Chapter IV

The Buddhist’s Approach to Extinction of

4.1. Introduction

All the teachings of the Buddha could be considered to be of therapeutic value since they basically deal with mental purification; and this implies that an elimination of defilements on every level is a pre-requisite. In *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna sutta*, the Buddha has clearly identified a salient principle of psychology, that the mind can be purified by recognizing presence of both enlightenment factors and mental defilements. The mind is looked into for the purpose of discovering the causes of mental illness which are buried in the unconscious level of mind. As admitted by advanced medical science, the practice of *bojjhaṅga*, with its holistic approach to life, could promote health if properly practiced. Development of enlightenment factors can help many practitioners regain loss of physical functioning and a greater sense of psychological well being. Thus, practice of *bojjhaṅga* is helpful in regaining lost health by a psychosomatic balance which is affected through the development of enlightenment factors.
4.2. Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*Bojjhaṅga*)

Just as a river inclines and flows towards the ocean, so the factors of enlightenment incline towards *nibbāna*.¹ The Buddha assured in many instances that the seven factors of enlightenment, when developed and cultivated, fulfill true knowledge and liberation. In order to overcome hindrances, development of seven factors of enlightenment is needed. These mental factors are developed by taking clusters of positive qualities already present, though sporadic and random, in the average mind and using them to strengthen one another each step along the way. The term “*bojjhaṅga*” is composed of “*bodhi*” and “*aṅga*”. “*Bodhi*” denotes enlightenment, to be exact insight concerned with the realization of the four noble truths. “*aṅga*” stands for factors or limbs. *Bojjhaṅga* therefore means the factors of enlightenment, of the factors for insight wisdom.

“They lead to enlightenment, *Bhikkhu*; therefore they are called factors of enlightenment.”

The factors of enlightenment can be likened to the sap that runs through the tree of enlightenment, nourishing all parts of it. The intention behind the Buddha’s presentation of the scheme of enlightenment factors is to train the disciple to arouse these factors

---

¹ ‘*satta bojjhaṅge bhāvetvā anuttaram sammāsambodhiṃ abhisambuddho ti.*’ MN I, p.83
purposely, through the exercise of one of the four predominant features (adhipati)- the will (chanda), the mind (citta), the exertion (vīrya) and the wisdom (vīmaṁsa). When these factors are strengthened and their functions are harmoniously integrated, their inherent potentials are actualized and gradually rise up to the degree of intensity needed to shatter the fetters by which one is kept in bondage to suffering. Hence, the Buddha emphasized over and over again on the idea that one “develops and cultivates” (bhāveti bahulikaroti) the factors of enlightenment.² With sati as its initial cause and foundation, the seven mental factors form a causally related sequence, the dynamics of which can be understood in practical context as follows.

Well established mindfulness paves the way to the development of investigation of Dhamma. The development of investigation of Dhamma in turn arouses the enlightenment factor of Energy. The Energy again leads to the arising of Rapture. The progress of the enlightenment factors then leads from Rapture, via Tranquility, to Concentration which culminates with the Equanimity. This perfect state of mental balance as the consummation of the enlightenment factors constitutes the climax of the insight knowledge, in which equanimity is in regard to all conditioned phenomena (saṅkhārupekkhāñāna) marks the culmination of the

² MN II, p. 371
series.\(^3\) This echoes the causal sequence is described in previous chapter, which is found elsewhere in the discourses. As each subsequent factor arises, those already arisen do not disappear but remain alongside it as its adjuncts (though rapture inevitably subsides as concentration deepens). Thus, at the mature stage of development, all seven factors are present simultaneously in varying degrees, each making its own distinctive contribution towards liberation knowledge.

In fact, the enlightenment factors exist together in each mind-moment in the practice of insight meditation. In the strictest sense, the enlightenment factors are transcendent since they become fully operative only as one reaches the point of enlightenment. As the commentarial explanation of terms suggests, this description best fits the *bojjhaṅgas* only in the advanced stages of insight and at the level of the supramundane path, then the *bojjhaṅgas* are actively eliminating the defilements and leaning towards the realization of *nibbāna*. It is only then that they can actually be described as leading to enlightenment. The discourse, however, indicate that the seven enlightenment factors can function in the development of preparatory of mundane level as well. In other words, they are to be developed if mundane concentration is to be attained. Several passages in the *Pali* text demonstrate that the enlightenment factors

\(^3\) Vsm, p. 281
can function on the level of mundane jhāna in addition to the level at the threshold of enlightenment. Earlier their function is merely preparatory.

The seven enlightenment factors play such a central role in the practice of meditation that one cannot neglect to treat them in an ordinary way. The spiral loop of the factor of enlightenment continually feeds back on itself, as the factor of Equanimity allows the factors of Mindfulness and investigation of Dhammas to gauge the success of the practice and call for adjustments where needed. According to a stock description in discourses, the enlightenment factors are to be developed successively as “being dependent on seclusion, dispassion, cessation, until they finally ripen in release”. This is precisely because “have as its final goal the removal of lust, the removal of hatred, the removal of delusion.”

The transcendent dimension of the enlightenment factors is signaled by a phrase occasionally tagged on to the well-known formula: “vast, elated, measureless, without will” (vipulam mahaggatam appamānam abyapajjham). So described, the enlightenment factors are said to be enabling one to abandon craving, kamma and thus to penetrate and destroy the whole mass of suffering. Their use in this context signifies that the enlightenment

---

4 DhA, p. 302
5 Psm, p. 148
factor is directed to Nibbāna as its goal during the preparatory stages of the path, and as its object with the attainment of the supramundane paths.

A commentary on the Majjhima Nikāya explains that the word vossagga, rendered as “relinquishment” of “release,” has the two meanings of “giving up” (pariccāga), i.e., the abandonment of defilements, and “entering into” (pakkhandana), i.e., culmination in nibbāna. On the mundane level, they play a role in the practice of jhāna. As they develop and reach transcendence, they bring the mind to “the state of aloofness of no-identification” (aṭanmayatā) which is the threshold to Enlightenment. They are developed in mutually reinforcing way, heading in the direction of enlightenment.

Several discourses state that the development of the four foundations of mindfulness fulfil the seven factors of enlightenment.\(^6\) This point is well reflected in the very definition of “satipaṭṭhāna” in the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna sutta, wherein the Buddha makes a special mention of four particular mental qualities which can be correlated to all the seven factors of enlightenment. A little thought may readily convince one that they are nothing more than a list of personal qualities which are immediately present, to at least some extent, in the average human mind. Pointing to qualities in the mind, the

\(^6\) “Cattāro kho, kuṇḍaliya, satipaṭṭhānā bhāvitā bahulikatā satta bojjhange paripūrenti ti” SN V, p.73
scheme of enlightenment factors encourages one to regard the teachings not as a teaching system in itself, but as tools for looking directly into one’s own mind-body process, where the sources and solutions to the problem of suffering lie. If one develops these beautiful mental qualities, one will inevitably come to the same realization that the Buddha and his noble disciples attained.

It is interesting to note that the practice for bojjhaṅga is not something to be left behind and discarded at some more advanced point in one’s progress. Much rather, it continues to be a relevant practice ever for an Arahant since they continue to arouse the bojjhaṅgas, not for some mysterious goal, but simply as a way of noble dwelling in the present. Discourses provide ample evidence that the Buddha still continued to engage himself in cultivating the bojjhaṅgas own after his enlightenment and advises preaching to his disciples to follow.

From empirical standpoint, the seven factors of enlightenment begin to manifest with the arrival of the knowledge of rise and fall (udayabbaya ñāṇa). The mental factors build on one another over time, strengthening one another simultaneously. As one’s practice deepens, one can come to sense how these qualities operate in one’s
mind constituting the ongoing flow of impersonal experience, with no need to imagine a permanent self.\(^7\)

4.3. **Mindfulness the Factor of Enlightenment (Satisambojjhaṅga)**

Being an extremely powerful attribute of mind, mindfulness – or *sati*, as it grows, develops all the other factors of enlightenment. Bringing along with it calm and equanimity, *sati* enhances one’s ability to investigate the nature of all phenomena. *Sati* can be called a universal quality because it helps in every human endeavor carried out both in meditative and non-meditative spheres. When strengthened, it serves as a reference and protection for one and keeps one from being too caught up in the changing circumstances of life. *Sati* is the soil out of which all kinds of wholesome states can grow. *Sati* underlies the development of all the factors of enlightenment. It is the quality of being aware of what is happening in the present moment, not allowing the mind to be forgetful. It can be simply understood to imply presence of mind, as directly opposed to absent-mindedness (*mutthasati*) which can leave opening for hindrances to invade and flood the mind. Lacking in this all-important quality of mindfulness, one cannot achieve anything worthwhile in the spiritual pursuit.

\(^7\) Vsm, p. 429
According to commentarial tradition, mindfulness has the characteristic of not wobbling i.e., the steadying of an object, the remembering and not forgetting it keeping it as immovable as a stone instead of letting it go bobbing about like a pumpkin in water. Its function is not to forget. It is manifested as guarding, or it is manifested as the state of confronting an objective field. Its proximate cause is strong perception, or its proximate cause is the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

In the discourses, the same Pāli word “sati” is used for both awareness and memory. A person who has got good mindfulness also has got a good memory, because these two things go hand in hand. Sati not only forms part of the noble eightfold path as right mindfulness, but also occupies a central position among the faculties and powers, and constitutes the first member of the enlightenment factors, in all contexts of which it covers both present moment awareness and memory. The Buddha declares that he knows of no other factor which is as powerful as mindfulness for the cultivation of wholesome states of mind and the dismising of unwholesome ones.\(^8\) Mindfulness is desirable everywhere, like a seasoning of salt in all dishes, like the prime minister in all state functions. This is

\(^8\) ‘bhāvite bahilikate anuppanā ceva akusalā dhammā nuppajjanti, uppannā ca akusalā dhammā pahiyaṁ. Uppannā ca kusalā dhammā bhīyyobhāvāya veppullāya saṁvattanti.’ AN I, p. 44
because the mind finds refuge in mindfulness and mindfulness is its protector. Without mindfulness there can be no exertion or restraint of the mind.

Sati undermines the power of unwholesome states; diminish their degree of intensity, and dissociating them from self-identification. However diverse in nature the numerous exercises which come under the heading of mindfulness may seem to be, they all have in common this one purpose, that of guarding the incipient and growing calm in one’s heart. In the list of the enlightenment factors, sati assumes the starting position. Here sati constitutes the foundation for those factors that bring about realization. The activity of sati is closely related to investigation of Dhamma, since according to the Ānāpāṇāssati sutta, the enlightenment factors arise sequentially, with investigation of Dhamma arising consequent on the presence of sati.

In Dantabhūmi sutta the cultivation of sati is compared to the taming of a wild elephant. Just as a recently captured elephant, it has to be gradually weaned of his forest habits, so too, the practice of sati can gradually overcome memories and old habit patterns unfitting to the spiritual life. Other similes compare sati to the investigation of a physician for subsequent treatment, or to the goad

---

9'hatthidammā vā assadammā vā godammā va adntā avinitā.' MN III, p.130
and ploughshare of a farmer for ground preparing work for sowing seeds. According to these similes, sati fulfils an important preparatory role for the arising of wisdom. Hence, sati is regarded as exclusively wholesome mental factor.

Another significance of sati is its stabilizing function which is illustrated by a simile of a strong post to which six stable posts in the sense it is not shaken in regard to distraction by way of the six sense doors. Due to its non-reactive feature sati is sometimes referred to as choiceness awareness. It is choiceless in the sense that with such awareness one remains impartially aware, without reacting with likes of dislikes. In numerous instances the Buddha encouraged to retain sati in regard to all sensory inputs. This guardianship role of sati in relation to sense input is alluded in those similes that declare “satipaṭṭhāna” to be the proper pasture (gocara) for a meditator and which compare sati to the gatekeeper of a town.

The continuous presence of well-established sati is indispensable for attainment of mental absorption since concentration cannot reach the level of absorption without the support of it. With the attainment of the third jhāna, sati becomes particularly prominent.¹⁰ Again, sati, due to its association with deep equanimity, gets to its peak when it reaches the fourth jhāna which

¹⁰ DhA  p. 326
is the basis of the development of supernormal powers. It is clearly because of its crucial role in fulfilling the realm of concentration, *Cūlavedalla sutta* speaks of the four foundations of mindfulness as the cause of concentration (*samādhinimitta*).\(^{11}\)

Because mindfulness is very powerful, the fact of being slightly more mindful changes the way in which one acts. Once one has had a mindful glimpse of just watching what is going on, it is very difficult to get caught up in quite the same old way, even when one is involved in the same actions again. As the Buddha mentions in *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna sutta*, one needs to identify hindrances and enlightenment factors as they are experienced, having the presence and absence in the mind. Since the means to deliverance lies in mental purification, sati becomes the crucial factor for ensuring that one keeps straight to the path of training without deviation due to the influence of hindrances. The crucial importance of sati is reflected in the Buddha’s well-known admonition that one should make an island for oneself, safe from the whirlpool of repeated birth and death, which is nothing other than the practice of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. The *Dhammapada* beautifully sums up

---

\(^{11}\) *Cittassa ekaggatā ayam samādhi, cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*  
*Samādhinittā‘* MN I, p.301
that sati is the path to the deathlessness, and the otherwise the path to death.¹²

4.4. Investigation of the Factors of Enlightenment (Dhammavicaya sambojjaṅga)

Investigation of Dhamma or states is the quality of mind that is investigating, probing, analyzing the mind-body process, not on the level of intellectual thinking, but with a silent, peaceful and equanimous mind, it is aroused in one who, being ever mindful, investigates and examines whatever occasion arises during the course of meditation with wisdom, embarking upon a full inquiry into it. Therefore, it is a synonym for the wisdom factor, that light in the mind which illuminates everything that is happening in the present moment.

According to commentary tradition, investigation of Dhamma of non-delusion has the characteristic of penetration into things according to their individual essences. Its function is to illuminate the objective filed, like a lamp. It is manifested as non-bewilderment, like a guide in a forest. According to Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, the five higher stages of purification, the three contemplations, and the ten insight knowledges fall under this particular mental factor. The application of investigation of states, one finds out the validity and

¹² ‘Appamādo amatanpadam pamādo maccuno padam’ DhpA I, p. 227
relevance of the Buddha’s teachings to experienced reality and thus energy is aroused. Though the final flowering of the higher wisdom follows after development of concentration and equanimity, some preliminary wisdom is needed to start on the path; and the factor of dhammavicaya represents both phases. To follow the practice of bojjhaṅga is a matter of practice rather than intellectual understanding, but to undertake the practice correctly it has to be properly understood.

In actual practice, there are a few features of investigation of states (dhammavicaya) which appeal to one who takes up the practice of bojjhaṅga. There are many others which follow later; they come in due course as one’s own understanding and practice of the Dhamma make them manifest. As one proceeds along the path, new sceneries are constantly opening up before one’s vision; new aspects of insight into the truth are continually unfolding and fresh experiences previously unrealized are being disclosed. While some important aspects of bojjhaṅgas can be noticed by merely intellectual appreciation of the Dhamma, others beyond ordinary human experience can only come with the progress of the practice.

In order to gain insight into the nature of the hindrances and factors of enlightenment as one tries to eliminate the former and bring the latter to full development, it is required for the meditator
to inquire into the causal functioning of both sets, to see how they arise and cease in the course of meditation. Dhammavicaya enables one to perceive the various factors that deepen meditation so that one can master them and get rid of the factors that prevent on from attaining higher levels of concentration. While concentration provides the basis on which the dhammavicaya opens up, the dhammavicaya in turn can foster concentration to the point where both issue in enlightenment.

The function of the dhammadariya is to look at events in the mind in a way that gives rise to a sense of detachment. When coupled with sufficient degree of concentration, it then turns on itself to see itself as part of a similar causal chain. This eradicates any sense of self-identification of attachment even for wholesome states so that the mind can see them simply as natural events. In order to uproot the distorted view of self, the field of experience has to be laid out in terms of “nāma” and “rūpa”, which are then methodically investigated to find out that none of them are permanent, satisfactory, can be taken as a self, singly or in combination. Hence, dhammavicaya is the insight into reality which is the only form of knowing that is skilful enough to lead to enlightenment.
4.5. Energy (Vīriya sanbojjhaṅga)

In one who investigates and examines the states of wisdom and embarks upon a full inquiry into it, tireless energy is aroused. Since Energy is a powerful factor, when it is cultivated and developed it overcomes the sloth and torpor and laziness of mind. It is a great support, an integral part of the path to freedom.

Energy is simply the mental effort to be aware, to be mindful of what is presented in the present moment. It grows as one develops the capacity to be fully engaged in the practice. According to commentarial tradition, vīriya is the state of one who is vigorous. Its characteristic is marshalling. Its function is to consolidate conscientious states. It is manifested as non-collapse. Its approximate cause is a sense of urgency. When rightly initiated, it should be regarded as the root of all attainments.

A factor that greatly supports the opening of energy in practice is exercise and care of the physical body. At certain deep stages sitting meditation can bring energy and lightness to the body. Through proper care of physical body, one can help make the body a suppler vehicle for the powerful energy practice to open up. As practice develops one must nourish mindfulness by learning to care for one’s own body and live more fully in them.

---

13 DhA p. 349
The importance of \textit{vīriya} as an aspect of the path leading realization is also exemplified in the canonical presentation of the four roads to power (\textit{iddhipāda}), one of which is \textit{vīriya}. A different form of presentation of Energy can be found in those passages in which the Buddha described his firm resolution prior to enlightenment under the Bo tree: “I will not change my posture unless realization has been attained.” In the \textit{Kayagatāsati sutta}\textsuperscript{14}, \textit{vīriya} comes up in relation to experiencing the bliss of absorption. Similarly, in a passage from the \textit{Indriya Samyutta}, this quality of diligence is combined with pleasant feelings, mental and physical. From these instances, it is clear that \textit{vīriya} has no relation to self-mortification and its concomitant physical pain. Therefore, \textit{vīriya} the factor of enlightenment can be understood as a balanced but sustained application of energy which is far removed from self-inflicted suffering in the name of higher goal.

The balanced effort needed for proper progress in spiritual path can be compared to the turning of a lute, whose strings should be neither too tight nor too loose. It is this middle path avoiding the two extremes of stagnation and excessive striving, which will enable the meditator to attain enlightenment. In the practical context of insight meditation, \textit{vīriya} or the quality of diligence (\textit{ātāpa}), has twofold implications. Firstly, if one realized that the mind has

\textsuperscript{14} SN V p. 358
wandered off, one brings it right back to its object immediately. Secondly, it means trying to be as sensitive as possible to what is going on – not just drifting in the present moment, but really trying to penetrate more and more into the subtle details of what is actually happening with the object of meditation. One has to learn about how things arise and pass away in the mind, not by simply watching them, but by actually getting involved in their arising and passing away.

To overcome hindrances, a determined effort, committing all the resources of the human mind to the task of achieving the undying goal, is required. One turns one’s utmost energy to the practice, rather than to sensual objectives. This will help one tune the mind to the right attitude and keep that attitude firmly in mind.

4.6. Rapture the Enlightenment Factor (*Pīti sambojjaṅga*)

When energy is aroused to fullest extent, mind is free from the hindrances and from every sort of restlessness, like a white cloth that is spotlessly clean. This gives rise to *pīti* the enlightenment factor which is a sense of total satisfaction marked with joyous interest in the object of meditation. It has been described as zestful joy which is independent on worldly things.\(^{15}\) The relentless application (*vīrya*) of

\(^{15}\) PsmA, p. 373
the investigation of Dhammas brings a greatly joy to the mind and
cultivated the pītī the enlightenment factor.

Pītī is a mental quality which suffuses both the body and mind.
As a wholesome quality of mind, pītī is so vital to the practice of
bojjhanā that anyone who is lacking in it cannot advance along the
path to enlightenment. Since no one can bestow on another the gift
of happiness; each one has to build it up by effort, reflection and
concentration activity. Only those who have experienced non-
worldly rapture (pītī nirāmisā) can truly understand that simplicity
and contentment are characteristics of the really happy individual.
Pītī the enlightenment factor is compared to the happy experience of
a weary walker who sits down under a tree in the shade, or the
cooling of a hot place by rain. According to the Visuddhimagga, pītī
has the characteristic of endearing. Its function is to refresh the body
and the mind. It is manifested as elation.

The man who cultivates pītī the enlightenment factor does not
get upset, confused or excited when confronted with the eight
vicissitude of the world. He endeavors to see the rise and fall of all
things conditioned, how things come into being and pass away.
When pītī the enlightenment factor is cultivated and developed, one
will see the fragility of the fragile without anxiety and restlessness.
A mind suffused with *pīti* is unshaken by loss and gain, good repute and ill repute, censure and praise, pleasure and pain and undisturbed by adversity. This frame of mind is brought about by viewing the sentient world in its proper perspective. Thus *pīti* the enlightenment factor leads one to enlightenment and deliverance from suffering. *Pīti* is spaciousness in the mind born of detachment, free of grasping or clinging or identified involvement. This intense delight is closely associated with insight knowledge and thus creates a very light and buoyant state of mind. As *pīti* the enlightenment factor arises as the mind settles down; and it helps one stay comfortably in the present moment and on the present object without the slightest tendency of deviation. Once the mind is firmly settled there, it acquires the ability to look at the object of meditation of a long period of time so that one can see the real nature of phenomena.

When *pīti* the enlightenment factor arises in the context of *sāḷābojjhaṅgas*, then one begins to experience the fruit that the practice of *bojjhaṅga* brings. One comes to understand the vast difference between worldly happiness and non-worldly happiness. Real happiness comes not through grasping or clinging to things animates or inanimate but by giving up. It is the detached attitude towards the sensory world that brings about true happiness. The discourse of four foundation of mindfulness speaks of pleasant
worldly feeling and pleasant unworldly feeling. Pleasant unworldly feeling is far superior to pleasant worldly feeling.

Whenever he reflects on the rise and fall of the Aggregates, he experiences unalloyed joy and Happiness.

To the discerning one that Reflection is deathless.

When one gets deeply concentrated in meditation, pīti becomes very strong and one’s whole energetic system is affected. A whole range of pleasant physical states and an inner sense of extreme wellbeing arise. All of this is different from the pleasurable feelings due to having a desire satisfied; it is born out of the unification of the mind as one enters present moment’s experience with strong concentration and interest. The quality of pīti is an ease and openness of mind that receives with interest every kind of circumstance. To be in touch with this factor brings a capacity to look at life with a light-hearted yet caring interest even in times of difficulty. Visuddhimagga mentions five kinds of pīti namely, minor pīti, momentary pīti, showering pīti, uplifting pīti, and pervading pīti depending on its increasing intensity. It is the fifth and final stage of pīti which is the kind associated with full absorption.
4.7. Tranquility the Enlightenment Factor (*Passadhisamboj-jhaṅga*)

When the rapture comes to fulfillment, tranquility of both body and mind is aroused.\(^{16}\) *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* explains kāyapassaddhi as tranquility of the aggregates of feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*) and mental formations (*saṅkhāra*). The mind begins to grow in calmness and alertness, characterized by a pliancy and lightness coupled with a seemingly effortless attention to the object. With the arrival of *passaddhi* the factor of enlightenment, a sense of enthusiastic interest in the practice is felt. Whenever this mental quality was present, boredom and drowsiness would be absent. Then, one begins to realize a simple but significant and fundamental aspect of the nature of the mind: both the wholesome mental states and unwholesome mental states cannot be present at the same time since they are incompatible and mutually exclusive. Any thoughts that were still present seemed to have lost much of their force and energy, such that they no longer had the power to distract the focused attention. Upon terminating the meditation session, one would experience a deep sense of peace and relaxation, which would linger on throughout the day, as long as activities were not too rushed or emotionally intense. Also, such occasions result in a

---

\(^{16}\) ‘Sā panesā pañcavidhā pīti gabbhaṃ ganhanti paripākaṃ gacchanti duvidham passaddhiṃ paripūreti kāyapassaddhiṅca cittapassaddhiṅca’ *DhA* p. 117
spontaneous and expansive flow of warm and kind feelings, which naturally leads to a deep and genuine experience of loving-kindness for all beings. One is enlightened to the fact that the practice of four sublime living is integral to the practice of Bojjhaṅga. Doubts about, and resistance to the practice of four sublime abodes dissolve. The gradual extension of loving-kindness to all beings resulted in a state of consciousness which, though brief, was blissful, expansive, and non-limiting.

Both tranquility of body and consciousness have the characteristics of quieting disturbance of the body and consciousness. Their function is to crush disturbance of the mental body and consciousness. They are manifested as inactivity and coolness of the mental body and consciousness. Culminating in concentration, pīti and passaddhi are closely associated with mental factors conveying a sense of emotional fulfillment that is seen as inherent in the spiritual state. When invested with these qualities, the mind is ready and suited to the gaining and developing of insight knowledge. Thus, they are seen as the precursor to the more advanced stages along the spiritual path.

Periodic retreats and other forms of outer stillness can powerfully nourish one’s inner tranquility. To support tranquility in practice one needs to foster a sense of stillness in the body, a
calmness of breath, and an inner ease and restfulness. Mental calmness is a quality of cultured mind that can transform one’s life. As one’s skill in meditation grows, one can learn the art of letting go and finding a calm centre in the midst of the changing world. One can learn how happiness comes from a heart at rest and not from changing outer circumstances. All of this can be discovered as a power and fruit of the practice of bojjhaṅga.

4.8. Concentration on Enlightenment Factor (Samādhi sambojhaṅga)

When both the body and mind become tranquil, the mind naturally feels pleasure (sukha) which is the immediate cause for concentration. Concentration is the ability of the mind to stay one pointed on an object, to stay steady without flickering or wavering. During the course of insight meditation, concentration gives strength and penetrating power to the mind; thus the mind is steady and one pointed on changing objects. It is this kind of concentration which in conjunction with all the other factors of enlightenment, leads to realization of the four noble truths.

---

17 Passaddhi gabbham gaṅhanti paripākam gacchanti duvidham sukham paripūreit- kāyikam cetasikaṅca Sukham gabbham gaṅhantam paripākam gacchantam tividham samādhiṁ paripūreti’
DhA p. 118
Though concentration is defined as unification or singleness of mind, not every instance of mental singleness counts as right concentration. Only through the cultivation of mind into a state of right concentration, does Dhammavicaya have the basis of stability and equanimity needed to probe into pain or pleasure without feeling threatened or allured by it. This is able to arrive at an unbiased understanding of true nature of its object. In its purity, the mind naturally takes a firm stance in a single preoccupation.

In the framework of Buddhist meditation, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness are considered themes of concentration. Concentration enables the mind to stay comfortably in the present moment, helping it attain the stability it needs for gaining insight. Secondly, because an advanced level of sensitivity is required to tune the mind to the refined pleasure of jhāna, the practice serves to increase one’s sensitivity, making one more acutely aware of even the most refined levels of stress as well. Thirdly, because the pleasure and equanimity of jhāna are more exquisite than sensory pleasures, and because they exist independently of the five senses, they can enable the mind to become less involved in sensory pleasures and less inclined to search the emotional satisfaction from them.

The fact that complete mature mastery of jhāna brings about the attainment of non-returning, the pan-ultimate level of
Enlightenment, where sensual desire is abandoned, shows the necessary role that *jhāna* plays in eradicating this particular defilement. The pleasant experience of *jhāna* can become an obstacle if treated as an end in it. *Gopakamoggalāna* sutta\(^1\) mentions that *Arahants* practice concentration both for the sake of a pleasant abiding in here and now, and for mindfulness and alertness. So it is a fact that Concentration and *Dammavicayā* are mutually supporting.

On following the commentarial tradition, some assert that *jhāna* is not necessary for any of the four levels of enlightenment and that there is a class of individuals called dry insight meditators (*sukkavipassika*) who are released through discernment based on a level of concentration is mastered only on the level of non-returning, hold that *jhāna* is necessary for the attainment of non-returning and *Arahantship*, but not for the lower levels of enlightenment. However, it should be remembered that the *jhānas* are included as components of the noble eightfold path, entering into the group of concentration. This is precisely because when the supramundane paths and fruits are attained, consciousness occurs with a degree of concentration equivalent to the four or five *jhānas*. Hence it can be drawn that the attainment of at least the first level of *jhāna* is essential for all four levels of awakening but not necessarily prior to the moment of enlightenment.

\(^1\) MN III, P.7
Since concentrated mind is not distracted by sense objects bringing the five hindrances under subjugation, jhāna can act as the basis for transcendent wisdom to arise. Wisdom is the primary tool for deliverance,\textsuperscript{19} but the penetrating wisdom it yields can only open up when the mind has been sufficiently composed and collected. According to commentarial tradition, concentration has the characteristic of non-wandering or non-distraction. Its function is to conglomerate co-nascent states as water does bath powder. It is manifested as peace. Its proximate cause is bliss.

Concentration on the enlightenment factor brings the required steadiness to the mind by unifying it with undistracted focus on a suitable object. To do so, however, the steps of concentration needs the aid of the factor of energy and the factor of mindfulness. Demanded by the task, factor of energy and factor of mindfulness provide the stability of the factor of concentration to arise. The commentators illustrate the interdependence of the three factors within the concentration group with a simple simile. Three boys who go to a park to play see a tree with flowering tops. Though they decide to gather the flowers, these are beyond the reach even of the tallest boy. Then one of them bends down and offers his back. The tall boy climbs up, but still hesitates to reach for the flowers due to fear of falling. So the third boy comes over and offers his shoulders.

\textsuperscript{19} Vsm, p. 371
for support. The first boy, standing on the back of the second boy, then leans on the shoulder of the third boy, reaches up, and gathers the flowers.$^{20}$

In this simile, the tall boy who picks the flowers represents concentration with its function of unifying the mind. But to unify the mind, concentration needs energy which is like the boy who offers his back. It also requires the stabilizing awareness provided by factor of mindfulness, which is like the boy who offers his shoulder. When factor of concentration receives this support, then empowered by energy and balanced by factor of mindfulness, fix the mind firmly on its object. Concentration is the factor of enlightenment known as one-pointed-ness, arising when the mind is steadily focused on an object. It gives the mind tremendous strength. Just as light, when concentrated in a laser has the ability to cut through steel; the concentrated mind has the ability to penetrate deeply into the process of mind and body, offering the opportunity for the wisdom to open up.

As the mind becomes more concentrated, as it becomes focused and still, one begins to penetrate through the layers of thought and see how the thoughts and emotions simply arise and pass away moment by moment. The seemingly solid experience of bodily

$^{20}$ MA II, P 360
sensations and sound and sight dissolve and one can see that, like the mind, they too are actually a process that is in constant change. The illusion of continuity that they give is called santati and is the result of the constant and rapid flow of activity. The concentrated mind is able to cut through this seemingly solid process and see its moment by moment impermanence.

3.9. Equanimity the Enlightenment Factor (Upekkhā saṁboj-jhaṅga)

Equanimity the enlightenment factor is a kind of impartially towards all phenomena, treating all phenomena equally. It is acceptance and receptivity towards all objects. It is not cold indifference, but rather a strong balance of mind. It is this factor of equanimity which keeps everything in balance, in perfect poise. According to commentarial tradition, uppekkhā has the characteristic of conveying consciousness and mental factors evenly. Its function is to prevent deficiency and excess, or to inhibit partially. It is manifested as neutrality. It is likened to a conductor who looks with equanimity on thoroughbreds progressing evenly.

When equanimity the enlightenment factor is developed, the mind reaches the point where one begins to realize that all causal processes in the mind – including both unwholesome states like hindrances and the wholesome state like enlightenment factors
themselves – are not to be liked or rejected. If one likes them, one gets stuck; if one does not like them, one gets stuck. One reaches a point of disenchantment, where he realizes that the most skillful way of dealing with the present is to strip away all levels of participation by way of liking or rejecting that cause even the slightest bit of stress in the mind.

The causal sequence shows the skillful development of the mind in which mindfulness and discernment help to develop concentration. Equanimity as a factor of enlightenment on the mundane plane can feed back into the process of meditation, providing a steady basis for more continuous mindfulness and clearer analysis of mental qualities, until all the enlightenment factors ripen to transcendence. This point is reflected in the standard description of the fourth jhāna whose salient feature is total purity of mindfulness caused by equanimity (uppekkhāsatipārisuddhi).

When Equanimity the enlightenment factor is developed, the middle way (majjhimaṭṭipadā) becomes more significant than ever before. At this stage, one starts to wipe out the levels of participation to the point where things reach equilibrium on their own, where there is letting go and release. Without arriving at Right Concentration, one cannot develop equanimity which is the skill needed for understanding reality – for it is in the process of
mastering the skill of concentration through mindfulness that true insight arises. At this stage, the mind does not make or shape anything at all. It does not become attached to any manifestation of good or bad. Neutral and unperturbed, it does not approve or disapprove of anything. Once the mind has followed these steps from the first to the sixth and come to be still with a spacious sense of relaxation, not fastening onto any sign, preoccupation, or anything at all, it has reached to a state where equanimity a factor of enlightenment is developed.

According to commentary tradition, this stage of equanimity is called equanimity of insight (vipassanupekkhā). With full development of equanimity of insight, one can set up insight in the neutral state in comprehending the objects experienced through the six sense faculties without allowing the mind to be overcome by lust, hate or delusion. This means one enters into equanimity regarding formations (sakhārupekkhā) which is the climax of mundane stages of insight knowledge. In this respect, the development of upekkhā the enlightenment factor signifies the cultivation of the mind in responding to the objects experienced through the sense faculties, which the Buddha declares to be the supreme development of faculties (anuttarā indriyabhāvanā).²¹

²¹ PsmA, p. 268
This developing requires a supreme effort aimed at full and conscious mastery of mindfulness, concentration, and discernment to the point of aloofness or no-identification (*atammayatā*), a state in which the mind stays without being attached to anything in the world. When all seven of the enlightenment factors develop themselves in full measure within the heart, they all come together at a single point in a single moment, issuing in clear knowing and release (*vijjāvimutti*).\(^{22}\)

When one has fully developed *upekkhā* the enlightenment factor, attachment even to the path itself is abandoned as stated in the famous raft simile of the Buddha. In other words, the path of right practice itself is eventually abandoned after it has been brought to the culmination of its development. Because a practitioner has to use causal factors in order to split up the causal system, one has to make use of factors that eventually have to be transcended. Conditioned mental factors are put into service to reach an unconditioned goal which is a state of release so total that no conditioned phenomena can encompass it; it is by virtue of *upekkhā* that even skillful factors themselves are transcended.

Many people have misunderstood this point, believing that the Buddha’s teachings on non-attachment required that one relinquish

\(^{22}\) Vsm, p. 281
one’s attachment to the path of practice as quickly as possible. In terms of the famous raft simile, one abandons the raft only after crossing the ocean.

“I have taught you the Dhamma like a raft, or
The purpose of crossing over, not for the
Purpose of holding onto. Knowing the
Dhamma to be like a raft, you should let go
Even of skilful qualities, to say nothing of those
That are not.”

Equanimity (upekkhā) is developed as one learns to keep his heart open through the changing circumstances of life as well as the practice. In the Abhidhamma, equanimity is indicated by the term tatramajjhhattatā, neutrality. It is difficult to remain calm and undisturbed when touched by the vicissitudes of life, but the one who cultivates this quality of equanimity is not upset. Amidst the vicissitudes of life – pain and loss, good repute and ill repute, praise and censure, pleasure and pain, one who has successfully developed upekkhā never wavers. He is as firm as a solid rock which is unshaken by words. Of course this is the attitude of the Arahants.

An attitude of non-reactive acceptance also brings the quality of equanimity, producing a non-reactive clarity that allows one to stay balanced. This is an important quality especially when
undertaking activities in both meditative and non-meditative spheres. Without equanimity one can get drawn into one-sided reactivity shaped by his own views, opinions and old habitual patterns. Without equanimity, it is easy for one to get out of balance, thinking one is always right and other people are in the wrong.

4.10. The Significance of Enlightenment Factors in destruction of Hindrance

The practice of *bojjaṅga*, as taught by the Buddha, leads to removal of three unwholesome roots – craving, aversion and delusion that derive from defense of the false, ephemeral self. In the light of *anicca* which is an aspect of *dhammavicaya* the enlightenment factor, the false notion of self is utterly eradicated. The dissolution of self in the experience of impermanence- or *anicca* is neither a rejection of mundane obligations nor running away from interpersonal responsibility in life. It is a perspective that embraces and validates these aspects of routine existence, but places them in proportional importance within a comprehensive context. The virtues and qualities open up due to experienced insight. There is nothing in the experience of *anicca* to make one abandon the responsibilities of one’s social or professional existence, for the experience is neither an excitement nor intoxication. It points to a
sense of liveliness that is marked by a tenacious steady effort both in the meditative and non-meditative spheres. Through the experience of anicca, equanimity becomes sweeter than pleasure and thrill. Death is no less welcome than life because realization of anicca leads to a sense of mental equipoise beyond the polarity of pleasure and pain. Hence, by developing factors of enlightenment along the path of practice, one’s individual personality is seasoned and matured because understanding of impermanence (anicca) leads to maturaty but not eradication of personality. Through a gradual emergence of enlightenment factors, one may grow in human capacities. 23

As practice develops, the understanding of impermanence deepens. One comes to deep understanding that the whole complex world is alone made up of changing sights, sounds, tastes, smells, touch, and thoughts and feelings. Change is synonymous with life. Under a constant mindfulness (sati) and powerful concentration (samādhi) that keeps focusing on the present moment life dissolves into fleeting moments of sense perceptions changing every instant. It brings into vision each momentary arising and passing of experience at the sense doors, so that what has ordinarily appeared as solidity of oneself and the world around literally breaks asunder under the investigation of states (dhammavicaya).

23 DN II, p. 231
The realization of impermanence is a deep insight into oneself and the world around. From realization that all things are impermanent, comes the deepest empathy possible; a feeling of kinship with all beings who suffer alike from the pain aroused by the illusion of separate self; a feeling of fellowship with all beings who yearn for liberation from the agony of unwelcome union, pain of separation, dissolution and death. The experience of anicca through the process of insight meditation leads to the transformation of selfishness into selfishness vanity into modesty. One comes to understand that cooperation is greater than competition that self-sacrifice is more fulfilling than self-aggrandizement, and that true welfare is to be achieved through harmony and good will rather than by exploiting and dominating others. Hence, anicca is a signpost which indicates the trail that other noble ones have blazed.

Penetration into anicca is involved in the loss of individual image of self with which one has hopelessly infatuated, and which one wants to preserve and defend in vain by the exercise of craving, conceit and wrong-view, This is because one seeks security and satisfaction in life through a projected sense of the idealized self as one imagines it to be lasting forever. Instead of trying to deny the flow of change and living in conflict, one can understand it deeply and live in harmony with the changing seasons of life. Instead of creating solid things, solid relations, a solid, unchanging world to try
to hold onto, one can let go and open to the actual truth of each changing moment. There is no pretending, no complacency, and no desolate grasping and groping for some secure thing that will not go away.

At the very deepest level one sees that one’s identification with and grasping at any of the five processes of life, body, feelings, perception, reaction, consciousness—is the source of suffering. It is a directly experienced judgment that there is no lasting happiness, because of the eternal truth that nothing lasts. Only when one stops running away and chasing after and accepts life with all its dance of change, joys and sorrows, with its inherent suffering, only then can one find peace and wisdom.

With the deepened knowledge of impermanence, the practitioner comes to realize that one’s sense of self is created by one’s thought process and by the habit of grasping in the mind. If one is not caught up in all thoughts about one’s experience, there is simply an experience in each moment: just seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. It is all emptiness, all emptiness, all without self. It is not that one has to get rid of thoughts to experience emptiness, because thoughts are empty in themselves, thoughts are merely a process, words and pictures in mind, conditioned by certain causes and composed of constituent elements. One does not have to
make things empty of self because emptiness is their true nature. One has only to experience each moment directly; each moment is a manifestation of the empty, impossible nature of reality.

The realization at the centre of this practice is the experience that none of the five aggregates of clinging- or the five processes which make up life- the body, the feelings, the perceptions, the reactions, the consciousness itself-none of them is enduring. Every process in the six sense doors comes into operation impersonally and conditionally moment to moment; the sequence goes on strictly as a matter of cause and effect with no room for any “I” to explain the continual rise and fall of nāma-rūpa.

4. 11. Enlightenment factors and their therapeutic effects

Due to the diffusion of cittaja-rūpa throughout the body, there arises the excellent body (atipanītarūpa). As the seven enlightenment factors (bojjhaṅga) are also fulfilled at this stage, physiological benefits result from the Dhamma practice.

It has already been said that the udayabhayañāṇa (the knowledge of rise and fall of Nāma-rupa) has reach maturity at this stage. Likewise, the Dhamma has developed and become powerful. According the books, it is only at this stage that the bojjhaṅga Dhamma is fully accomplished. To accomplish the bojjhaṅga Dhamma, there is no other way than the respective satipaṭṭhāna practice. Also
its benefits would be understood as the sole condition for the protecting of clear vision and deliverance, for this has been said by the Blessed One:

Cattārome bhikkhave, satipaṭṭānā bhāvitā bhaulyatinga satta bojjaṅge paripūrenti. This means that: Bhikkhu, if you practise and repeatedly practise the four foundations of mindfulness, you will accomplish the Seven factors of Enlightenments.\textsuperscript{24}

(a)Bojjaṅga as Osadha

As a result of the development of bojjaṅga at the third Jhāna, there occur changes in material phenomena. The bojjaṅga practice brings about a radical change for the better in the psychological system, especially the blood circulation, resulting in the clarity of blood (lohitam pasidati). As a result, there is also heightened awareness and sensitivity through the sense organs (uppādarupam visuddham hoti).\textsuperscript{25}

With the development of bojjaṅga, there arises atipanītarupā (excellent body) out of the combined formation of cittajra-ṛupa, kammajra-ṛupa, utuja-ṛupa and āhāraja-ṛupa. Just as when the switch is on, electricity flows in a continuous manner to give uninterrupted

\textsuperscript{24} MN III, P.81-84-87
SN V, P-188

\textsuperscript{25} On the Path to freedom, P-200
light, so also bojjhaṅga Dhammas are developed the blood flows continuously in the system with the pure replacing the impure.

Purification of mind is achieved by the development of mindfulness, investigation of stages, energy, happiness, tranquility, concentration and equanimity. All these contribute to the abandonment of defilements (kilesas) or hindrances (nīvaraṇas) so that bhāvanākusala citta is strengthened and with purity of mind, the body becomes pure also. That’s why, the Buddha addressed in Bojjhaṅga Saṃyutta pāli:

Satisambojjhaṅgo, bhikkhave, anāvaraṇo anīvaraṇo cetaso anupakkileso bhāvito bahulikato vijjāvimuttiphalasacchikiriyāya saṃvattati…pe… upekkhāsambojjhaṅgo, bhikkhave, anāvaraṇo anīvaraṇo cetaso anupakkileso bhāvito bahulikato vijjāvimuttiphalasacchikiriyāya saṃvattati. Ime kho, bhikkhave, satta bojjhaṅgā anāvaraṇā anīvaraṇā cetaso anupakkilesā bhāvītā bahulikatā vijjāvimuttiphalasacchikiriyāya saṃvattantiti.26

26 SN V, P-93
(b) Mode of Healing

In the realms of dhamma, we are more interested in spiritual stamina, spiritual resistance. With the development of bojjhaṅga dhamma through the practice of satipaṭṭhāna, we will be able to prevent and treat kilesas or nīvaranās diseases. If the mind is wholesome, so is the body. Just as we take time in building up physical resistance, we must do the same with the mental one.

As a result of the practice of bojjhaṅga dhamma and the attainment of at least sotāpanna, one will attain diṭṭhi such as attadiṭṭhi or sakkāya diṭṭhi, vicikicchā and silabbata-parāmāsa (clinging to mere rites and rituals as practice or affectation of rites). Thus, the three fetters fall away from him.

4.12. Conclusion

In this way, the growth of enlightenment factors brings about the deepening realization of the basic truths of life; impermanence, suffering and non-self. The penetration of these characteristics can undermine all grasping and can guide one to act according to the truth (dhammānudhammapaṭipatti) in all experiences of both meditative and no-meditative spheres. Each of them becomes a gateway to liberation (vimokkhamukha), if one can understand and fully accept it. At the very deepest level of meditation, a moment of
full acceptance at one of these gates and of full letting go brings one to what is beyond it, the unconditioned, to Nibbāna.