virtues in detail, one should recall all nine virtues of the Buddha. These virtues are:

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1. *Itipi Arahaṃ* - Lord Buddha is Saintly pure,
2. *Itipi Sammāsambuddho* - Lord Buddha is fully self-enlightened,
3. *Itipi Vijjācarana-sampanno* - Lord Buddha is perfect in knowledge and conduct,
4. *Itipi Sugato* - Lord Buddha is well-fared,
5. *Itipi Lokavidu* - Lord Buddha is the knower of all worlds,
6. *Itipi Anuttaro Purisādammasārathi* - Lord Buddha is the unexcelled trainer of capable beings
7. *Itipi Satthā-devamanussanaṃ* - Lord Buddha is the teacher of devas and men,
8. *Itipi Buddhho* - Lord Buddha is fully awakened,
9. *Itipi Bhagavā* - Lord Buddha is the exalted sage.

One constantly repeats *Itipi Arahaṃ*, Lord Buddha is Saintly pure, *Itipi Sammāsambuddho*, Lord Buddha is fully self-enlightened and so on until *Itipi Bhagavā*, Lord Buddha is the exalted sage. When the meditator can remember the meaning of each item, he or she may just recite the Pāḷi words.

The Buddha is our benefactor, since after knowing the *Dhamma*, He taught people the way to dissipate sufferings. Thus, He should be highly respected so that we may be endowed with strong faith. Therefore, recollecting His virtues, the mind that used to be downhearted and in deep despair will become encouraged and will not be discouraged any longer.

4.3.6.b. Meditation on loving-kindness (*Mettabhāvana*)

Loving-kindness (*metta*) is a kind of love, i.e., love without attachment, craving or lust. It is a wholesome and genuine desire for the
well-being of all beings including ourselves. So when we practice loving-kindness and wish for our own happiness, saying, “May I be well, happy and peaceful”, this should not be interpreted as selfishness because, in order to send out thoughts of loving-kindness to others, we have to generate these thoughts first in ourselves. In addition, when we send thoughts to ourselves, we can take ourselves as an example. That means, when we say, “May I be well, happy, and peaceful,” we think, “Just as I want to be well, happy and peaceful, so do all other beings. So may they also be well, happy and peaceful.” To be able to practice loving-kindness towards other beings, we first have to practice loving kindness towards ourselves. Then we send our thoughts to other beings. We can send these thoughts in different ways. We can send thoughts to all beings by location. We can send loving-kindness to all beings in this house. By “all beings” we mean not only human beings, but also animals, insects, etc. Then we send loving-kindness to all beings in this area, in this city, in this county, in this state, in this country, in this world, in this universe, and last, to all beings in general. When we say the sentences to ourselves, please, mean them and try to see and visualize the beings we mention as really well, happy, and peaceful, and our thoughts of loving-kindness reaching them, touching them, embracing them and making them really well, happy, and peaceful. It will take about fifteen minutes. When practicing forgiveness, we can fold our hands up, and say,

“If by deed, speech or thought,
Foolishly I have done wrong,
May all forgive me honored ones,
Who are in wisdom and compassion strong.
I freely forgive anyone
who may have hurt or injured me.
I freely forgive myself.”

Now we can practice loving-kindness meditation. When practicing loving-kindness meditation, repeat the following sentences silently to ourselves, about ten times each.

May I be well, happy, and peaceful.
May all beings in this house be well, happy, and peaceful.
May all beings in this area be well, happy, and peaceful.
May all beings in this city be well, happy, and peaceful.
May all beings in this county be well, happy, and peaceful.
May all beings in this state be well, happy, and peaceful.
May all beings in this country be well, happy, and peaceful.
May all beings in this world be well, happy, and peaceful.
May all beings in this universe be well, happy, and peaceful.
May all beings be well, happy, and peaceful.
May suffering ones be suffering free and the fear-struck fearless be.
May the grieving shed all grief, and all beings find relief.

We can radiate loving-kindness to all beings by simply thinking and wishing in our mind: “May all beings be happy. May they be free from harm and danger. May they be free from mental suffering. May they be free from physical suffering. May they take care of themselves happily.” It doesn’t take long to mentally recite these lines; it takes a minute or less to repeat a few rounds of these lines. Developing loving-kindness is simply the radiating of such good wishes. As we fill our mind with such wholesome thoughts and suffuse the world with love, we’ll find a gradual change coming over us. We’ll find that we’ll be happier, get
angry less often, and have more goodwill towards others. Eventually the goodwill that we have for others will be translated into words and deeds. How can it be otherwise if we are genuinely cultivating loving-kindness, if we are sincerely wishing well for others?

As we transform ourselves in this way, we’ll find that people also change in their attitude towards us. They become more friendly and well-disposed towards us. Even animals may show their friendliness and heavenly beings, too, it is said, will protect those who are kind and virtuous. As our loving-kindness develops we’ll find that we don’t want to hate anybody, that we don’t subscribe to hatred any more. No matter what, we’ll believe that love is the answer, not hate, not anger. Consequently we’ll be able to forgive easily, we won’t keep or nurse grudges, and we won’t seek revenge.

To sum up, mettabhāvana is an effective means:

1. to overcome anger as it is the opposite of these violent and destructive mental states,
2. to build up the required concentration base for the development of insight, because with metta, our mind concentrates rapidly,
3. for a healthy relationship with every living being – so important for a happy family, society and the world.\(^{36}\)

From this we can see that mettabhāvana is something that should be practised to some degree by everyone. Without it one not only tends to fail in social and personal relationships but is also at a great disadvantage when involved in spiritual practice.

\(^{36}\) Ven. Sujiva, *Loving-kindness Meditation*, BEDAI, p.6
4.3.6.c. *Recollection on the repulsiveness of the body (Asubha)*

This meditation theme, *Asubha*, eradicates lust (*rāga*). In general, this is for laymen who become overpowered by lust, thus making themselves unhappy and far from peaceful. The Buddha advises us to practice this meditation theme, recollection on the repulsiveness of the body, to banish the lustful forms of mental hindrance.

In fact, the human body is full of manifold impurities. For example, the hair on the head, the body hair, the nails, the teeth, the skin, etc. are all dirty, unclean, and repulsive. “The body is like an unwashed toilet. If one is ten years old, then one is like a ten-year-old unwashed toilet. If one is twenty years old, then one is like a twenty-year-old toilet that has never been cleaned.”

The body is the abode for impurities and remains. It is a cemetery for the corpses of pigs, ducks, chickens, and other animals that one has eaten. It is a shelter for various diseases caused by the germs that reside in the body. These diseases use the body as their birthplace, their place of procreation, and their place of death. These diseases (called worms by monks) breed, decay, and die inside our bodies.

Furthermore, the body is a moving skeleton. If we reverse the internal organs to the outside of our body, then crows and dogs will certainly chase after us to eat our meat, organs, blood, and so on. One who constantly reminds himself of the repulsiveness of the body as described above will be able to destroy one’s lustful desire for the body.

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37 Ven. Phra Tepvisuddhikavi, Ibid.
4.3.6.d. Mindfulness of death (Maranasati)

This meditation theme, Maranasati, is a means to free the restless mind caught in a tangle of thoughts and to prevent one from being careless in life. If one practices being mindful of death, then this will cause one to make haste in doing good. One should recall,”I am surely going to die someday, probably before reaching an old age. However, should I remain alive until old age, then I am still sure to die soon afterwards.” Or, one may chant the words, “maranam, maranam or death, death”. This will serve to remind us that we must certainly die someday.

Having seen others die before us, we know for sure that we must die. At present, people are dying every moment and more will die at each and every moment of the future. We should consider the following words

“All beings are dying now,
Many beings have already died,
and all beings will die.
We also will die like this.
There is no doubt that we must die.)

Death should be regarded as the end of everything that we possess in our lives. We cannot take loved ones or treasured, worldly belongings with us. We have to leave all that we have on earth. Even our own bodies must be left behind. We can take with us only our merit or evil, which we have accumulated. When death comes, no one can delay it. We cannot
ask the death master (*maccu-raja*) to wait while we complete whatever task we are engaged in. Nor will we receive additional time to advise others who will take over our tasks once we have departed.

“Death is all-powerful. We can never know what diseases or *karma* will bring to us, nor can we know the time we will die. So the Buddha regularly exhorted, ”Make haste in doing good”. The way we practice for mind development can be regarded as an attempt to do good. So do not wait to do good since life is impermanent.”

Thus contemplating death, the restless mind will become calm and will be disillusioned with false thoughts and ideas about life and death. In order to get the best results from being mindful of death, it is advised that the following three factors be considered:

1. Maintaining mindfulness during recollections of death (keeping the mind fully alert),
2. Having sense of urgency about death’s inevitability,
3. Possessing a clear understanding (*ñāna*) that one is sure to die.

If the three factors are combined, then restlessness will be calmed, one will not be afraid of death, and one will make haste in doing good. Therefore this meditation theme is also a protector of the mind.

In short, all four meditation themes should be recollected both day and night. These are called Four Kinds of Protective Meditation (*Caturarakka*) because if practising, the meditator will be protected by their power, just like being protected by powerful deities. These four

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38 Ven. Phra Tepvisuddhikavi, Ibid.
protectors will prevent one from staying in wicked places, from going astray, and from being in trouble.

Therefore, one who recollects these four protectors daily will create a holy guardian within oneself. One’s mind will be well-cultured, serene, strong, and distant from the perils of retribution and danger. One will receive the benefits of one’s good conduct and it will be worthwhile to be one who was born a human in Buddhism. The Dhamma, proclaimed by the Lord Buddha, protects those who practice in making them happy and free from suffering. So they can progress in their lives as a result of their righteous conduct.

One must not underestimate the power of these preliminary meditations even though they are recommended to be done only in the initial five or ten minutes of a meditation sitting. When done properly, it can hold the mind. The restless mind is actually only at a certain level of activity. If we can just hold the mind, make it still, and do its work long enough, then all those thinking, restlessness and hindrances will be put aside.

4.4. The process of eradicating anusayas

The Visuddhimagga\textsuperscript{39} differentiates the three levels of abandoning of defilements:

1. \textit{Tadāṅga-pahāna}: overcoming by the opposite. Here, overcoming by the opposite refers to the overcoming of the wrong of transgressions (\textit{vītikkama kilesa}) by good morality (\textit{sīla}). This removal or overcoming is just momentary, just by substitution. Next moment they may come back. It is of a very

\textsuperscript{39} Vsm. I. 12-13
short duration. That means one abandons the unwholesome mental states by substituting them with the wholesome mental states. When there is wholesome mental state there cannot be any unwholesome mental state. You put wholesome mental states in the place and so unwholesome mental states do not get a chance to arise. That is called abandonment by substitution.”

2. *Vikkhambhana-pahāna*: overcoming by repression, refers to the subduing of the hindrances and so on (*pariyutthāna kilesa*) by suppression, by preventing their arising by means of concentration of the degree of access concentration and attainment concentration (*jhāna*), just as a pot thrown into moss-clad water pushes the moss aside.

“When you push something away it may stay there for sometime, it may not come back quickly, like plants in the water. If you push them away they may stay away for some time, but then very slowly they may come back. That kind of removing or abandonment is called “temporary abandonment or removing”, or removal by pushing away. When a person gets *jhāna*, or experiences *jhāna*, he/she is able to push these mental defilements away for some time. They may not come to his/her mind for the whole day or maybe a week or a month, but in this case too they can come back.”

3. *Samuccheda-pahāna*: overcoming by destruction, refers to the abandoning of the groups of defilements which originate in the succession of *cittas* of someone who develops the Path and which are completely eradicated by the four supramundane Paths so that they cannot arise anymore.

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Venerable Sayadaw U Silānanda, *The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, (A Summary)*, A Talk given at the Buddha Sāsana Yeikthā Severn Bridge, Ontario, Canada
When the jhānas are developed, the mind is so purified, that it resembles a polished mirror, where everything is clearly reflected in true perspective. Still, there is not complete freedom from unwholesome thoughts, for, by concentration, the evil tendencies are only temporarily inhibited. They may rise to the surface at quite unexpected moments. Discipline regulates words and deeds; concentration controls the mind; but it is Insight (paññā) that enables the aspirant to Sainthood to eradicate wholly the defilements inhibited by samādhi.

“It is like you cut the root of a tree and it never grows back. So the total removal or removal once and for all is called removal by cutting off and that is achieved at the moment of enlightenment. The mental defilement eradicated at the moment of enlightenment never comes back to that person.”

An Arahant has eradicated all mental defilements. He has no attachment, no anger, no pride, no jealousy and other unwholesome mental states. Even though they are provoked Arahants will not get angry. Even though they may see a very, very attractive and beautiful object, they will not feel any attachment or desire for that object. Those are the persons who have eradicated mental defilements by totally cutting them off.

In order to eradicate anusayas, one needs to practise insight meditation (vipassanā) to develop the Path-wisdom (Maggāñāna). This can be done alone or combined with serenity meditation (samatha) as described in the Aṅguttara Nikāya:

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41 Venerable Sayadaw U Silānanda, op.cit.
“Friends, any bhikkhu or bhikkhuni who declares the attainment of Arahantship in my presence has always arrived there by four paths or by one of them. What four? Here, friends, a bhikkhu develops insight preceded by serenity. While he is developing insight preceded by serenity the path is born in him. He cultivates, develops, repeats that path. As he does so his fetters are abandoned and his inherent tendencies (anusayas) are brought to an end. Again, friends, a bhikkhu develops serenity preceded by insight … He develops serenity and insight yoked equally. Again, friends, a bhikkhu’s mind is seized by agitation about highest states. When that consciousness settles down internally, becomes steady, unified and concentrated, then the path is born in him … his inherent tendencies are brought to an end”\(^{42}\)

The Path-wisdom is different from mundane wisdom that arises in the three-planed moral consciousness (lokiya kusala citta) in that one heaps up the saṁsāra while the other demolishes it, as explained in the Commentary of the Dhammasaṅganī:

“When one man having heaped up a stockade eighteen cubits high, another man taking a large hammer were to go on knocking down and demolishing what had been heaped up. So it sets about pulling down and demolishing decease and rebirth heaped up by the three-planed moral consciousness, by bringing about a deficiency in the causes thereof; hence it is “leading to dispersion for the putting away of wrong views.”\(^{43}\)

The chief object of Insight is to understand things as they truly are, which means to see the three characteristics (tilakkhaṇa) of all conditioned phenomena, namely anicca, dukkha and anatta.

\(^{42}\) A. II. 157
\(^{43}\) Exp. 290
Anicca, or impermanence is the fleeting nature of both mind and matter. Changeableness is a characteristic of everything that is conditioned. All conditioned things are constantly changing, not remaining static for two consecutive moments. Mind, in fact, changes even faster than matter. Normally matter endures only for seventeen thought-moments. Commentators state that, during the time occupied by a flash of lightning, billions of thought-moments may arise.

Dukkha means suffering. All conditioned things are subject to suffering. Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering. Union with the unpleasant is suffering. Separation from the pleasant is suffering. Not to get what one desires is suffering. In brief, the five aggregates of attachment are suffering.

Anattā or Soullessness is the crux of Buddhism. As there is no permanent entity in matter, so also there is no unchanging entity in mind conceived as an ‘ego’ or ‘soul’. In everything mundane and supramundane, conditioned and non-conditioned, there is no permanent soul. Hence the Buddha in the Dhammapada stated “sabbe dhammā anattā” – ‘all dhammas are soulless’. With regard to anicca and dukkha the Buddha said ‘sankhārā’ - conditioned things’. With regard to anattā, the Buddha employed the term dhammā to include supramundane unconditioned Nibbāna as well.44

The Vipassanā practitioner does not usually meditate on all these three characteristics. Of them, he takes only that which appeals to him most. Deliverance, gained by meditating on one of them, is named accordingly.

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44 Bhikkhu Bodhi, CMA
It is said in the *Aṭṭhasāliṇī*, “Of the three Paths, the Path of one emerging by means of impermanence (*anicca*) is the Signless (*animmita*); that of one emerging by means of ill (*dukkha*) is the Undesired (*appanihita*); that of one emerging by means of soullessness (*anatta*) is the Empty (*suññata*).” The Commentary continues to explain:

“And whoso discerns the three characteristics as impermanence, ill, soullessness, to him the five aggregates become like a corpse tied to his neck. Knowledge, having the complexes as its object, emerges from them. So a *bhikkhu*, desirous of buying a bowl, might see one brought by a bowl-merchant, and glad and delighted would think, “I will take it.” On examining it, he might see holes, whereupon he loses all attachment, not for the holes, but for the bowl. Similarly, noting the three characteristics [the student] has no further attachment for conditioned things. He transcends any such thing by means of knowledge, having such thing as object.”

The Commentary gave another example to illustrate the insight of a *bhikkhu* of sharp insight and great understanding. “As if folk were to offer a man aching with hunger a bowl full of food of divers excellent tastes and put a lump of ordure in the middle. And he were to scrape the curry with his hand, and seeing the lump were to ask, “What is this?” and on being told, would not have any inclination for the food or the bowl, saying, ‘Fie! Fie! Take it away,’” so should the application of this simile be understood. As the time of rejoicing on seeing the bowl full of food, so is the time when the *bhikkhu*, then a foolish average man, grasps the five aggregates as “I am the five aggregates; mine are they.”

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45 Exp., p.305
46 Ibid.
As the time of seeing the lump of ordure, so is the time of noting the three characteristics. As the time of having no inclination for the food or the bowl is the time when the bhikkhu of sharp insight and great understanding transcends at one stroke the five aggregates, saying, “Whatever has the nature of coming to be has the nature of passing away.”

4.5. The stages of eradicating anusayas

In the exercises on mental culture pertaining to Insight, the meditator will pass through the seven stages of Purification.

4.5.1. The seven stages of Purification

1. Purification of Virtue (Sīlavisuddhi)

Purification of Virtue consists in understanding and maintaining four types of restraint: (1) observing the precepts one has undertaken and protecting them like one’s very life; (2) guarding the six sense-doors without allowing defilements to arise; (3) maintaining a righteous livelihood; and (4) making use of one’s requisites of life with wise reflection.

2. Purification of Mind (Cittavisuddhi)

There are three kinds of concentration qualifying as Purification of Mind: access concentration (upacāra-samādhi), absorption concentration (appanā-samādhi), and momentary concentration (khaṇika-samādhi). The first two are achieved through the vehicle of serenity (samatha), the last through the vehicle of insight (vipassanā).

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47 Exp., p.306.
3. Purification of views (Diṭṭhīvisuddhi)

This purification consists in arousing insight into mind-and-matter (nāmarūpa), using the meditation subject as a basis. Here the aspect “matter” (rūpa) covers the physical side of existence, the aggregate of material form. The aspect “mind” (nāma) covers the mental side of existence, the four mental aggregates of feeling. Purification of Views is the understanding of mind and matter with respect to their characteristics (lakkhaṇa), function (rasa), mode of appearance (padaṭṭhāna), and proximate cause (paccuppaṭṭhāna).

4. Purification of Overcoming Doubts (Kankhāvitaranavisuddhi)

To gain freedom from all doubts concerning the nature and pattern of existence, it is necessary to understand the law of cause and effect, clearly revealed to the world by the Buddha. This understanding is called the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition (paccayapariggahañāṇa). With the maturing of this knowledge the Purification by Overcoming Doubt is brought to completion. Thus the second knowledge is obtained in the process of reaching the fourth purification. This knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition is also known as “knowledge of things-as-they-are” (vathābhūta-ñāṇa), “right vision” (sammādassana) and “knowledge of relatedness of phenomena” (dhamma-ṭṭhitiñāṇa).

5. Purification of Vision in discerning the Path and Non-Path (Maggāmaggañāṇṇadassanavisuddhi)

The understanding of the distinction between the direct path and its counterfeit, the misleading path, is referred to as Purification by
Knowledge and Vision of What is Path and Not-Path. This purification involves understanding that attachment to the ten imperfections of insight (*upakkilesa*) is the not-path, and that attending to the process of observation (i.e. mental noting) proper to the way of insight, is the path. It is so named because it purifies the person who attains it of the misconception that the not-path is the path.

6. Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way (*Patipadaññā†ñadassanavisuddhi*)

The “way” signifies the practice or the process of arriving at the goal. The understanding, knowledge, or illumination relating to the process of arrival is the Knowledge and Vision of the Way. The purification or elimination of defilements by means of that knowledge is Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way. It is at this point that there begins to unfold the series of full-fledged insight knowledges which will climax in the attainment of the supramundane paths. Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way comprises eight stages of knowledge.

7. Purification by Knowledge and Vision (*Ñañadassanavisuddhi*) is the seventh and final stage. This purification consists in the knowledge of the four supramundane paths.

Purification of Vision in discerning what is the Path and what is not the Path, is the determining of characteristics of Path and not Path by understanding an aura etc., as inimical impediments of insight. Getting rid of these inimical impediments, the meditator reflects on the three Characteristics. Now to him, starting from the knowledge of arising and passing away, and extending up to the knowledge of adaptation, there arise in one continuous stream of contemplation, nine kinds of Insight. By
Purification of Vision that discerns the method is meant these nine kinds of knowledge. There are ten kinds of Insight:

1. Investigating knowledge (*Sammasanañāṇam*)
2. Knowledge with regard to the arising and passing away (of conditioned things) (*Udayavyayañāṇam*)
3. Knowledge with regard to the dissolution (of things), (*Bhangāṇāṇaḥ*)
4. Knowledge (of dissolving things) as fearful (*Bhayāṇāṇaḥ*)
5. Knowledge of (fearful) things as baneful (*ādīnavañāṇaḥ*)
6. Knowledge of (baneful) things as disgusting (*Nibbidāṇāṇaḥ*)
7. Knowledge as regards the wish to escape from them (*Muñcitukamytatāṇaḥ*)
8. Knowledge of reflecting contemplation (*Patisaṅkhāṇaḥ*)
9. Knowledge of equanimity towards conditioned things (*Samkhārupekkhāṇaḥ*)
10. Knowledge of adaptation (*Anulomanāṇaḥ*)

The thought-process of the meditator attaining the path is described in the *Abhidhammaṭṭhasaṅgaha* as follows:

“When one practices contemplation, owing to the ripening of insight (he feels) ‘Now the development (of the path) will arise’. Thereupon arresting the life-continuum, arises mind-door consciousness, followed by two or three (moments of) insight consciousness having for their object any of the Characteristics such as impermanence etc. They are termed ‘preliminary’, ‘proximate’, and ‘adaptation’ (moments).
That knowledge of equanimity towards conditioned things, together with knowledge that conforms (to the truths), when perfected, is also termed ‘Insight of emergence leading to the Path.’

There after the gotrabhū-consciousness, having Nibbāna as its object occurs, overcoming the lineage of the worldlings, and evolving the lineage of the Ariyas.

Thus, the thought-process of a Stream-Winner: manodvārāvajjana - parikamma - upacāra - anuloma - gotrabhū - magga - phala - phala – bhavaṅga.

Immediately after that consciousness, the Path (of the Stream-Winner), realizing the Truth of suffering, eradicating the Truth of its cause, realizing the Truth of its cessation, and developing the Truth of the Way to its cessation, descends into the (supramundane) appanā thought-process.

After that Path-consciousness two or three moments of Fruit-consciousness arise and subside into the life-continuum. Then, arresting the life-continuum, the knowledge of reflection occurs.

The wise man reflects on the Path, Fruit, Nibbāna, defilements destroyed, and either reflects or does not reflect on the remaining defilements.

There is an illustration from the Aṭṭhasālinī about the thought-process of the person who attains Magga. “A certain man who had eyes to see, went forth at night saying, “I will observe the conjunction of the stars” and looked up to see the moon, which from being covered by clouds did not appear to him. Then a wind came and dispersed the densest
clouds, another wind the lighter clouds and a third wind the thinnest of the clouds; so that he saw the moon in the sky clear of clouds and observed the conjunction of the stars. Herein, the darkness of our lower nature, dense, thick, medium, thin, covering the Truths, is like the three clouds; the three kinds of adaptation-consciousness are like the three winds; the insight of adoption is like the seeing man; Nibbāna is like the moon; the dispelling of the darkness covering the Truths by each adaptation-consciousness is like the dispersing of the three clouds one by one by the winds; the making of pure Nibbāna the object of the insight of adoption when the darkness covering the facts disperses is like the seeing by the man of the pure moon in the sky clear of clouds. As the three winds are able only to disperse the clouds covering the moon and not to see the moon, so the adaptations are able only to dispel the darkness covering the Truths, and not to make Nibbāna the object. As the man is able to see the moon, but not to disperse the clouds, so the insight of adoption is able to make Nibbāna the object, but not to dispel the darkness of our lower nature. Thus adaptation has conditioned things for its object and adoption has Nibbāna for its object.”

Indeed, the Path has only one function: to reject latent evil tendencies (anusaya). In rejecting latent tendencies one is said to emerge from the (five aggregates as) sign and to cut off their proceeding. The sign is the sign of matter, feeling, perception, mental concomitants, and consciousness; the process is the continual round of these five aggregates and is twofold: grasped at, not grasped at.

“In the case of the inherent tendencies, the inherent tendencies to false view and to uncertainty are eliminated by the first knowledge. The
inherent tendencies to greed for sense desires and to resentment are eliminated by the third knowledge. The inherent tendencies to conceit, to greed for becoming, and to ignorance are eliminated by the fourth knowledge.”

4.5.2. The modes of eradicating anusayas

Whether we say “overcoming” or “removing” or “eliminating” or whatever, actually we are avoiding or preventing them from arising. Not that they have come and then we overcome them, or we remove them after they have come. The meaning really is preventing the defilements from arising in our minds. These mental states can come, but by the practice of mindfulness we can prevent them from coming. Preventing them from arising in our mind is what is meant by overcoming them.

“When we talk about enlightenment we say, “at the moment of enlightenment” mental defilements are eradicated. What mental defilements are eradicated at that moment? The present ones, or past ones or the future ones? The past is already past, we do not have to do anything to get rid of them, and the future defilements are not here yet, so you cannot do anything about them. What of the present defilements? If they are present there can be no enlightenment. Because enlightenment is a wholesome state and those mental defilements are unwholesome states. Wholesome states and unwholesome states cannot exist together. They do not coexist. So the defilements that are said to be eradicated at the moment of enlightenment are not of the past, not of the future and not of the present. Then what defilements are eradicated?

49 Vsm., p.716
Actually, strictly speaking, those that are eradicated are not called defilements, or *kilesas* in *Pāli*. They are called latencies or *anusayas*, which means the potential to arise. What the enlightenment consciousness eradicates is that potential. That means when something is always with us we say we have that thing. Take, for example, smoking. Suppose you smoke but right now you do not. If I ask you, “Do you smoke?” you would say, “Yes, I do.” Because you smoked in the past and you will smoke in the future and you have not given up smoking. So, although you are not smoking at the very moment, you say, “Yes, I smoke.”

In the same way, now right at this moment, I hope I have no mental defilements in my mind and you have no mental defilements in your mind. But after the talk you go out and you step on something sharp or someone pushes you and you get angry and thus the mental defilement comes when there are the conditions for them. So we say we have mental defilements. I have mental defilements, you have mental defilements, but not right at this moment. So, that “liability to arise” is what is eradicated by enlightenment.”

The mental defilements that are said to be eradicated at the moment of enlightenment are actually nothing but that ability or liability to come up. When we see things clearly there is no chance for these mental defilements to come into the mind. In this way, *Vipassanā* or mindfulness practice removes latent tendencies of mental defilements.

The *Visuddhimagga* reasons about the act of abandoning as follows:

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50 Sayadaw U Silānanda, Ibid.
“Do these knowledges abandon these states when they are past, or when they are future, or when they are present? What is the position here? For, firstly, if they are said to abandon them when past or future, it follows that the effort is fruitless. Why? Because what has to be abandoned is non-existent. Then if it is when they are present, it is likewise fruitless because the things to be abandoned exist simultaneously with the effort, and it follows that there is development of a path that has defilement, or it follows that defilements are dissociated from consciousness though there is no such thing as a present defilement dissociated from consciousness.”51

The text continues to reject the idea that there may be some mental defilements that lie separately, dissociated from consciousness:

“Or it follows that there is dissociation of defilements from consciousness, like that of formations according to those who assert that formations exist dissociated from consciousness. He said, ‘there is no such thing as a present defilement dissociated from consciousness’ in order to show that that is merely the opinion of those who make the assertion. For it is when immaterial states are actually occurring by their having a single basis and being included in the three instants that they are present; so how could that be dissociated from consciousness? Consequently there is no dissociation from consciousness here”52

The following method of reasoning is very typical for the Abhidhamma commentarial texts:

51 Vsm. p.716
52 Ibid.
“Then the objection is put in this way: “If he abandons past defilements, he destroys what has already been destroyed, causes to cease what has already ceased, causes to vanish what has already vanished, causes to subside what has already subsided. What is past, which is non-existent, that he abandons.” But this is denied in this way: “He does not abandon past defilements.” Then the objection is put in this way: “If he abandons future defilements, he abandons what has not been born, he abandons what has not been generated, he abandons what has not arisen, he abandons what has not become manifest. What is future, which is non-existent, that he abandons.” But this is denied in this way: “He does not abandon future defilements.” Then the objection is put in this way: “If he abandons present defilements, then though inflamed with greed he abandons greed, though corrupted with hate he abandons hate, though deluded he abandons delusion, though shackled he abandons conceit, though misconceiving he abandons false view, though distracted he abandons agitation, though not having made up his mind he abandons uncertainty, though not having inveterate habits he abandons inherent tendency, dark and bright states occur coupled together, and there is development of a path that has defilement.” But this is all denied in this way: “He does not abandon past defilements, he does not abandon future defilements, he does not abandon present defilements.” Finally it is asked: “Then there is no path development, there is no realization of fruition, there is no abandoning of defilements, there is no penetration to the Dhamma (convergence of states)?” Then it is claimed: “There is path development … there is penetration to the Dhamma (convergence of states).”
And when it is asked: “In what way?” this is said: “Suppose there were a young tree with unborn fruit, and a man cut its root, then the unborn fruits of the tree would remain unborn and not come to be born, remain ungenerated and not come to be generated, remain unarisen and not come to be arisen, remain unmanifested and not come to be manifested. So too, arising is a cause, arising is a condition, for the generation of defilements. Seeing danger in defilements, consciousness enters into non-arising. With consciousness’s entering into non-arising the defilements that would be generated with arising as their condition remain unborn and do not come to be born … remain unmanifested and do not come to be manifested. So with the cessation of the cause there is the cessation of suffering. Occurrence is a cause … The sign is a cause … Accumulation is a cause, accumulation is a condition, for the generation of defilements. Seeing danger in accumulation, consciousness enters into non-accumulation. With consciousness’s entering into non-accumulation the defilements that would be generated with accumulation as their condition remain unborn and do not come to be born … remain unmanifested and do not come to be manifested. So, with the cessation of the cause there is cessation of suffering. So there is path development, there is realization of fruition, there is abandoning of defilements, and there is penetrating to the Dhamma”\(^53\)

When a meditator has abandoned all the latent tendencies of mental defilements, he is said to have finished his holy duty and attained his summum bonum, for which he has made effort:

“When, for a monk, the obsession of sensual passion has been abandoned, its root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the

\(^53\) Vsm. p.716
conditions of development, not destined for future arising; when, for him, the obsession of resistance... the obsession of views... the obsession of uncertainty... the obsession of conceit... the obsession of passion for becoming... the obsession of ignorance has been abandoned, its root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising: this is called a monk who has cut through craving, has turned away from the fetter, and — by rightly breaking through conceit — has put an end to suffering and stress.”^54

And the state of mind when all the mental defilements have been completely uprooted is considered the most blissful:

“Blissful is the overcoming of all sense-desire.
More blissful is dwelling in complete harmlessness.
Even more blissful is solitude for one content and learned.
But highest is the bliss of uprooting this deepest conceit: “I am”!”^55

In this Chapter, the possibility, the difficulty, the method, the process and the mode of eradicating anusayas have been presented based on the Canonical and the Commentarial texts. Anyone who wants to lead a happy life, to get rid of all kinds of sufferings and to be free from the cycle of death and rebirth need to practice in this method, as declared by the Buddha, “Ekayano ayam, bhikkhave, maggo” (This is the one and only path).

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^54 A. IV. 9
^55 Ud. II. 1