Chapter Two

Buddhist view on the contemplation of body

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, we will consider the contemplation on the body (Kāyānupassanā), the first foundation of mindfulness meditation described in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta. The sequence of the body contemplations is progressive, beginning with more obvious and basic aspects of the body and continuing towards a more detailed and analytical understanding of nature of the body. Awareness of the body postures and clear knowing of activities would precede mindfulness of breath through this shifting position. As simpler forms of contemplation then the other body contemplations can characterize awareness of the four postures and clear knowing of activities. Taking of elementary character seems reasonable to place them at the beginning of cultivation of Satipaṭṭhāna to build Sati, a mindfulness meditation practice in a proper way. However, this does not imply that in actual practice mindfulness of breathing need always be proceeded by awareness of posture and clear knowing of activities, since mindfulness of the breath can also be followed by mindfulness of one’s postures and activities.

Awareness of bodily postures and clear knowing of activities are predominately concerned with the body in action. In this context, mindfulness of breathing has a transitional role, since it is traditionally carried out in the stable sitting posture and it is still concerned with an
active aspect of the body, which is called the process of breathing. When it is shifted to the bodily activities, mindfulness of breathing becomes the first in a series of practices conducted mainly in the sitting posture. In fact, in the instruction for mindfulness of breathing, there described the proper sitting posture in detail, since awareness of the four postures and clear knowing regarding the bodily activities are forms of contemplation that take place in different postures, and only then it come to relevant state, it makes sense to introduce the sitting posture. This is the case for mindfulness of breathing and also remaining exercises which require a fairly stable posture, and the development of deeper degrees of concentration. By shifting mindfulness of breathing to the bodily activities, the description of the sitting posture also moves to the most convenient position within the body contemplations.

The contemplation on the body begins with an emphasis on “Pajānāti, Sampajānāti” which is translated as “knowing” in two exercises concerned with bodily posture and activities and in the first two steps of mindfulness of contemplation. The verb Sikkhati means training and Paccavekkhati directs to the bodily activities and repulsiveness parts of the body.1 And the verb Upasamhārati concerns with the contemplation on the dead body in decay. Each of the body contemplations except for the awareness of the four postures and clear knowing in regard to activities is illustrated by a simile. These similes compares with mindfulness of breathing to a turner at his lathe, contemplation on the repulsiveness parts to examine a bag full of grains, and contemplation on the four elements to butchering a cow (Kumbhārassa bhastaṅca

1 Vism.vol.1.p-264
The last exercise employs mental images of a body in various stages of decay. Although these stages of decay cannot be reckoned as similes, the use of mental imagery here parallels the similes given in the other three exercises. These similes and mental images point to additional degree of affinity between mindfulness of breathing and the final three body contemplation and thereby further support the idea of presenting them together by shifting mindfulness of breathing to the third position in the sequence of body contemplations.

The instruction for contemplating the repulsiveness parts employs the word impure "Asusī" which betrays a certain degree of evaluation inherent in this practice (Bhikkhu imamevakāyām uddham pādatalā adho kesamattakā...asucino paccavekkhati). According to Āṅguttara Nikāya, contemplation on the repulsive parts and contemplation on a dead body in decay come under the “recollection” (Anussati) category (Bhikkhu imameva kāyam..asucinopaccavekkhati ‘atthi imasmin käye...). This evokes Sati’s connotations of memory and shows that these two contemplations imply to some extent a form of practice, which is not confined to bare awareness only.

2.1 Purpose of contemplation on the body

The purpose of contemplation on the body is not to demonize the body, although contemplating the nature of the body highlights its less...
attractive features. While it is certainly true that at times the discourses describe the human body in rather negative terms, some of these instances occur in a particular context in which the point being made is that the speakers in question have overcome all attachment to their own body (Santi kho tassa savaka kāyenaca jivitenaca addiyamāna satthahārakaṁ pariyesanti).\(^5\) So, the purpose of contemplating the nature of the body is to bring its unattractive accepts to the forefront one’s attention, thereby placing the attractive accepts previously emphasized in a more balanced context. The aim is a balanced and detached attitude towards them. With such a balanced attitude, one sees the body merely as a product of conditions, a product with which one need not identify. The Buddha pointed out that the body is neither one’s own nor does it belong to another, but is simply the produce of condition.\(^6\)

The Suttas illustrate the practice and benefits of contemplating the body with variety of similes. One of these similes describes a man carrying a bowl brimming with oil on his head through a crowd watching a beautiful girl singing and dancing (Ayam te ambho purisa, samatiittiko telapatto...tattheva te siro pātessati)\(^7\). He is followed by another man with a drawn sword, ready to cut off his head if even one drop of oil is spilled. To preserve his life, the man carrying the oil has to apply his full attention to each step and movement, without allowing the commotion around the girl to distract him. The careful behavior of man carrying the oil exemplifies the circumspect behavior of a meditator well established in present moment awareness of the body. The image of carrying an object on the head in particular point to the balance and centeredness that

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\(^5\) S.N.vol.2- p-287  
\(^6\) S.N.vol.2.p-64  
\(^7\) Jāt.a.vol.3.p-220. and also S.N.t.vol.2.p-482 said ‘Telapattipviya kāyagatāsat tassa pariharamapuggaloviya vipassato’
accompany bodily activities carried out with Sati, mindfulness. Another important aspect of this simile is that it relates continuous awareness of the body’s activities to some restraint. In this way it vividly illustrates the importance of developing awareness grounded in the body, since in the situation depicted in the simile the restraint of the senses through being grounded in the body constitutes the means to preserve one’s life in the modest of commotion and danger.

Sense-restraint comes up again in another simile, which compares mindfulness of the body to a strong post to which six different wild animals are bound. Since the animals are family bound to the post, however much they might struggle to escape, they have sooner or later to sit or lie down next to the post. Similarly, mindfulness of the body can become a strong post for tethering the six senses. This simile compares the mental agitation of searching for sensual gratification to wild animals struggling to go into different directions. Once the post of the body mindfulness is firmly established, however, the senses will invariably have to calm down, just as the animals will come to lie down next to the post to which they are bound. This simile points out the benefit of being grounded in the experience of the present moment through contemplation of the body (Kāyagatāya satiya bhāvitā bahulīgatāya cakkhu nāviṇjati...satīarakkhena). Lacking such grounding in body awareness, attachment and clinging can easily arise.

In the Kāyagatāsati Sutta, a similar connotation underlies a set of similes, which present contemplation of the body as a crucial factor for

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8 D.N.a.vol.2.p-353
withstanding. Mara, the personification of mental defilements, just as a heavy stone ball can penetrate a mound of wet clay, or just as fire can be produced from dry wood, or just as an empty jug can be filed with water, so too will Mara find an opportunity to overpower those who are not well established in contemplation of the body. But just as a light ball of string cannot penetrate a door panel made of heard-wood, or just as fire cannot be produced from wet wood, or just as a full jug cannot take more water, those who develop and cultivate contemplation of the body.

The Kāyagatāsati Sutta contains the same sequence of body contemplation as the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta. However there is a notable difference in the Kāyagatāsati Sutta’s version of the refrain, which relates body contemplation to the overcoming of worldly thoughts and the development of concentration. These points out another important benefit of body contemplation, that overcoming sensual infatuation through a proper assessment of the nature of facilitates the development of concentration unhindered by sensual distractions. The Kāyagatāsati Sutta illustrates it with another set of similes which just as drinking water will flow out if a jug is tipped over or just as water in a pond will flow if the embankment is broken, or just as a skilled driver is able to drive a chariot wherever he likes to go, so too mindfulness of the body will lead easily to the development of deep concentration (Udakadabaro gambhiro...udakasakatampviya niccalo hutvā gacchati).

So, contemplation on the body can become a basis for the development of Samatha, or it can lead to an application of Sati to feelings and mental phenomena, as described in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta.

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10 M.N.vol-3-p- 95
11 D.N.a.vol-1-p- 171
The fact that a firm grounding of awareness in the body provides an important basis for the development of both calmness and insight. An emphasis given on the body contemplations highlighted even today in the *Vipassanā* school of *Theravāda* tradition, where contemplation on the body occupies a central position as a foundational *Satipatthāna* practice. The discourses repeatedly emphasize the great value of mindfulness of the body. According to them, those who do not practice mindfulness of the body do not partake of the deathless (*Pamādo miccuno pādaṃ*).\(^1^2\) Mindfulness of the body is a source of joy, and can truly be considered one's best friend (*Rakkhitena kāyena...na maṃ tathā tasamin samaye lobhadhammā parihasanti*).\(^1^3\)

2.2 Two branches of Buddhist meditation: *Samatha* and *Vipassanā*

In the Buddha’s teaching, meditation is presented in characteristically sober and pragmatic terms, avoiding all high-flown rhetoric. Meditation is described simply as *Bhāvanā*, which means ‘cultivation’ or ‘development’, terms which at the same time, accurately define its purpose: to cultivate and develop the vast potential of the mind in order to overcome the unsatisfactory nature of the internal and external circumstances in which we find ourselves. The unsatisfactoriness of existence is the consequence of unrealistic expectations based on an incorrect perception of the true nature of things. The cultivation and development of the mind is the means whereby this erroneous perception

\(^{1^2}\) Dhp.P-293  
\(^{1^3}\) S.N.vol.2.p-330. Ashinjanakābhivamsa “Vipassanā meditation”p-25
is corrected, and its practice comprises two distinct types of techniques, known respectively as *Samatha* and *Vipassanā*. *Samatha* means 'tranquility', 'calm' or 'serenity'. *Samatha* meditation, or tranquility meditation aims to achieve states of consciousness characterized by increasingly higher levels of mental tranquility and stillness.¹⁴

*Vipassanā* derived from the verb *Vipassati* means literally 'clear vision', to see things precisely as they are. Among them, tranquility meditation leads to gaining good concentration or *Jhāna*, insight meditation leads to the eradication of the mental defilements. When one practices tranquility meditation, he practices differently than practising insight meditation. When he practices tranquility meditation, he practices tranquility meditation on breathing, keep his mind on his breath or count it. When he counts, neither counts below five nor past ten. The purpose of counting is to help him keeping his mind on the object, and he gains concentration through counting and can stay with an object without distraction. He just keeps his awareness on the breath and it will become more and more subtle.

Sometimes, meditator may see signs or visions, but visions come to different from one to the other. Meditator may see the sign like a star or a cluster of gems or pearls, or it may appear to have a rough touch like that of silk cotton seeds or a peg made of hardwood, or a long braided string or a wreath of flowers or a puff of smoke or a stretched-out cob wed or a cloud or a lotus flower or a chariot wheel or the disk of the moon or the sun.¹⁵ Any of these sings or visions may come to meditator reaching a

¹⁴ Amadeo Sole-Leris *Tranquillity and insight* p-21
¹⁵ Harcham Singh Sobti, *Vipassana the Buddhist way* p-75
certain level of concentration. Then, he will enter the absorptions or Jhānas, and from the Jhāna can move to insight meditation.

When meditator practises breathing meditation as insight meditation, he does not count the breaths. He just has to keep his mindfulness on the breath and practises according to the four ways; breathing long, breathing short, and comprehending clearly the entire breath body, but signs or visions will not appear in insight meditation. However, if he sees any kinds of signs or visions, he will have to just stay aware of them. After some time, he will see mind and body clearly, and he will progress more and more, until the stage of realization.

The emphasis in Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, is on the insight meditation, not tranquility meditation, because contemplating the “original factors” and the “dissolution factors” is only possible in insight meditation. In tranquility meditation, the meditations do not contemplate on the arising or the disappearing of the objects. One just keeps the mind on the objects. When it is said that he contemplates on the origination and the arising or on the dissolution and the falling, he is neither attached to nor clinging to anything. This means insight meditation and not tranquility.\(^\text{16}\) In every meditation objects in this Sutta is directed toward insight meditation, although in the early stages, it can be tranquility meditation. When one practises insight meditation, he keeps his awareness on the breath and also everything that comes to him through the sense doors at the present moment. When he sees something, he becomes aware of it. When he hears something, they do the same. This is the difference between tranquility and insight meditation. So, in the former he keeps his awareness only on the meditation object and ignores everything else. In

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\(^\text{16}\)Mahāsi ‘Mahāsaṭṭhapāna Sutta’ (Tra), p-59
the latter, he keeps his awareness on everything that is present, everything that is important at the present moment.

It is well known that mindfulness of breathing, which is expounded in the scripture and elaborated in the field of mental training in Buddhism. The Buddha himself followed this mindfulness breathing meditation as a complete method for attaining Nibbāna, and praises it as “the noble abode "Āriyāvihāra", the divine abode," and it is recorded that the Bodhisatta Gotama reached the state of the first Jhāna which is said to have been the result of the practice of breathing meditation, and it is evident that mindfulness breathing is the Buddha’s meditation because he used it as the path to his supreme enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree.

Mindfulness breathing is included in the system of Samādhi meditation as Kammatṭhāna, which may be used in two ways. In the first place, it is practised in combination with other exercise as an indispensable means of obtaining calmness of body and mind. One of the most important possessions for one who has a desire to do practise of meditation is the possession of a pure and healthy body and clarity of mind, because in the absence of bodily purity and mental serenity, the practice of meditation may meet with no success and even prove dangerous. A slight physical indisposition may impede the mind in its effort to attain concentration. When the mind is scattered by evil thought, meditation is not helpful to concentrate because of the persistent occurrence of evil thought, especially thoughts of lust, hatred and injury. Elder Meghiya advised by the Buddha to practice breathing meditation for the elimination of evil thoughts above mentioned provides it. So, the practice of breathing meditation conducted upon the lines given in the

17 S.N. Vol-4.p- 326
scriptures, not only tends to subdue the difficulties associated with the mind and the body, but also regulates the physical body so that it can be used whenever desired as the complex instrument of higher consciousness.

Secondly, it is the forty subjects of *Kammaṭṭhāna*, this is the only subject suitable for those who are of imaginative turn of mind, or whose minds are continually disturbed by sensory emotions. This is the method that has been selected as a special path for such individuals. In the *Suttas*, especially in the *Ānāpānassati sutta*, the breathing meditation is very frequently detailed and the points concerning it are usually given in the same order.

2.3 The place of meditation practice

Having mentioned the purpose of meditation practice, and the different view of tranquility and insight meditation, one should study the suitable place to get better result in his practice. Commentary on the *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta*, it indicated the forest as first suitable place for meditation practice. A forest, the root of tree and a secluded place are recommended for meditation practice. Since the place must be secluded, it should be a forest where nobody lives, away from the sounds and noises of people living in the village, towns, or cities (*Itthipurisa hatthiassādissaddasamākulaṃ gāmantaṃ...saddakaṇṭākattā jhānassa*). According to the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, a forest is defined as a place about five hundred bow-lengths away from human habitation. One bow-length is

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18 D.N.a.vol.2.p-354
equivalent to six feet, so it means about three thousand feet away from any human habitation (Arannakanāma senāsanam pañcadaṃsatikam pacchimam).¹⁹

The second place is the root of a tree mentioned in Satipaṭṭhāna Suta. The root of any tree is a suitable place for meditation but it should be as quiet a place as a forest. The third place is just a secluded place and it may be in a city or in a village but it has to be secluded, cave, pagoda, and retreat in any other places what can help meditation to concentrate on the meditation object.

With regard to these places, seclusion is the most important condition. Therefore, any place that offers seclusion is a suitable place for the meditation. On the other hand, there are traditional lists of secluded places; a forest, the root of a tree, a rock, and a hill cleft, a mountain cave, a charnel ground, a jungle thicket, open space, and a heap of straw.²⁰

With reference to these lists, the last seven places are to be taken as secluded places. For the meditator who needs a place that is both quiet and free from distractions mentioned these places as the most suitable place (Imassa satipaṭṭhānabhāvanānotūpasenāsanaparigghapadīpanam).²¹

A retreat centre or meditation monastery may provide secluded environment for the practice. For those who have experience and whose concentration matured to some extent, place is the right place for meditation.

¹⁹ Vin, vol.1, p-261
²⁰ Kabaayesayadaw ‘Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna vipassanā-insight meditation’, p-32
²¹ D.N.a, vol.2, p-353
2.4 Physical posture in meditation practice

As well as describing the external environment, the *Satipthana Sutta* also specifies the proper sitting posture. The Buddha showed how one should prepare for meditation practice and which one should be selected. In the *Visuddhimagga*, it is mentioned the traditional posture of sitting “cross-legged” (*Nisidati pallamkkam abhujitvā ujumkāyam panidhāya... satovasassati satovapassati*). People in east are accustomed to sitting on the floor, so sitting cross-legged comes naturally to them. They have no difficulty sitting in this posture. It is a good posture for meditation practice and it is a peaceful one, neither conducive to idleness nor to agitation.

There are three different forms of sitting cross-legged. The first one is the “full-lotus posture”, when the legs are intertwined, the meditator will feel pain after sitting in this posture for a few minutes. The second posture is the “half lotus posture”. The meditator put one leg on the top of the other, but they are not intertwined. The meditator can sit longer in this posture; however they will still feel some kinds of pressure and their feet will get numb after some minutes. The third is the “easy posture”. In this posture, meditator will sit one leg in front of and not on the other. However, some meditater finds that it is very painful to sit in meditation practice. Such meditator may sit on a cushion, a chair, or a bench, since some degree of comfort is necessary for meditation practice. Though there should not be too much comfort, some is necessary to continue with practice of meditation. Then, meditator keeps his body straight after sitting cross-legged. When he sits straight, his spine is also straight.

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22 Vism.vol.1 p-252
23 S.N-vol.4 p-1-209
the spine is straight, the eighteen vertebrae in spine are resting one on the top of the other. When he sits straight, his muscles, sinews, skin, and flesh are not twisted, so painful feelings do not so readily arise as their muscles are twisted. Meditator’s mind can become unified in meditation and instead of collapsing when the pain increases, can attend to growth of mindfulness. Therefore, sitting crossed-legged and keeping their upper body erect is a very suitable posture that is conducive to concentration.

2.5 Literal definition of Ānāpānassati

Before explaining the breathing meditation (Ānāpānassati) as given in the Satipatthāna sutta, it is better for the sake of clarity to introduce the technical terms and assign definite meaning to them. There is a difference of opinion with regard to the application of the terms “Āna” and “Āpāna”, in the commentaries unnecessary confusion may be caused by using the terms while attributing various meanings to them. The subject is referred to in the texts as “Ānāpānassati Samadhi”, a compound of the four technical terms “Āna” “Āpāna”, “Sati” and “Samādhi”, which means “the concentration based upon the mindfulness which embraces Āna (in-breath), or Āpāna (out-breath), or both in-breath and out-breath. Here “Āna” and “Āpāna” are two separate objects of mindfulness, which correspond to “Assāsa” (in-breath), Passāsa” (out-breath). In this connation we may quote “Ānan’ti-assāso, nopssāso Apānan’ti –passāso, no assāso”, that is to say, “Āna is Assāsa, separate from Passāsa. Āpāna is Passāsa, separate from Assāsa.”

24 Mahāsi “Practical insight meditation” p-29. Pannyavaro ‘The art of attention’ p-16
25 Pītis. vol- I p- 172
On the other hand, “Āna” is applied to the air which is inhaled and “Āpāna” to the air which is exhaled. “Āpāna” is defined as opetainds “Anāno” that is, “Apāna” is that which is distant from “Āna”. The same application, in breath and out-breath is given to the words “Assāsa” and “Passāsa” respectively. To make it clear that “Assāsa” is “in-breath” and “passāsa” is “out-breath”. But according to Visudhimagga, there is the opposite meanings, described “Assāsa” as “out-breath” and “Passāsa” to “in-breath”. The reason appearing to establish this sense is given as follows: “when those who lie in the womb come out there from, the air from within goes out first, then the air from out side, mixing with fine dust, enter within and touching the palate, blow out. So, “Assāsa” and “Passāsa” should be understood as “out-breath” and “in-breath” responsively.26

Of two kinds of breath, which supports the life of the physical body, the breath of inhalation, being the essential activity, may be granted priority. Moreover, the words “Āna” which is equal to “Pāna” is derived from the root “Āna”, equableness to “Passāna”, “to animate” is to be applied to this vital current of in-breathing. The breath of exhalation, being the air which is exhausted of its life-giving property and which is naturally to be emitted from the body, so that other, fresh air may take its place, rightly occupies a position of secondary importance. The word “Āpāna” as destined from “Āna” is to be applied to the lifeless current of out-going breath. Furthermore, at the time of death, the last breath is a out-breath. Hence, seeing that death follows upon life, and not vice versa, it seems to be more rational to take “Assāsa” which corresponds to the functioning of the life current of “Āna”, as breathing in; and “Passāsa”

26 Vism. Vol-2-p- 272
which corresponds to that lifeless current of “Āpāna”, as breathing out. Therefore, we prefer to show “Assāsa” “in-breath” and “Passāsa” “out-breath”. We also find confirmation of this, both in regard to the relative importance of the two words and the order in which they should be taken and the meanings given to them in the Patisambhidā magga. It should be understood that the mindfulness established by apprehending “Āna”, “Apāna”, or both, constitutes “Ānāpānasati”. It should also be stated that the mindfulness established out, forms the Kammaṭṭhāna in the preliminary stage, until the disciple becomes aware of both as the meditation progresses. The practice of breathing meditation will induce one pointedness of mind which is designated “tranquility concentration”.

2.5.1 Mindfulness on breathing in and breathing out

Breathing meditation (Ānāpānasati) is the first topic that the Buddha described in the body contemplation. It is widely used as method of body contemplation. Even the Buddha does frequently mindfulness of breathing up top getting Nibbāna and he started his practice to get enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree. The Buddha said in the present Sutta; “So, satova assasati, satova passasati. dīgham vā assasanto “dīgham assasāmiṭi pājānāti... passambha yām kāyasaṅkhāram passasissāmiṭi sikkhati”.27

Here, contemplation on breathing in and breathing out is described in a variety of ways. Four steps are described in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta and another twelve steps in Ānāpānasati Sutta.28 So, there are sixteen

27 M.N.vol-1-p- 70
28 S.N-vol-4-p-326
steps altogether. All these various presentations demonstrate the multifunctional character of process of breathing as meditation object. The contemplation on breathing in and breathing out is concerned with both tranquility and insight and it can turn into peaceful character by practising of mindfulness of breathing and one who practises contemplation on breathing in and breathing out is lead to stability of mentality and physicality and away from some defilements for a sometimes during meditation practice. If a meditator can put his effort to attain liberation, *Nibbāna*, all mental and physical defilements are destroyed totally, and never appear again by in insight knowledge.

The defilement, which lists out greed, anger, delusion, conceit, wrong view, skeptical doubt, sloth and toper, restlessness and remorse, shamelessness, and fearlessness cause one’s mind prolusion. Here, greed means *Lobha* in *Pāli* term and it also can be translated as desire, lust, craving, attachment and love in English. When one of these mental states arises in us, our mind gets defiled or pollute. So, these are known as defilements. When one can get rid of these defilements by practice, he can get the result of the purification of the mind. It is mentioned in *Satipatthāna Sutta* as the first benefit of mindfulness (*Sattānapaṭṭhinī vi-suddhiyā*).29 According to *Satipatthāna Sutta*, one who follows to the practice of contemplation on breathing in and breathing out should take the instructions for it includes the appropriate external environment and the suitable physical posture.

29 M.N.vol-1-p-69
2.5.2 Basic instruction:

We have described the appropriate environment and posture in body contemplation, and then one should study the instruction for the breathing meditation. According to the *Satipatthāna sutta*, meditator has to observe the breathe in and breathe out mindfully (*Satova assati satova passati*), and should become aware of the length of each breath as “long” or “short” (*Dīghamvā assāsato dīghamvā assāsamīti pajānāti*). Here, the point is to be aware of long and short breath, not consciously to control the length of breath. The meditator focuses his mind on the object of meditation. The object of meditation will be the breath. So, he sets his mind, that is, he focuses on the incoming and out coming breath.

When meditator practises meditation, he keeps his mind on the breath. He breathes in and breathes out mindfully. Actually, he put his mind at the entrance of the nostril and observes the breath as “in-out” and so on. His mind must stay at the tip of the nose; it must not follow the breath into and out of the body. He must try to see the in-breath and the out-breath as two separate things. The in-breath does not exist at the time of breathing out and the out-breath does not exist at the time of breathing in.

The Buddha compares this progress to a skilled turner who attends to his lathe with full awareness of making a long turn or a short turn. The simile of the turner suggests rereading degrees of refinement and subtlety in practicing mindfulness of breathing. Just as a turner makes progressively finer and more delicate cuts on the lathe, contemplation

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30 D.N.a.vol.2.p-354.
31 M.N.vol-1-p-70
proceeds from long and comparatively gross breaths to shorter and subtler breaths \((\text{Seyyathāpi bhikkhave dakkho bhamaro...rassamvā bhañchnto 'rassam bhañchāmi'ti pajānāti})\).\(^{32}\)

When the meditator practises breathing meditation, he can observe his breath in many different ways. In the \textit{Satipatthāna Sutta}, four of them are shown. During meditation practice, sometimes, meditator happens to breath long breaths, then he should know “I am breathing in long” \((\text{Dīghamvā assāsato dīghamvā assāsamiti pajānāti})\),\(^{33}\) that means he does not fail to notice it when he paid sufficient attention to the breath and it does not mean that he should deliberately breathe long so that to know that he is breathing to long. Here to “know” means knowing thoroughly, not superficially.

Sometimes, meditator happens to breathe short breaths. He knows thoroughly that he is breathing short breaths \((\text{Rassamvā assāsato rassamvā assāsamiti pajānāti})\).\(^{34}\) He does not fail to notice that he does doing so. Here also, it must be understood that he should deliberately make the breaths short. He should just know that he is breathing short breaths. In the scheme described in the \textit{Ānāpānassati Sutta},\(^{35}\) awareness moves through the process from the bodily phenomena of breathing to feelings, mental events, and development of insight. Considering the range of these steps, it becomes evident that mindfulness of breathing is not limited to change in the process of breathing, but covers related aspects of subjective experience. Undertaken in this way, mindfulness of breathing becomes a skillful tool for self-observation.

\(^{32}\) D.N.a.vol-2-p-354

\(^{33}\) M.N.vol-1-p- 70

\(^{34}\) M.N.vol-1-p- 70

\(^{35}\) S.N.vol-4.p-326
The *Visuddhimagga* said that I should breathe in making known, making plain the beginning, middle, and end of the entire in-breath body. I shall breathe out making known, making plain, the beginning, middle, and end of the entire out breath.\(^{36}\) Body is given as explanation with future tense. This explanation is to show that in the previous observation of the breath. The meditator does not need so much knowledge, so much effort to distinguish the long from the short breaths, but he must make effort to fain knowledge, to see the breaths clearly and thoroughly. And it does not mean that he should breathe more vigorously so that the breathing may become clear to him. His concentration and knowledge or understanding is said to be deep and thorough only when he can perceive the beginning, the middle, and the end of each breathe clearly.

When meditator keeps his mind on the breath, he comes to see it as coming and going every moment, he cannot see anything to be attached. The breath comes and goes, the breath is nothing to be attached and it is just breathe (*Vayadhammānupassīvā viharati*).\(^{37}\) When he reaches the higher stage of insight knowledge (*Vipassanānāpa*), he will come to see the arising and disappearing of all phenomena (*Samudayayadhammā nupassīvā viharati*).\(^{38}\) By seeing the true nature of things, one who practises mindfulness meditation does not cling to anything in the world because there is no longer craving, let alone clinging.\(^{39}\)

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\(^{36}\) Vism-vol.1.p-260

\(^{37}\) M.N.vol-1-p- 70

\(^{38}\) M.N.vol-1-p- 70

\(^{39}\) Mahāsi “Vipassanānayapakaraṇa” vol.1.p-109
2.5.3 The definition of body (Kāya) in meditation practice

When one follows to the contemplation on the breath in and breath out, he must try to see all the breaths clearly. In the Satipaṭṭhāna sutta, “Making clear” (Patisamvedi) means making the breaths known, making them plain, and trying to see them vividly. Sabhakāya is “the entire in-breath body that literally means the entire body but Kāya, body here does not mean the entire physical body. The real meaning is the breath body; though the Pāli word Kāya can mean the physical body as well as a group. It is similar to when we talk about a body of members. So, here it means not the entire physical body but just the breath, and “entire” here means the beginning, the middle and the end. So, meditator must try to see thoroughly the beginning, the middle and the end of each breath.

On the other hand, the breath is called “body conditioned thing”, translated the Pāli word Kayasanākhāra. Kayā means “body” and Sanākhāra means “conditioned”. Therefore, it means a “thing conditioned by the body”. It is said that breath is caused by consciousness or the mind but when there is nobody, there cannot be any breaths. So, though it is caused by the mind, the breath depends on the body for it’s arising that is for its appearance. Therefore, it is called Kāyasanākhāra, a “thing conditioned by the body”.

The expression, “calming the gross in-breath”, should not be taken to mean that meditator should deliberately calm down, inhibit, and still his breath. What is meant is that when the breaths become very subtle, meditator must try hard, pay attention, and apply more effort to understand it. The breath is not like the other objects of meditation, which become clearer and clearer with the increase in concentration and
understanding. When meditator has progress further and further, the objects that the earth disks (Kasipo) or other meditation objects become clearer and clearer in his mind. It is not the same with the breath, which becomes subtle and mere and more difficult to perceive, according to his progress.

In the Satipatthana Sutta, for the third and forth steps introduce of a different verb to describe the process of contemplation; in place of “he knows” (Pajana) the text now uses the expression “he trains” (Sikkhati). Accordance with Anapanasati Sutta, the meaning of training covers altogether fourteen steps, in addition to the first two steps concerned with “knowing”. Using training in different way indicates some in degree of additional effort on the part of the meditator, awing to an increased degree of difficulty in these steps. Such training seems to entail a shift to a broader kind of awareness, including phenomena other than breath itself.

On the other hand, the third (Sikkhati) and fourth (Pajana) steps of mindfulness of breathing, alike in both the Anapanasati Sutta and Satipatthana Sutta, are concerned with experiencing the “entire body” and with calming the “conditioned body-Kayasankhara”. In the Satipatthana Sutta, said the entire body can be taken literally to refer to the whole physical body. With understanding in this way, the instruction points out a broadening of awareness, a shift from the breath alone to its effect on the entire body. According to the Visuddhimagga, the entire body should be understood to refer, more figuratively, to the body of the breath. By understanding the entire body as the whole breath, then the

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40 S.N-vol-4.p-326
41 Buddhadasa ‘Mindfulness with breathing’p-38
instruction indicates full awareness of the beginning, middle, and end stages of each breath (Ādimajjapariyosānam).42

This interpretation can be a slay support from the same Ānāpānassati Sutta, since the Buddha has identified the breath as a “body” (Kāya) among bodies (Kayasu kāyaññatarāhaṃ evaṃ vadāmi yadidam assāsapassāsā).43 An argument against this interpretation could be that the cultivation of full awareness of the length of the breath was the task of the previous two steps, knowing long or short breath, which already required meditator to be aware of each breath from the beginning to end. The next step of training is the calming of the body condition (Kāyasāṅkhāra), a discourse defines the “body formations” as in-breathing and out-breathing (Assasapassāsā kāyasāṃkhāro...vedanāca cittasaṃkhāro).44 It dovetails with the second interpretation above according to which “entire body”, refers to the whole tenths of the breath.

The Paṭisambhidāmagga and Vimuttimagga, indicate that this fourth step of mindfulness of breathing also refers to maintenances of a calm and stable posture, in the sense of calming any inclination to move (Yathārūpehi kāyasāṃkhārehi kāyassā ānamanā...passasissāmiṭi sikkhati).45 So, the instruction to calm the body conditioned things also implies an increase in general bodily calmness, an understanding that fits with the first interpretation mentioned above, taking “body” to refer to the repulsiveness body. In the end, both interpretation overlap, since a calming of the breath naturally leads to increased bodily tranquility (Yadāpanassa kāyopī cittampi parigghahitā honti, tadā te santā hontī

42 Vism.vol.1. p-273
43 M.N.vol.3.p-126
44 S.N.vol.2.p-483
45 Vism.vol.1.p-268
vūpasanta). Such calming of breath and body can either become the basis for developing awareness of the inner constitution of the body, as in the subsequent meditation practice. In both cases it constitutes a natural progression in which the establishment of a basis in bodily calmness enables awareness to proceed to subtler aspects of contemplation.

In the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, there are many usages of the word Kāya that is translated in accordance with its context. Here for the breathing meditation, wherever the word Kāya, body comes in this Sutta, it must be understood that it means “the breath body”. Therefore, when meditator keeps himself on the mindfulness of breathing meditation, his mindfulness is established on “there is only the breath body”. When he keeps his mind on the breath, he is nothing else but breathe. There is only breathing, no person, no being, no woman, no man, no individual, no I, nothing pertaining to I, no soul, nothing pertaining to the soul, and so on (Paccupannaddhammamattamevetam añño sattovā puggalovā natthi).

There is only breath, but no one who is regulating the breath or who is giving orders to the breath, who creates the breath; just the breath.

In this way, meditator establishes mindfulness. When meditator practises the breathing as mindfulness meditation, he goes from one stage to the other, from lower stages of knowledge to a higher stage of knowledge and than to the highest knowledge. Mindfulness is established to help him go on to the higher stage of knowledge and concentration. When meditator does not see that “there is only breath” but see this breath as being permanent or having on owner, a soul, or a self, or any permanent entity, he will not be able to his progress on the path of insight.
knowledge. Therefore, to know the mindfulness that “there is only the breath body’ is necessary for the development of knowledge.

2.5.4 Four rules of breathing meditation

To get better result in meditation practice in breathing in and breathing out, in the Satipatthāna Sutta, it shows the four ways of breathing meditation. When one practises the breathing meditation, he should perceive fully the long breaths, the short breaths, the duration of the breaths, and subtle, almost imperceptible breaths. These four ways of breathing meditation are; when the breathing in with long breath, one must observe that he is breathing in with long breath, second, he must observe when he is breathing out with long breath. Third, he must observe when he is breathing in with short breath. Fourth, he must observe when he is breathing out with a short breath. These are the four rules of breathing meditation. In the commentary on the Satipatthāna Sutta a simile explains so that the meditator could understand these four rules more clearly. When skillful operators make something big like a drum, they have to make a long turn on the lathe and when they make something small, such as ivory needles, they have to make short turns on the lathe. Making these turns, meditator should be aware of what turn is being made.\(^{48}\) Then, meditator contemplates or keeps himself mindful of his own in breaths and out breaths. When he keeps the mind on his own

\(^{48}\) M.N.a.vol-1–p-355
breathing, he is said to be “contemplating the body in the body internally” (Attano vā assāsapassāsakāye kāyanupassi viharati).\footnote{\textit{D.N.} vol.2 p.214}

When meditator has gained same practice in keeping the mind on his own breaths, occasionally he may think of other people’s breaths as well “just my breaths have a beginning and, end appear and disappear, so do the breaths of other people. In doing this, he is said to be “contemplating the body in the body externally” (Parassa vā assāsapassāsakāye kāyanupassi viharati).\footnote{M.N. vol.1 p.70} However, when meditator happens to contemplate other people’s breath, he should be mindful of them, too. Sometimes, he contemplates his own breathing and then the breathing of other people, and then his own breathing again. He goes back and forth between his breathing and the breathing of other people. When he does that he is said to be “contemplating the body in the body internally and externally (Kālena attano, kālena parassa assāsa passāsakāye).\footnote{M.N. vol.1 p.70}

On the other hand, knowing the factors helps meditator to bring about the breath. Commentary on the \textit{Satipaṭṭhāna sutta} gives an example for the contemplation on the breathing. When a blacksmith wants to produce fire, he uses the bellows. There are the bellows and something at the end of the bellows, which is called the spout, and there are the efforts of the blacksmith. Depending these three things, air is produced to make fire with the bellow; the spout, and the effort of the smith. In the same way, in order to produce breath, their need a physical body like abdominal, the nasal aperture, and the mind (\textit{Yathā kmmārassa bhastaṅca

\footnote{\textit{M.N.} vol.1 p.70}
gaggarājñiṇca tajjaṅca vāyāmam paticca vāto aparāparāṁ sañjarati...).  
Depending on these three things, each breath is produced in the body. Without the bellows, the spout, and the effort of the smith, the blacksmith cannot produce the air. In the same way, without a physical body, the nasal aperture and a mind, the breath cannot be produced. Therefore, these three things are called “the origination factor of the breath”. When the meditator practises the breathing meditation, he comes to understand that “because of there is a body, a nasal aperture and there is a mind, there is this breath”. When he contemplates this breathing meditation, he is said to contemplate on the “origination factors of their breath”.

Then, when there is no physical body, there can be no breath. When there is no nasal aperture, there can be no breath. And when there is no mind, there can be no breath; these three things breaking up of the body, destruction of the nasal aperture, and the cessation of the mind to faction are called the “dissolution factors of the mind” (Vayadhamma). So, when meditator contemplates on these three factors, he is said to contemplate on the “dissolution factors” of the breath. And when he contemplates on all six factors, he is said to contemplate on both, the “origination” (Samudayadhamma) and the “dissolutions factors” of the breath. Therefore, meditator who closely observes the arising of breath bit by bit, at every moment and at any place is said to be contemplating of the origination of the breath or the arising of the breath. And meditator who closely observes the disappearance, bit by bit, at the every moment and at the any place can be said to be contemplating the dissolution factors of the breath or the dissolution of the breath.  

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52 M.N.a.vol-1-p- 355-6  
watches the breath, first he sees the beginning of the breath, then the breath ends and he watches it disappears.

2.6 Awareness of body posture in meditation practice

Awareness of the four-body posture concerns with directing mindfulness to the body is foundation in activities. It is not only a way to build up mindfulness, but it can become the object of insight investigation. In accordance with Satipaṭṭhāna sutta, the four kinds of bodily activity connecting with posture is mentioned, namely; going, standing, sitting, and lying down (Bhikkhu gacchanto vā ‘gacchāmi’ti pajānāti, thito vā ‘thitomhi’ti pajānāti, nisinno vā ‘nisinnomi’ti pajānāti, sayāno vā ‘sayānomi’ti pajānāti). 54

Those who practise mindfulness meditation on the contemplation of the body use all these four postures. Here, the main instruction is “knowing” deeply pointed out with “Pajānāti” on the four kinds of body posture in mindfulness meditation, but it is not just a superficial knowledge, it is a deep knowledge of what is going on. These four kinds of posture often convey the sense of doing something at any time (Yathā tathā vā panassa kāyo papihito hoti, tathā nām pajānati). 55 Applied to the context of mindfulness meditation, this usage suggests continuity of body awareness at all activities in meditation practice. In fact, this contemplation is not limited to the four postures; but includes any way; one’s body might be positioned. So, this particular contemplation means speaking practically. It is an aware of the body in a general manner and is

54 M.N.vol.1:p-71, D.N.vol-2:p-232
aware of the body during its natural activities instead of being carried away by various thoughts and ideas. This particular practising constitutes the mindfulness meditation that most importantly fulfils the role of providing a firm grounding of awareness in the body. For the beginner in meditation practice, this simple practising of being aware of the body in every position and activities helps him to build up continuity of mindfulness. By performing even the least important movement of the body in conscious and deliberate is turned into occasions for mental development. Awareness trained in this way constitutes an important foundation for more formal meditation, since diligent practice of this contemplation will bring the minds tendency to distraction considerably under control.

Awareness of these postures is not only a way to build up mindfulness; the four bodily postures can also be used as objects of insightful investigation. In accordance with the Therāgāthā, it relates the ability to assume any of the four postures to the inter-action of the bones and tendons in the body responsible for that posture (Atthi samghāta ghatito, nhārusuttanibandhano...kappati iriyāpatham). In this way by describing the mechanic behind the body activities, the verse in Therāgāthā points out a perspective on contemplating the body, which has received much attention from modern meditation teacher.

The last statement, “just as his body is disposed, so he knows it”, allows different interpretations. According to commentary on Satipāṭṭhāna Sutta, it is interpreted to be a general statement for all four postures, not differing much from the statements made earlier. That

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56 Theg.p- 570
57 Debe ‘Satipāṭṭhāna in wissen and wanel’ p-113. Mahasi ‘Practical insight’ p-9-16
means, when meditator is going, he must know “I am going”. When he is standing, he knows the same way, “I am standing”, and so on.\textsuperscript{58} In the sub-commentary on the same \textit{Sutta}, adds another interpretation to this statement. According to it, in the statement, “Bhikkhu knows, “I am going,” when he is going”, and so on, the different postures are emphasized, but in the last statement, “just as his body is disposed, so he knows it”, the body as a whole is emphasized. Therefore, when meditator knows that his body as a whole is going, standing, sitting, or lying down, he may be following the instructions given in the last statement. But when he knows, “I am going”, when going, and so on, he may be following the instructions given in the previous statement.\textsuperscript{59}

On the other hand, the statement covers all the small subtle functions or postures of the body as well; not only going, standing, sitting and lying down but also the small movements like stretching, bending, or looking forward or sideways, and falling of the abdomen.\textsuperscript{60} So, meditator especially practising insight meditation cannot afford to be unmindful of the small movements and deportments. When meditator fails to make note of these small movements, there may be a tendency to cling to him, by way of craving or wrong views. When practising insight meditation, he must be aware of everything that is present at the moment.

Therefore, in the statement, “just as his body is disposed, so he knows it”, all other deportments have to be included. \textit{Vipassana} must be practised not only in the four main postures but also in the various small postures.

\textsuperscript{58} M.N. a.vol.1-p- 358  
\textsuperscript{59} M.N. t.p- 353  
\textsuperscript{60} Mahasi ‘The basic insight meditation’ p-19
2.6.1 Position on the development of insight knowledge

When meditator matures his concentration by following instruction on the awareness of body posture as mentioned above, he comes to feel that someone or something is pushing him from behind when he walks in meditation practice. That is because he realizes that the intention is moving his body. He sees the intention and the movement clearly. Each time there is intention and movement, he is aware of them, because he is closely watching the action of walking. He knows separately the intention and the movement one from the other. Going or walking is caused by intention to walk or to go. When there is intention to walk to go, or to do something, there will be going, walking and doing something, then he sees these two things separately. He also sees that because of there are successive movements of desire or intention, there is successive movement of the body.

Meditator comes to know there are only intentions and going in the act of going and nothing else. He does not see a being or a person or a human or I who is walking, who is going (Paccayuppannaññadhammanattam evetam añño sattovā puggalovā nattthi). He sees only these two things in the going. When he watches the intention and the movements closely, he comes to know that these intentions and movements come and go very fast, not last long. These are appearing and disappearing in every moment. He can see this when he achieves real concentration. So, the knowing of those who practise meditation is thorough, clear and precise. When he cannot see any being or any person apart from the intention and the going, he does not see going to be a person going, but just the

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61 D.N.a.vol.2.p-355
intention and the movement take place. He does not see any person, any agent in the act of going or walking. When he sees the intention and the going arising and disappearing at very moment, he comes to realize that what is now going is mind and body, and they are different from those existing a moment ago. At the every moment, something new arise, a new mind, new matter or body, and the old ones disappear (Samkhapatohi manayatanasseva dharmayatane ayatanani narumarupamattameva hoti). He knows that mind and body or the intention and going that exist at one moment, do not exist in the next moment. They just disappear at the moment and at the next moment, there are new intentions and new movements.

Meditator comes to realize that what is now is not the same as what has been in the past and it is not the same as it will be in the future. At every moment, present, past, or future, everything is always moving, appearing, and disappearing. When mediator knows this, his knowledge enables him to abandon the belief in a person or in an individual. Meditator who closely observes the actions and the state of mind, can abandon the belief in a person or a being, and their knowledge enable him to throw away the perception of a permanent entity, a soul, or a self.

Meditator who achieves the real concentration, the deep knowing of his going or walking is the basis or the condition for the further development. It will lead to observe the phenomena arising at every moment and it will lead to develop concentration and wisdom further and further, until he reaches the final state of attainment. At this stage, his knowing is the basis or the condition for the further development of concentration and wisdom.

62 Vin.vol.2.p-113
2.6.2 Different views on meditator and non-meditator

When insight knowledge comes to arise, it leads meditator to distinguish different views on meditator and non-meditator. Regarding the meditator and non-meditator, there have some misunderstandings about the instructions on going, walking, standing, and lying down. These misunderstandings did not arise recently. They arose before the commentaries were put into writing. The commentaries were written down about 2,100 years ago. Even at that time already there were misunderstandings about the meaning of knowing that “I am going, when he is going”, and so on. Non-meditators said, “Even ordinary people who do not meditate and even animals know, “we are going”, when they are going”, but they do not know “going and themselves separately". So, what is the significance of the instruction that they have to be aware of going, when meditators are going, and so on? When knowing “I am going”, when somebody is going, is to be called meditation or a foundation of mindfulness, then everybody can be said to be meditating all the time (Sopasīpinggālādayopi gacchantā ‘gacchamā’ti jānanti, napanetam evarūpaṃjānanaṃ sandhāya vuttaṃ).

So, what is the difference between the knowing of ordinary people who do not meditate and the knowing of meditators? The answer is that the two are diametrically opposed to each other. People who meditate know, “we are going”, when they are going. Before going can take place, they have desire or intention to go. When people who do not meditate know, “we are going”, when they are going, they do not know at every moment when the going takes place. They may be aware of going superficially at some time, but they are not always aware of it.

63 M.N.vol-1-p-70, D.N.vol-2-p-231
In a twinkle of eyes, it is said that various thought moments come and go. These moments can cause some material properties to arise. We have four great elements; earth, water, fire, and air. In moving, the air element is predominant. The desire or the intention causes the air element to arise in the parts of the body that are going to move. That air element causes the body or parts of the body to move. When we do not observe the going closely, as is done in meditation, we do not know that going is composed of successive movements caused by intention or desire. We do not know that the act of going is composed of only the intention and the going, nothing more. We do not know that there is neither an individual nor a being apart from the intention and the going. There is neither I, nor a man, nor a woman, but just the intention and the going or the body movement occurring together.⁶⁴ We do not know it, because we have only a very vague idea of what is going.

The people who meditate on knowing are very distinct from those who do not meditate on knowing. When we meditate while walking, we are aware of the movement at the moment to moment. It may be taken a note of the three stages in one step; lifting, moving, putting down. We are watching closely the process of walking. When we are meditating, we know each time when the walking occurs. We are aware of each time of the intention and the going itself. We are aware of the action and movements, and also will come to observe the intention underlying each voluntary action, as long as we can maintain sufficient concentration.

When meditators know deeply, clearly, and precisely what constitutes the act of going; when they know that there is only intention to go, the going itself, and nothing more, their knowledge is said to be

⁶⁴ D.N.a vol.2.p-357
thorough, with reference to three questions who goes? Whose going is it? And why does going take place? When we ask a meditator “who goes”? The answer will be “No living being or person whatsoever”, since they see that in the act of going, there is just the intention to go and the flow of the air element, which causes movement. They cannot see any person or any being that goes. So, the answer to “who goes?” is “No living being or person whatsoever”. There is no being or person who goes, apart from the intention to go, the movements of the air element, and the consequent movements of the different parts of the body.

Accordingly the questions arise “whose going is it?” Is there a person or authority who owns the going or who presides over the going? We cannot see anything or anyone like that. Therefore, the answers to the questions are in the following: “Not the going of any living being or person”. Since there is no living being or person, there can be no going belong to that living being or person. There is no person, just the intention and the movements, just that. Why does the going take place? On account of the flow of the air element, born from mental activity, going take place. When we want to go, at first, there is a desire or an intention to go and then, this desire or intention or mind promotes the air element to arise in the parts of the body that are involved in the going. Why is there going or walking? Because there are these three factors; the mind that desires to go, the air element that is caused by the mind, and the movement of the different parts of the body caused by the movement of the air element. It is like a cart that four horses are yoked to it, and there is a man, the driver. The man causes the horses to move, and they move, and with their movements, they carry the cart. The movement of the body
is like the movements of the cart. The body is like the cart. It is to be moved by something. The horses are like the air element, caused by the mind. The mind is like the driver. The mind or the driver causes the horses to move or the air element to arise. With the movement of the air element, the whole body moves. So, the going or the walking or moving is composed of these three factors occurring together; the mind, the air element, and the movement what we called as going.

Meditators knowing the answers to these three question thoroughly, cannot see any living being, any permanent entity in this act of going and come to realize that the usage, “a person goes”, “a person walks”, are just for the convenience but does not reflect reality (Kattubāva visitthaattapatipakkhepatattu dhammatttasservagamanasiddhī dassanato). We can see such terms or such statements, but actually there is no person or man or woman going, apart from the intention to go and the actual movement of the different parts of the body. Therefore, people who meditate upon come to realize this going as it really is and not as it appears to be.

2.6.3 Contemplation on act of going (Gacchati) etc

In meditation practice, when meditator watches his own going, standing, sitting, lying down, and other small departments, he is said to be “contemplating the body in the body internally” (Ajhattam vā kāye kāyanupassī vihārati). Sometimes, during meditation practice, he may

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65 Mahasi ‘Satipaṭṭhāna sutta nissaya’p-54
66 M.N.a-p-357, M.N.t-p-352
67 M.N.vol-1-p-70
think of somebody else who is going, standing, sitting, and lying down, and think, just as my going and sitting are impermanent and caused by intentions, so will be the going, sitting down, standing, and lying down of other people”. By contemplating in this way, they are said to contemplate “the body in the body externally” (Bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassi vihārati). This does not mean that deliberately look at other people when he meditates. It is just thinking of other people as “just as my going or my moving is impermanent, comes and goes, so is the going and coming of other people” during their meditation.

Here also, the word “origination factors, and dissolution factors” come again in Satipaṭṭhāna sutta, but there is another way as mentioned above. This means there is cause of the arising of the body or matter and also the arising itself. There are different causes for matter to arise. We are here as human being because we have done something in the past. We are here, because of action. Action is the cause of the body to arise. This action arose because of hearing some craving, because we are ignorant. Although we say we know everything about craving, we are actually ignorant, and this ignorance causes us to crave for a better life. We gather actions and have this good life as human beings. So, the arising of material properties in this life has different causes, ignorance in the past, craving in the past, action in the past, and food is also in one of the causes for the material properties to arise. Sometimes, during meditation, meditator contemplates on the causes for arising of the body or the arising of the material properties. When meditator is mindful of walking or going, he sees the arising of the desire and the arising of the movement. When he sees the four causes or the arising itself, he is said to be
“contemplating on the origination factors” (Samudayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmin). 69 “Dissolution factors” are the same way such as the absence of ignorance, the absence of craving, the absence of action, and also the absence of food. When meditator contemplates on the “dissolution factors”, he begging to see there is desire and they take note of the desire. There is movement at one moment and it disappears at next moment. So, meditator also comes to see the dissolution or the disappearing of the different phenomena, when he pays close attention to what is going one. When he recognizes one of these factors, then he is said to be seeing “the dissolution factors of the body” (Vayadhhammānupassīvā kāyasmin vihārati). 70

When mediator is fully aware of what is going on in his body, he sees that there is the body only, neither a person nor a permanent entity. When meditator sees the arising and the disappearing of the different phenomena, he sees no reason to be attached to anything. He sees no reason to grasp anything. Then, he will have no craving for what is going on. He will not have any craving for themselves or the action of going. He sees clearly by insight knowledge, that everything is impermanent, such as coming, arising and vanishing. When meditator can keep him from being attached to anything, from grasping of anything, his craving and grasping is temporarily inhibited or momentarily removed. When he has no craving or grasping for anything, he has to remove craving and grasping momentarily with regard to the things he does not watch, craving and grasping do not arise for some time and it is called “momentary removal of craving and grasping”. When he can remove craving and grasping for the things what he observes, he will also be able

69 M.N.vol-1-p-70
70 M.N.vol-1-p-70
to remove craving and grasping for things what he does not observe and it is called “temporary removal”.

As mentioned above, the four postures are often used in the discourse as a way to indicate that something should be done at any time. In this way, they are related to various predominantly mental events such as fear, unwholesome thoughts, or overcoming the five hindrances. These relate each of the four postures to awareness of the concurrent state of mind. It indicates that removing unwholesome state of mind is not confined to formal sitting meditation. But it should be undertaken in any situation or posture. In fact, it depends on the character of individual meditators because the standing and walking posture are particularly suitable for lustful natured personalities, while sitting and reclining are more appropriate for anger natured personalities but it adds in *Visuddhimagga* that whichever posture is effective for developing concentration is the one to be adopted. And another possibility suggested by the fact that the discourses relate the four postures to various states of mind is to observe the interrelation between states of mind and the way one performs activities like walking, sitting, etc. through such observation one can become aware of how a particular state of mind expresses itself through one’s bodily posture, or how the condition and motion of the body affects the mind. Bodily posture and state of mind are essentially interrelated so that clear awareness of the one naturally enhances awareness of the other. In this way, contemplation of the four postures can lead to an investigation of body’s conditional interrelation with the mind.

71 M.N.vol.1-p-21
72 Vism.p- 128
Of these four postures, the discourses individually relate walking and reclining to the development of awareness. Walking meditation often comes up circumstantially in the discourses when a visitor, on approaching a settlement of monk, finds them practicing walking meditation in the open. And several passages report the Buddha and some of his senior disciples engaged in walking meditation. This shows that even accomplished meditator considered walking meditation and worthwhile practice. According to the discourses, walking meditation benefits bodily health and digestion, and leads to the development of sustained concentration. Unlike the way in which walking meditation is usually practised nowadays, the standard instructions for walking meditation found in the discourses take mental events as their main object of observation. The instructions in this context do not mention awareness of one’s bodily posture or awareness of the dynamics of walking, but speak of purifying the mind from the five hindrances. Since the same expression is also used for sitting meditation, it simply implies a continuation of the same meditation that has earlier been practised while seated, although in a different posture. In the commentary on the Satipatthāna sutta, walking meditation is mentioned as a cure for sleepiness (Yasmmin iriyāpathe thinamiddham okkamati, tato aññam parivattantayāmi). However, in this case, the instructions are different from the standard descriptions. By way of conclusion it should be underlined that, in spite of these various perspectives on developing insight related to the four postures, what the instructions in the Satipatthāna sutta, itself suggest is simply awareness of the whole body in general, and awareness of its disposition in space.

73 D.N.vol.1-p- 189-
74 Sayadawupaṭṭita ‘In this very life’.p-83
75 D.N.a.vol.2-p-372
2.7 Determinate knowledge

Mindfulness of the four postures has led to a grounding of awareness in the body, and then one can turn to the next contemplation introduced in the *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta*, a determinate knowledge in regard to a range of bodily activities (*Bhikkhu satova abhikkamati..satova kammaṁ adhiṭṭhāti*). This also forms a distinct step in the gradual path of training referred to in the *Satisampajañña*. In the sequence of this gradual path of training, mindfulness and clear knowing in regard to bodily activities occupy a transitional place between a preparatory development and actual sitting meditation. To be more precise, mindfulness and clear knowing complete the preliminary stages concerned with ethical conduct, restraint, and contentment, and form the starting point for the formal practice of meditation, when one resorts to a secluded place in order to overcome the hindrances, to progress through the levels of absorption, and to gain realization (*Imināca ariyena satisampanaññena samannāgato..vivittam senāsanam bhañjati*). So, the development of mindfulness and clear knowing are the foundation for more formal meditations, and the remaining contemplations described in the *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta*.

The combined expression “mindfulness and clear knowing” indicated that in addition to being mindful of the activities mentioned the presence of “clear knowing” plays an important role in meditaton practice. What is the clear knowing that the Buddha said it must be applied before trying to understand how meditater should apply clear knowing, first, they must know the meaning of the term “clear knowing”.

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76 A.N.vol.2.p-286
77 Edwerd F Crangle ‘The origin and development early India contemplation practice’ p-163
78 D.N.vol.1.p-67
To know its meaning, the original Pāli word "Sampajañña" mentioned in commentaries need be explained.

The word Sampajañña is derived from the word Sampajāna that means "one who sees correctly", "one who knows correctly, entirely, and equally or evenly". When somebody is called Sampajāna, his or her state of being is called Sampajañña. So, Sampajañña means, "seeing or knowing or discerning rightly, entirely, and evenly or equally". The syllable Sam, in the word Sampajāna is a prefix or has many meanings. The sub-commentary on the Satipatthāna sutta explains three meanings for this word.

The first meaning is "rightly" or "correctly" (Samantato pakārchi, pakatthamvā savisesamajānāti sampajāno). Therefore, when meditator tries to see or observe the object of meditation, he must see them clearly and precisely. He must not confuse them with other things. When he is distinguishing mind from matter and matter from the mind, he must see mind separate from matter and matter separate from mind. He must not confuse these two with one and another. He must see precisely and clearly. This is what is meant by saying, "He must see rightly or correctly".

The second meaning of Sam is "entirely". When meditator sees or discerns an object, he must know it in its entirety. "In its entirety" means in all aspects of its mental or physical phenomena. He must know the characteristics, functions, and manifestation of a given object. Third meaning of Sam is "equally or evenly (Sammā pajānanam sampajānan). Meditator must know how evenly apply his mental faculties. When he

79 M.N.t-p-354
80 M.N.t-p-354
practices meditation, he puts five mental faculties to work. These five mental faculties are confidence, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. He must work in harmony and be in balance with each other.\footnote{Ashinjanakabhivamsa ‘Vipassanā meditation’ p-15} Especially, importance is the balance of energy and concentration. When these faculties are even and equal, there will be concentration and wisdom rose from concentration. When the faculties are not in balance, concentration is disturbed and scattered and consequently, penetration into the nature of things cannot arise.

"Clear knowing," means seeing precisely, seeing everything in its entirety, seeing it is evenly using all mental faculties. Only when there is evenness in the application of the five mental faculties will there be further development of wisdom. When he applies clear knowing, it means, he observes or takes note of the object, paying close attention to it, trying to see it thoroughly, precisely, and with all mental faculties in balance. There are four kinds of clear knowing; clear knowing of purpose (Satthaka sampajañña), clear knowing of suitability (Sappāya sampajañña), clear knowing of pasture (Gocarasampajañña), and clear knowing of non-delusion (Asamnohasampajañña).\footnote{M.N. t, p-354-5. D.N.a.vol.1.p-165} Meditator has to understand and observe each of the subtle actions of the body with these four kinds of clear knowing in mind.

2.7.1 Clear knowing of purpose

Among these four kinds of clear knowing, the clear knowing of purpose (Satthaka sampajañña) is the knowing of purpose after
considering what is worthy and not worthy, with the thought, "Is there any use to one by this going or is there not?" (Dhammato vaḍḍisamkhā tena saha atthena pavattati sāthakaṃ, sāthakassa sampajānaṃ sāthakasampajaññaṃ).\(^{83}\) One does this but not immediately, just by the influence of the thought, at the very moment the thought of going forward is born. In this context, purpose is growth according to the Dhamma, by way of visiting a relic shrine, Bodhi tree, the Saṅgha, the elders, and a place where the dead are cast for seeing the unlovely. By visiting a relic shrine, a Bodhi tree, or the Saṅgha, for producing spiritual interest and by meditating on the waning of the interest one could reach Arahantship. By visiting to the elders and by getting established in their instruction, one could reach Arahantship, and by visiting a place where the dead are cast, by seeing a corpse there and by producing the first absorption in that unlovely object, one could reach Arahantship. So, visitings to these places are purposeful (Atthonāma dhammato vaḍḍiti...cetiyaḍasaṇatā vāṭiādi āraddham).\(^{84}\)

### 2.7.2 Clear knowing of suitability

The clear knowing of suitability (Sappāyasampajañña) is the knowing of the suitability after considering what is suitable or not (Sappāyassa attano upakārāvahassa hitassa sampajānanam sappāya sampajaññaṃ).\(^{85}\) For instance, the visiting of a relic shrine could be quite purposeful but when a great offering is made to a relic shrine, people gather to shrine and if the greed would arise for the meditator in an

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\(^{83}\) D.N.t.vol.1.p-242  
\(^{84}\) M.N.a. vol.1. p-355  
\(^{85}\) D.N.t.vol.1.p-354
attractive object, resentment in a non-attractive one, and delusion through prejudice; or if harm could come to the holy life of purity; then, a place like that relic shrine would not be suitable. When there could be no such harm it would be suitable. Further more, the “clear knowing of what is suitable” in looking at a corpse and applying its nature to your own body may be beneficial, but it is not suitable for the meditator to look at corpse with lustful thought. Thus it is not suitable action and a suitable object of meditation. These two kinds of clear knowing can be applied to any ordinary daily activities. When meditator applies these two clear knowing to what he is doing, he will not do anything wrong.

2.7.3 Clear knowing of pasture

The clear knowing of pasture (Gocarasampajañña) means meditation in the seclusion (Abhikkamādisu kammaṭṭhānasamkhāte gocare sampajaññam gocarasampajaññam). It is said when people stay in their own domain or in their own territory, they will not come to any harm. Nobody can harass them. But when they leave their domain, they may be harassed. Therefore, the Buddha advises Bhikkhus to live in their own territory, their own domain, which is the fourfold foundation of mindfulness. The practice of the four foundations of mindfulness is said to be the territory or the domain of meditator. Here, “the clear knowing of pasture,” means just the practice of the four foundations of mindfulness.

86 D.N.t, vol.1,p-354
2.7.4 Clear knowing of non-delusion

The last kind of clear knowing is “clear knowing of non-delusion” (Asammohasampajañña). This means not confusing the different acts when going forth and when returning (Abbikkamādiṣu asammuyhanameva sampajaññaṁ asammohasampajaññaṁ). Meditator must recognize them and know the differences clearly. When he comprehends them clearly, and when he sees them distinctly, then he is said to apply “clear knowing of non-delusion”. Now, this “clear knowing of non-delusion” will come when he thoroughly applies “clear knowing of the resort”. It will arise by itself, when the “clear knowing of the resort”, or simply the practice of meditation has been brought to maturity. So, in practising meditation, the “clear knowing of the resort” is important. It means that meditator applies comprehension to whatever you are doing, whether going forward or returning.

Several of the activities listed in this part of the Satipatthāna sutta, such as “Abbikkante patikkante”, “Ālokite vilokite”, “Samiñjhite pasārite”, and “Sanghātippatīcīvaradhārane”, occur as a set elsewhere in the discourses. These instances do not explicitly mention clear knowing, but these are instructions given to monks regarding proper behavior. What the discourses emphasize regarding these activities is that they should be performed in a graceful and pleasing way (Pāśādika). The need to maintain such standards of good conduct has found its expression in the numerous training rules for the monastic community. These regulate in great detail, the various aspects of daily conduct. It needs for the monks and nuns to behave in a careful and dignified manner parallel to the

87 D.N.i.vol.1.p-354
88 Vin. vol -6. p-14 8, 206. These are called seventy-five rules.
second aspect of clear knowing mentioned in the commentaries, which relates it to the suitability of on action.

Commentary on the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, it mentioned that it associates clear knowing with the activity of looking (*Sace bhikkhave nandassa pacchimā disā..guttadvāratāya hoti*). This passage reports the monk *Nanda*, who was a particularly lustful character, marshalling all his efforts in order to avoid the arising of desire and discontent (*Abhijjādomanassa*) when looking in any direction. The terms used in this instance shows that this form of clear knowing is related to sense-restraint (*Sampkamati ‘evam mam sayantam nabhijjādomanassā..tattha sampajāno hoti*). On the other hand in the *Mahāsuniṇīta Sutta*, which relate clearly knowing in regard to the four postures to sense-restrain. Both passages correspond to the third aspect of clear knowing mentioned in the commentaries, which speaks of “pasture”. The same expression came up earlier in relation to sati descriptions, depicting *Satipaṭṭhāna* as the proper pasture of a monk, while improper pasture represented sensual distraction. This suggests that the clear knowing in regards to pasture refers in particular to sense-restraint.

The fourth aspect mentioned in the commentaries, which associates clear knowing with the absence of delusion (*Asammoha*), goes beyond the context of the body contemplation. To have a clear understanding of the true nature of reality is a task of clearly knowing in general, a quality that, according to the definition, needs to be developed with all the *Satipaṭṭhāna* contemplations. The commentarial presentation of the four aspects inherent in clear knowing can be seen to follow a progressive

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89 A.N. vol-3.p-14
90 M.N.vol.3.p-153
91 M.N. vol-2. p-151
sequence, with clearly knowing in regards to the purpose of establishing the background for corresponding “suitable” conduct, which in turn facilitates sense-restraint and one’s meditative development, which then enables insight into the true nature of reality to arise. In this way, according to the *Satipatthāna* practice of developing clear knowing in regards to the activities combines purposeful and dignified conduct with sense-restraint in order to build up a foundation for the arising of insight. In fact, both proper conduct and sense-restraint overlap to some degree, since several aspects of monk’s or nun’s code of conduct are intended to facilitate sense-restraint, on the other hand while one’s bodily activities will become more graceful and dignified if a certain degree of mental equilibrium through the obtaining of absence of sensual distractions.

2.8 Reflection on the repulsiveness parts of body

From the contemplation on the breathing, four postures, determinate knowledge, consisting only in bare awareness of whatever posture or movement occurred naturally, a meditation practice proceeds to the reflection on the repulsive parts of body. It is a direct process from mindfulness to an analysis of the body's constitution, and a survey of the constitution of one's body by listing various anatomical parts, organs, and fluids. According to *Satipatthāna sutta*, there are thirty-two parts of body. Meditator is instructed to contemplate on the repulsiveness of these thirty-two parts. It is a direct mindfulness to the analysis of the body’s constitution. This analytical meditation takes survey of the constitution of one's body by listing various repulsive parts, organs, and fluids (*Bhikkhu imameva kāyam uddham pādatālā, adho kesamatthakā ...sedo medo assu*)
vasā khelo sīṅghānikā lasikā muttan’ti).\textsuperscript{92}

Meditator surveys his own body by looking at them mentally seeing and contemplates on repulsiveness with respect to these parts. The set of repulsive parts given in the \textit{Satipaṭṭhāna sutta} follows a natural sequence from the solid and outer parts, through the internal organs, to the organic liquids. This sequence represents a progressive penetration of awareness. Alternatively, the sequence can also be taken to correspond to an exercise in imaginative visualization, during which one strips one’s body of each part in turn. According to the \textit{Visuddhimagga} the practice of this exercise develops by giving an attention to each individual repulsive part to become aware of all of them together.\textsuperscript{93} This suggests that with the more advanced stages of this contemplation the individual parts move away in importance and awareness turns to the composite and unattractive nature of the body in its entirety.

According to the \textit{Sampasadaniya sutta}, the contemplation on the repulsive parts of the body can also precede from the repulsive parts to the awareness of the skeleton body because that contemplation of the bones has many benefits (\textit{Aṭṭhikasaṅña bhikkhave bhāvītā bahūlīkatā mahapphalā hoti mahānisarṣā}).\textsuperscript{94} Similar to the \textit{Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta}, the instructions can be found in the \textit{Vijaya Sutta}, where a thorough investigation of the body leads from its outer repulsive parts to its inner organs and liquids. In this \textit{Sutta}, the Buddha said, “Only few people having known the repulsive part of the body and reflected the useless of the body, can get the liberation”.\textsuperscript{95} In the \textit{Vijaya Sutta}, investigation of

\textsuperscript{92} Vim.vol.1.p-240. D.N.vol.2.p-232, M.N.vol.1.p-71
\textsuperscript{93} Vism.vol.1.p-256
\textsuperscript{94} S.N.vol.3.p-113
\textsuperscript{95} S.N.p- 193-201
the body concludes with the abstract question; "how else, except through lack of insight, could one exalt oneself or disparage another because of such a body? This conclusion shows that the aim of this contemplation is to reduce the attachment to one's own body, a suggestion that holds true also for the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*.

The same exercise also occurs in other discourses in *Pāli Nikāya*. The main purpose of this contemplating on the repulsive parts is to gain the realization that one's own body and the bodies of others are not inherently attractive. Contemplation of the repulsiveness parts is concerned with "unattractiveness" (*Asubha*), which it explains to have the purpose of countering lust (*Asubhānapassīnāṁ bhikkhave kāyasamim vibaratha, yo subhāya dhātuyā so pahiyati*). It suggests that a detached observation of the various parts of the body leads to the understanding that they are all of equal nature. The clear apprehension of their true nature makes it evident that there is nothing inherently beautiful in any particular aspect of the body for example, such as, eyes, hair, and lips. Those who do not accept of the repulsive parts of the body, their attachment to their own body continue to exist. Following the instructions in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, to contemplate the unattractive nature of the body refers in the first instance to one's own body. It is clearly indicates that the contemplation on the repulsive parts of the body has to be developed on oneself first, before it can be applied to others.

In the *Bhāradvāja sutta*, *Bhāradvāja* said to the king *Udena* "To reflect the body as unattractive (*Asubha*), Lick of contemplation on the repulsive parts of the body, one come to thinking of their own body as

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96 Sn. Verse.208
attractive”. Reading the absence of beauty in one’s own body serves in particular as a countermeasure to conceit. Subsequently, the *Satipatthāna* refrains this contemplation as it is to be removed of lust, and to develop loathing in regard to sexuality. The potential of this contemplation as a countermeasure to sensuality has led to its inclusion in Buddhist ordination ceremonies, part of which consists in instructing a novice monk or nun to contemplate the first five repulsing parts listed in the *Satipatthāna* instruction. So contemplation on the repulsive parts of the body should be carried out with a balanced and detached attitude, so that the effect is to cool desire, not to stimulate aversion. If enough precautions are taken to establish the appropriate attitude, and balanced contemplation on the unattractive the body has the potential to lead to realization.

2.9 Reflection on the elements of materiality

Having explained body contemplation on the repulsive thirty-two parts of the body, *Satipatthāna* practice proceeds to the material elements and it shows how meditator should reflect on his body whatever posture he might be assuming, whether he is sitting or walking, standing, or lying down. He will reflect on his body with respect to these four primary elements (*Imameva kāyam yathathitam yathāpanihitam dhātuso paccavekkhati ‘atthi imasmin kāye pathavidhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu ’ti*).  

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98 S.N. vol.2.p-328  
Traditionally, there are four material elements, namely the Earth element (*Pathavīdhātu*), the Water element (*Āpodhātu*), the Fire element (*Tejodhātu*), and the Air element (*Vāyodhātu*). Meditation on each of elements is mentioned only briefly in this *Sutta*. It is meant for meditator with quick understanding, that is, for people of sharp intelligent. Elsewhere, in the *Rāhulovāda Sutta*, and *Dhātuvinīhaṅga Sutta*, this meditation is explained in more detail. These *Suttas* are useful for people who are not so sharp in understanding. Whenever the Buddha delivered a sermon, he looked at liking and disliking of his listeners, and also whether or not their minds were mature. Only after its investigation, did he deliver his sermon or discourse according to the situation. So, in *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, the topic is treated very briefly. The purpose of these kinds of meditation is to remove the concept of being or seeing oneself and others as beings. To remove this concept, one needs to practise the meditation of mentally dividing the body into four parts and seeing them separately, each as one of the four elements that are called "great elements".

The Earth element does not mean the earth as it is commonly understood. It means something that is inherent in the earth, the state of being of the earth, or the "quality of stiffness, hardness or softness" that are the characteristics of the earth element. It is stated in the scripture that these four elements are found everywhere in sentient beings as well as implants and inanimate objects. Next one is the Water element. Water element here means not the water as it is commonly understood, but its characteristics, which are "tricking" or "cohesion" or "fluidity". Tricking or cohesion or fluidity indicates the presence of Water element. It is

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100 M.N. vol-1-p-71
present in everything. There is cohesion in the earth or wood or bricks, and so on. This cohesion, which holds things together, is one characteristics of the Water element. Next one is the Fire element. This is not the fire, as it is commonly understood, but the state of being of the fire, the quality of fire that is, heat. By heat, it means cold also. Heat, cold or “temperature” is the characteristic of the Fire element. When one feels hot or cold, he feels the Fire element. The last element is the Air element. The characteristic of the Air element is “an extension, an expanding or distending”. The fact that one can sit or stand upright and do not fall down is also the work of Air element that supports him from all sides.

The corresponding simile illustrates the effect of this particular method of contemplation with a butcher who has slaughtered and cut up a cow to sell. Just as if come cow-butcher or a cow-butcher’s apprentice, a man who makes words for his keep, having killed a cow and divided it into parts, were sitting at a four-cross-road, just so, a meditator reflects, by way of the elements, on the body, in any one of the four postures thus; “there are in this body the Earth element, the Water element, the Fire element, the Air element” (Yathā koci gogātakovā tassevavā...‘atthi imasamim käye pathavīdhātu..evap paccavekkhati).\(^{101}\)

The cow-butcher does not get rid of the cow-percept while feeding the cow, driving it to the place of slaughter, tying it and putting it up there, killing it, and even when seeing the dead carcass of the cow; not until he cuts it up and divides it into parts does the perception of a cow disappear, To that butcher sitting with the meat before him after cutting up the cow, however, the perception of a cow disappears, and the perception of flesh comes in being. To him, there is not this thought; “I

\(^{101}\) D.N.a.vol.2.p-360
am selling the cow; these people are taking away the cow”. But to him, indeed, there occurs this thought; “I am selling flesh; these people indeed, are taking away flesh”.\(^\text{102}\)

Similarly, to the meditator, the perception of a being or the perception of a person does not disappear as long as he does not reflect, by way of the elements of materiality. To him who reflects by way of the element of materiality, however, the perception of a being disappears; the mind gets established by way of the element of materiality. Therefore, the Buddha declared; “A Bhikkhu reflects on just this body according to its being placed or disposed, by way of the element of materiality, thinking thus; ‘there are, in this body, the elements of solidity, the elements of cohesion, the elements of caloricity, and the elements of oscillation’. O Bhikkhus, in whatever manner, a clever cow-batcher or a cow-butcher or a cow-butcher’s apprentice having slaughtered a cow and divided it by way of portions should be sitting at the junction of a cross-road, in the same manner, a Bhikkhu reflects…thinking thus; “there are, in this body, the Earth element, the Water element, the Fire element, the Air element”.

An experience of oneself as a combination of material qualities reveals the qualitative identity of one’s own body with the external environment. In this way, a healthy degree of detachment develops, counteracting the grasping at what is, in the end, merely a combination of material qualities. With sustained contemplation a meditator may come to realize that this apparently so solid and compact material body, and with it the whole material world, is entirely without essence. His realization of the selfless nature of the four elements is a determining characteristic of full awaking (Netamama, nesomasami, na meso attati...evametam)

\(^{102}\) D.N.a.vol.2.p-361
There are simply different degrees of hardness or softness, of wetness or dryness, of hotness or coldness and some degree of motion. So, contemplation of the four elements has the potential lead to a penetrative realization of the insubstantial and selfless nature of material reality. The discourses relate the scheme of the four elements not only to the human body, but also to material existence in general.

In the *Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta*, it points out the similarity between one’s own “internal” four elements and their “external” counterparts in order to bring the truth of impermanence. An additional perspective of the four elements can be found in the *Mahārābulovāda Sutta*, which uses the four elements as an inspiration for developing the mental qualities of loving kindness (*Mettā*) and compassion (*Karunā*). Just as the earth is free from anger, even when various types of refusal are thrown on it, so too a meditator should develop a mind free from resentment (*Pathavaṁ saṁsamārabhulam, bhāvanam bāveta*). These passages show that contemplation of the four elements can be employed in a variety of ways, linking the nature of one’s body to the constitution of the whole material environment, or employing these material characteristics in order to develop wholesome mental attitudes.

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103 M.N.vol.3-p- 283, and also S.nā.vers-577, it said, ‘Sārṭroya bāṭīṁsaviddhakunapo sārarahito’.
104 M.N.vol.2-p-86. and also M.N.a. vol.3-p-90 it said, ‘Mettam yāžulāti...tādibavassa kāranadassanattham’
2.10 Contemplation on the dead body

The last kind of meditation practice in the body contemplations is contemplation on the dead body. It involves some degree of visualisation, or at least reflection on the own body through the death of others. Death is a subject, which many people prefer not to talk about. Death as the darkest side of life is considered an unsuitable subject for conversation. People tend to cover their awareness of the reality of death with enormous abstract imaginings and theories. They actually try to suppress that reality in their mind. Thus, the mind is deceived by intellect. Gradually deception becomes perception. However, this perception of death seems to have achieved general acceptance. The Buddha's way of thinking is different and in this case even against to the mainstream. We should try to understand it. In the *Maragānussati Sutta*, the Buddha taught his disciples that in order to uproot mental defilement and thereby achieve, one should stay vigilant and develop a sharp mindfulness of death.\(^{105}\) No long as we get liberation, we have to face death one day. Even the Buddha including all noble persons got liberation with their ultimate death in the cycle of world. Death is an inevitable process what we all have to go through.

People do not like to talk about death because they fear of death. This is true of anybody. Some people also think that talking about death may bring ill-fate and could predetermine them for ruin. The Buddha said that the fear of death could be driven only by the insight. When there is not insight, there will be fear of death. And all conditional things are subject to impermanent what can create several sufferings in life. The

\(^{105}\) A.N. vol.2.p.-268-270
insight to see all these conditional things as their reality is only one leading to the cessation of suffering. Why the people fear of death, the main reason is that they do not see death on its really, and also they do not see the nature of death. For example, when we cross the room where is no light and silent darkness, suddenly we may think the wire as a snake and a cat as a ghost, then we will feel frightened because we do not see the wire and a cat as they really are. If there is a light to see all these clearly, the fear is automatically expelled because we know exactly what there is. We just speculate on the sound of the cat’s movements and create fear within ourselves. Not seeing things, as they are makes us scared. What we need is light that helps us to see a wire as a wire, and to make sure that it is not a snake. Even when it comes to matters like death, what we have to do is to understand it, to know what fear of death is like. Understanding is likened to light. If you do not talk about it, you will not understand it. By reflecting self on the nature of death, the fear of death comes to be reduced. It is like the frighten goes away when the light appear in the dark room. That is why this meditation on death is meaningful and worthwhile, however fearful it may sound.

Fear of death is a fear of future that results in our not being able to live fully at the present moment. We fear and worry that we are going to lose what we have, unable to accept that things are impermanent. It hurts and discourages one to think that we have to leave all hard-earned wealth and reputation. The future always seems something uncertain for human beings. Uncertainty is the whole mark of life after death. Buddhism says that without fully accepting the uncertainties associated with death, life

106 Dhp.a.vol.1.p-45
never feels secure. Life is naturally insecure. However, it is possible to feel secure amid the insecure provided we develop our mind.

2.10.1 *Kamma* and rebirth from meditation point of view

As well as various techniques of meditation including *Vipassanā*, there are teachings in Buddhism that help to lessen fear of death such as *Kamma* and rebirth. However, we are approaching the problem of fear of death from *Vipassanā* meditation point of view. In the *Vipassanā* meditation, one of the principles is to start looking at things from the best-known point and to progress to the less known. Here, fear is what best known. It exists in you, in me, in every one of us. Therefore, we have to start tackling this fear. We do not start from the unknown, which is life after death and all the mystery connected to it. If it is unknown, how can we start with it? So, instead of contemplating the less known such as rebirth, we will start from the best known, that is fear of death. When we comprehend what it is fear, then we will not be fearful of death anymore. That is why we reflect on death. Lack of the right attitude is another ground where fear of death is bred. Death is very much a part of life. Death has to be viewed in the context of life, and life in the context of death. We go to funerals we see the death. If we do not view them in the context of life, we do not get the full picture. Looking at life alone can make us forgetful and arrogant, behaving as if we are never going to die. Focusing on death alone can bring us disappointment, negative fear and pessimism. Life and death are the two sides of the same coin.
Contemplation on the death is something that can make one a wise person and enables one to view life seriously. During the time of the Buddha, Kisāgotamī, a young mother, suddenly lost her only child. She could not accept that her son was now dead. She refused to be convinced by the appeal of common sense reality. She went on looking for a cure to bring him back to life. It was only too understandable that she as a mother would react in the way she did. The child meant everything to her. The same happened to Paṭācarā, a young lady who lost her two sons, husband and parents within a matter of days so mercilessly and unbelievably. It was too much for her to take. She had a complete breakdown. She could not accept that such thing had happened to her. From meditation point of view, the suffering for these two young mothers increased because they did not accept what had really happened, but kept rejecting it. The grief was being multiplied anytime they refused to accept it in their mind. The Buddha asked Kisāgotamī to bring mustard seeds to make medicine for bringing her son back to life, but that seeds must be from a family, which has never experienced death. She went out in search for the seeds, only to find that there was no such family that had never experienced death. Kisāgotamī came back to her senses, buried her dead child and returned to the Buddha for the meditation leading to the path of deathless. So, Vipassanā is to help us see and accept things as they are and thereby not to create more suffering out of suffering.

107 - Thig p-403
108 - Thig p-392
2.10.2 Purpose of contemplation on the dead body

Contemplation on the dead body is the last mindfulness meditation method mentioned in the *Satipatthāna Sutta*. In the *Visuddhimagga*, Contemplation on the dead body is described in detail how a meditator can gain the first vision of a decaying corpse in a charnel ground and subsequently develop this vision while meditation is lodging.\(^{109}\)

In the *Satipatthāna sutta*, it mentions the meanings that the first one is to repulse the nature of the body as discovered during the stage of decay, and other one is to know all living beings are subject to death, nobody can avoid himself from death. According to the *Dhammapada*, contemplation on the dead body can reduce one's sensual desire because the Buddha conducted his disciples to see the rotting corpse of the beautiful lady Sīrīmā as a countermeasure to sensual desires and it recommends the contemplation of a rotting corpse for those whose character disposition is predominantly lustful natured.\(^{110}\)

In this *Sutta*, the Buddha said the nine-cemetery contemplation to cultivate the concept of repulsiveness of the body. This is used to develop detachment from the body. We are attached to our body and to the bodies of other. As long as there is any attachment, there will be suffering. In order to get rid of suffering, we should have no attachments to our body and the bodies of others. When we can reduce our attachment to our body, the suffering connecting with body also go away in some way. The Buddha said in the *Piyājātika Sutta*, because of attachment, all mental

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\(^{109}\) Vism.vol.1-172, 107

\(^{110}\) Dhp.a.vol.2.p-66
and physical sufferings arise (*Sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsā piyajātikā*).\(^{111}\)

The contemplation on death will help to get rid of these attachments. In the *Mahādukkhakkhandha Sutta*, the Buddha explained to the Bhikkhus that every suffering, faults, and dangers come from the sensual pleasures, to escape from them it needs to realize things as they really are. The same set of terms as a way of contemplating the inherent. “Disadvantage” (*Ādinava*) in material bodies.\(^{112}\) Although one might be drawn to dwell on the “advantage” (*Assāda*) of the beautiful bodily aspects of a young opposite sex, the “disadvantage” becomes only too apparent once that same body has succumbed to old age, sickness, and finally to death, at which point this same body, which formerly appeared so attractive, proceeds through the stages of decomposition described above. This passage confirms that a central purpose of *Vipassanā* a corpse in decay is to counteract sensual desire.

The following instructions given in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, the vision of the rotten body is applied to one’s own body, reflection that in future one’s own body will undergo the same process of decay. Then, this kind of *Vipassanā* also constitutes a means for counteracting conceit. Subsequently, as indicated in the “refrain” the same understanding is to be applied to the living bodies of others. Commentary on the *Theragāthā* reports the actual practice of this *Satipaṭṭhāna* meditation in a charnel ground. Two monks named *Mahākāla* and *Cūḷakāla* each contemplated a female corpse, but with different results. While one monk was able to gain insight, the other was unable to develop the contemplation, since the

\(^{111}\) M.N.vol.2.p-308

\(^{112}\) M.N.vol.1.p-88
This danger is also reflected in the commentaries, which is a caution against the use of a corpse belonging to the opposite sex. An alternative insight to be gained through this meditation practice is the inevitability of death. The stages of decay of a dead body vividly depict the truth that whatever one clings to as an embodiment of “I” or “mine” will endure only a limited time. The approaches to recollection of death particularly recommended by the Buddha relate to rating and breathing; bringing to mind the fact that even the next mouthful be eaten and the next breath to inhaled are not certain to take place. Indeed, the presence or absence of breath spells life or death, so mindfulness of breathing also has the potential to be used for recollecting death helps to stir up effort in order to avoid and eradicate unwholesomeness, and can ultimately culminate in realizing the “deathless”.

Recollection of death also serves as a useful preparation for the time when one actually has to face death. As the concluding exercise among the body contemplations, a regular recollection of death can lead to the realization that death is fearful only to the extent to which one identifies with the body. With the aid of the body contemplations one can come to realize the true nature of the body and thereby overcome one’s attachment to it. Being free from attachment to the body, one will be freed from any fear of death.

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113 Dhp.a.vol.1.p-147. Thig.a.vol.2.90-119
114 A.N.vol.3.p-306
2.10.3 Instruction on the contemplation of dead body

In the *Satipatthāna Sutta*, it is mentioned the nine kinds of instruction on the contemplation of dead body. The nine kinds of cemetery insight meditation dwell on the different stages of decay of a corpse. The first one is on a “rotten body”. In the *Satipatthāna sutta*, the Buddha said, “as if a Bhikkhu sees a dead body”. One who practices mindfulness meditation needs not always going to a cemetery. He may still have visions of a dead body during meditation practice. This may be the result of either deliberately thinking of corpses, Whether the visions come to him on his own without any apparent reason he must investigate these visions and consider them repulsive, noting ‘repulsive, until they disappear. When practice mindfulness meditation, it is important to be aware of what comes to the attention of meditations, to mind or to the other five sense doors. When meditator has a vision, he just becomes aware of it until the vision goes away. The cemetery meditations given in this Sutta, are designed for the purpose of achieving awareness of the foulness or loathsomeness or repulsiveness of the body (*Ayampi kho kāyo evamdhammo evambhāvī evamevatito*).  

At first, meditator approaches toward the corpse from upwind, then, sits neither too close nor too far from the corpse, but sits on one side of it, in a place convenient for them to look at it. After he has selected the object for meditation, he can start the practice. When he tries to meditate and things appear or visions arise, he can prevent confusion. Therefore meditator has to note everything that can be seen around the corpse. After sitting near the corpse, he should look at the corpse and try to apprehend

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115 D.N. vol.2 p-233. M.N. vol.1 p-70
its foulness in six ways. First, he apprehends it by distinguishing its color
"This is a body which has a black or a yellow skin", whatever color it
might have. He also distinguishes the corpse by its "mark". By its mark
does not mean its being a man or a woman, but its age. Age means that
this is the body of someone who was in the first, middle, or last phase of
his or her life. When he looks at the shape of the corpse, he notices, "this
is the shape of its head, its neck, its hands, its chest, its whole body". He
has to look at the whole body to comprehend the concept of foulness.

Meditator looks toward the "four directions". Directions here mean
the upper and the lower part of the corpse. The lower part of the body is
the part down from the navel and the upper part that up from the navel.
So, he knows, "this is the upper part and this is the lower part of the
corpse". He should also note the "location". Location means here, "the
hand is in this location, the foot is in that location, the middle of the body
is in this location, and so on". He should also note the "delimitations".
"This body is delimited below by the soles of its feet and above by the
tips of its hair and all around by the skin. The space is so delimited, that
is, it is filled up by the thirty-two parts of the body". In this way, he must
recognize the limitations of the body, "These are the delimitations of
hands, its feet, of it head, of the middle part of the body, or this part of the
body is bloated, and so on". He should develop the sense of foulness,
with respect to a corpse, in these six ways. When he can see the corpse
with eyes closed, he is said to have obtained the "grasped sign". He
develops it so that it becomes a "counterpart sign"

If Meditator cannot get the sign by contemplating on the corpse in
the above-mentioned six ways, then he must continue to comprehend
foulness in five additional ways. Its joints first comprehend foulness.
“Joints” means here fourteen major joints. Three are in the right arms and three are in the left arms, three in the right leg and three in the left leg. There are also one head and one waist joints. The observation of these joints will lead to the understanding of the loathsomeness of the body. Then, he should observe “openings”. Opening here mean the hollows between the arm and the side, the hollow between the legs, the hollow of the stomach, the hollow of the ear, or the open and closed of the eyes and the mouth. Furthermore, he must define the corpse by “concavities”, such as the eye sockets, or the chest or the forehead. Lastly, he must “observe everything around”, that is, the entire corpse and the area around it. After having considered all these things, he establishes his mind on “bloated” as if it is a bloated body.

Contemplating on the corpse in these six and then these five different ways, meditator surely will get the sign of foulness. He contemplates and thinks about foulness again and again, ten times or ten thousand times, until he gets the sign. “Getting the sign” means he can see the bloated corpse with his eyes closed. This sign is called the “counterpart sign”. After that, the hindrances will be inhibited, and he will reach the state of Jhāna or absorption. This is the way Bhikkhus or lay people should practice this meditation. After going through this process, meditator may reach the Jhāna stage. Having gained the Jhāna stage, he can make this Jhāna as the object of mindfulness meditation. He can review the factors of the Jhāna, watching the factors of the Jhāna come and go, arise and disappear. He sees them rising and fading away. From that stage, he goes on to the different Vipassanā stages, until reaching the end of the Vipassanā process, the attainment of Nibbāna.
Therefore, this kind of meditation can be practiced first as *Samatha* meditation and then as *Vipassanā* meditation.

### 2.11 Conclusion

We have come to the end of contemplation on the body, which is one of the most important for the practice of Buddhist meditation. There are fourteen sections contemplation on the body; mindfulness of breathing, awareness of body postures, determinate knowledge etc. contemplation on the body can be practiced in different ways, focusing on different aspects. Of all these different ways, the first two; mindfulness of the bodily postures, determinate knowledge are especially suited to the practice of insight meditation, and of the other four, two are simply variants of two main meditation objects that are considered under separate headings; the contemplation on the dead body correspond to the ten kinds of body decay, and reflection on the material elements to the analysis of the four elements. Mindfulness of breathing, because of its considerable importance as an insight exercise, is taken as a separate meditation object with its own discipline and characteristics. The practice begins with the list of the thirty-two parts being recited, first aloud and then mentally. Attention is then focused successively on each part, giving close consideration to its exercise, which combines visualizations with the direct perception of body sensations. Its purpose is to develop awareness of the compounded and impersonal nature of the organism, and of the perishable and often repulsive nature of the materials of which it is composed.
With the aid of the body contemplations, one can come to realize the true nature of the body and thereby overcome all attachment to it. Being free from attachment to the body one will be free from any fear of death (Marane me bhayam natthi, Nikanti natthi jīvite). In the actual event, one who is thus free from attachment and fear will simply note mindfully that physical death is about to take place. Whatever feelings are felt at this time, contemplation continues with the understanding that these are the feelings to be experienced when life comes to an end (Jivitapariyantikam vedanam vedayamāno ‘Jivitapriyantikam vedanam vedayamiti pajānāti) which, on a sombre tone, leads one on to the next satipāṭṭhāna, the contemplation of feelings.\[117\]

\[Th. 1064c\]