Chapter six

Conclusion

Meditation is at the heart of the Buddhist way of life. It is basically a method for understanding and working on our own mind. We first learn to identify our different negative mental states known as 'delusions', and learn how to develop peaceful and positive mental states or 'virtuous minds'. Then in meditation we overcome our delusions by becoming familiar with virtuous minds. Out of meditation we try to maintain the virtuous minds we have developed and use our wisdom to solve the problems of daily life. As our mind becomes more positive our actions become more constructive, and our experience of life becomes more satisfying and beneficial to others. So, everyone can learn basic meditation techniques and get great benefits.

In my study, we have discussed meditation objects based on the body, feeling, mind, and mental objects and these are subdivided into twenty-one different ways in detail: fourteen sections for the Kāyānupassanā, once each for the Vedānānuapassanā and Cittānupassanā, and five sections for the Dhammānupassanā in accordance with the Buddha’s teaching in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta. Among these twenty-one ways of mindfulness meditation method, contemplation on breathing, reflection on the repulsiveness parts of the body, and contemplation on the dead body can lead to the attainment of absorption (Appanākammaṭṭhāna). The remaining meditation objects can only produce “proximate concentration” (Upacārakammaṭṭhāna). On the other hand, nine contemplations on the dead body are taught to discern faults in
the body. So, only the two-mindfulness on breathing, and reflection on the repulsiveness of the body produce absorption during tranquility meditation. The remaining sections produce “proximate concentration”.\(^1\) According to this statement, it must be thought that “proximate concentration” can be equated with ‘momentary concentration’ (*Khanikasamādhi*), which the practice of insight meditation practice, but it is not the same. “Proximate concentration” must precede *Jhāna* concentration, and the ten or nineteen meditation objects do not lead to *Jhāna* concentration but to *Vipassanā* goals.

In the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*,\(^2\) the Buddha said that those who practise mindfulness meditation could gain seven benefits as result; “For the purification of the mind of all beings” (*Sattanām visuddhiya*), “For the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation” (*Sokaparidevanām samatikka māyā*), “For the disappearance of pain and grief” (*Dukkhadomanassānam atthaṅgamāya*). “For the reaching of noble path” (*Nāyassa adhipamāya*), the noble path means a type of higher consciousness which appears at the moment of realization, and “For the realization of *Nibbāna*” (*Nibbānassa sacchikiriyāya*), we can say that to reach the noble path means reaching the “stage of path consciousness” and also realization of *Nibbāna* means reaching the “stage of fruition consciousness appears immediately after the path consciousness. Both the path consciousness and the fruition consciousness take *Nibbāna* directly. So, along with meditation practice, people who can overcome delusion and mould positive mental state or virtuous mind and, as a consequence, that mind can clean out and push away defilements polluted by greed, anger, ignorance, pride, envy,

\(^1\) D.N.a.vol.2.p-394
\(^2\) M.N.vol. 1.p-69, D.N.-vol. 2-p-230
jealousy, and so on. So, by thinking about that phenomenon in broad sense, if a person who has the more practice of meditation, the more he can manage his daily mess with positive and peaceful manner without anger, greed and hate etc. and lead to the peacefulness of society. Suppose, if all percentage of people are launching their meditation practice in the world, it will be sure to establish the tranquil and unique world for human beings.

So, the Buddha explained the things accomplished by "the only way", in this manner, in order to show that every thing which leads to the purification of beings by "the only way" is dependent on the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation; that this overcoming is dependent on the destruction of suffering and grief; and that the destruction of suffering and grief is dependent on reaching of the right path which is in turn dependent on the attainment of Nibbāna. In brief, the Buddha encouraged, "There is no any other way to purify the mind, to overcome sorrow and lamentation, to overcome pain and grief, to reach the noble path, to realize Nibbāna except the way of mindfulness meditation.

Also, in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, the Buddha said to the disciples before his final passing away (Parinibbāna), "Oh! Bhikkhus, live ever mindful! This is my admonition, and again, "Oh! Subhadda! May these Bhikkhus live well, this world will ever be present with arahat, the generation and generation of arahats, and the lineage of arahats will ever exist in this world (Imeca subhadda bhikkhū sammāvihareyyum āsuñño loko arahantīhi assa). So, if one practises the mindfulness meditation in

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3 M.N.vol. 1.p-69, D.N -vol. 2-p-230
4 D.N.vol.2.p-60
this way as the Buddha taught, it will lead him so rapidly to enlightenment, but certain things are required in practice. According to the *Attānuvāda Sutta*, one should maintain the five precepts, abandon the five hindrances, and then practice mindfulness meditation.\(^5\)

On the other hand, in accordance with *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, four kinds of mental qualities must be followed to get a better result; a balance and sustained application of effort (*Ātāpi*), the presence of clearly knowing (*Sampajāna*), and a balance state of mind, free from desires and discontent (*Vineyya Abhijñhādomanassa*). These qualities revolve the mental quality of *Sati*. According to the *Bodhirājakumāra sutta*, meditator must follow the five qualities of striving, that is, faith, health, honesty, energy, and wisdom.\(^6\)

For the one who follows these instructions with necessary requirements, the Buddha himself conformed and concluded his teachings by giving the assurance, “Verily, Bikkhus, whoever is practicing these mindfulness meditation for seven years, can expect one of two results; highest knowledge here and now, or, if there be yet some remainder of clinging, the state of non-returner” (*Tīṭhantu bhikkhave sattamāsāni, ...diṭṭheva dhamme añña sativa upādisese anāgāmitāti*).\(^7\) On the other hand, in the *Bodhirājakumāra sutta*, he said, “One who has the Buddha as teacher, will attain arahathood in any length of time, beginning with seven years down to less than a day”, “One can attain arahathood in the

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\(^5\) A.N.vol.1.p-436
\(^6\) M.N.vol.2.p-277
\(^7\) D.N.vol.2.p-250. M.N.vol.1p-91
morning after having been instructed in the evening, or can attain arahathood in the evening after having been instructed in the morning”.

So, when one practices mindfulness meditation for seven years, he can expect the highest knowledge, and one or two results- Noble person or the third stage of sainthood. Here, “highest knowledge” means the knowledge of the path of arahathood. One who is successful do eradicate all defilements becomes an arahat. When he cannot eradicate all defilements and some defilements still remain, he will become a “non-returner” (Anāgāmi), who has reached the third stage of sainthood and who consequently will not return, by rebirth to this sense-sphere, the world of human beings, or to the celestial worlds. Although only these two highest stages of sainthood are mentioned here, we must take stream-enterer (Sotāpanna), and once-returner (Sakadāgāmi), because there is not possible to attain the third and the fourth stages without attaining the first and two stages. In fact, one who practices mindfulness meditation for seven years can reach all four stages of sainthood and become Noble parson who has realized Nibbāna, the Buddhist final goal.

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8 M.N.vol.2.p-277