

Vipassana is to insight into the 3 universal characteristics of nature:

- i. Anicca (Impermanence);
- ii. Dukkha (Suffering); and
- iii. Anattā (Non- self and empty nature/not a permanent unchanging entity).

The ten fetters:

- i. self-delusion (sakayaditthi)
- ii. doubt
- iii. rites and rituals
- iv. sensual desire
- v. ill-will
- vi. form birth
- vii. formless birth
- viii. minor conceit (mana)
- ix. restlessness
- x. ignorance (avija)

The ten meritorious deeds (Punnakiriya-vatthus):

- i. Generosity to build up the Parami for goodness to arise (Dana)
- ii. Keeping the precepts, Morality, Virtue (Sila)
- iii. Meditative discipline which is inclusive of Samadhi and Panna (Bhavana)
- iv. Reverence or respect and gratitude (Apacayana)
- v. Service in helping others (Veyyavacca)
- vi. Sharing merits with others (PatiDana)
- vii. Rejoicing in the merits of others (Pattanumodana)
- viii. Listening to the Dhamma (Dhammassavana)
- ix. Preaching and teaching the Dhamma (Dhammadesana)
- x. Straightening one's views (Ditthijukamma)

Importance of the **spiritual faculties**

- faculties required for spiritual cultivation
- enables the mind to be in a meditative state
- conducive conditions to listen, investigate and understand the Dhamma

Occasions to develop the **spiritual faculties**

Ref: Heart Sutra (2nd Edition) Page 179 & 180

How do we train this mind to be mindful and aware most of the time? First, we must understand why we are most of the **time heedless** and **not mindful/aware** and **peaceful**? According to the Buddha it is because of the **5 mental hindrances** that **condition our heedless thinking thereby** stirring our mind and **hindering** our mind from returning to its natural **meditative state of inner peace and calmness before the stirring.**

The 5 Mental Hindrances of:-

- Sensual desire;**
- Ill will;**
- Sloth and torpor** (lethargic or sleepiness);
- Restlessness or agitated** mind (due to fear, worry anxiety);
- Doubt.**

The 5 Mental Hindrances condition our **heedless thinking, lack of peace** and **awareness** so we must **reverse all these** via cultivating the **opposite five** which are the **5 Spiritual Faculties:-**

- Saddhā** or **confidence** in the Buddha and his teaching
- Vīriya** or **spiritual zeal/tenacity** to cultivate heedfulness
- Sati** or mindfulness or awareness;
- Samādhi** or **collectedness** of mind/**unwavering** mind; and
- Paññā** or wisdom

To cultivate these **5 spiritual faculties**, the Buddha recommended the **pre and post pūjā** or **devotional practices** of **paying respect or homage** to the Buddha, Dhamma and the Saṅgha and **taking Refuge** in them followed by the renewal of **5 Precepts**, chanting the **various salutations** to the Buddha, Dhamma and the Saṅgha etc. The paying of respect and the taking of refuge followed by the chanting of the various salutations is to develop the faith or **saddhā** and **vīriya** spiritual faculties. Then the paying of respect or **mindful reverential salutation** is to develop the composed mind to be **mindful** while paying respect to the Buddha. So **do not under estimate** the **importance of pūjā** in the cultivation process. When **Sati is developed**, Samādhi will come to be and **with Sati and Samādhi** one will be able to have the **clarity** of mind **to see things as they are** (without the interference of thoughts) via the **Sati** in **direct seeing** hence awakening to the truth **leading to the wisdom.**

The 5 Universal Laws or Orders (Pañca Niyāmas) that govern all of Life and Existence in this Universe are:-

First **2** are **scientific** laws of -

- i. **Utu Niyāma** or the **Physical Law** of Nature and
- ii. **Bīja Niyāma** or the **Biological Order** of nature;

Next **3** are **spiritual** Laws of Nature of -

- iii. **Kamma Niyāma** or the Law of Kamma;
- iv. **Citta Niyāma** or the Law of the Mind and
- v. **Dhamma Niyāma** or the Law of Truth/Dhamma as taught by the Buddha.

Understanding these 3 spiritual laws that **govern all of our Life and Existence** will give rise to the 3 **important right views** as taught by the Buddha in his **Noble 8-Fold Path** i.e. **Right view** with regards to the:

- i. **Law of Kamma** - (i.e. 'You reap what you sow; Do good begets good and Do evil begets evil' and 'You are born of your kamma, heir to your kamma, conditioned and supported by your kamma and you are what you are because of your kamma', etc.);
- ii. **Law of the Mind** - (i.e. The 12 Links (Dependent Origination) or paṭicca-samuppāda);
- iii. **Law of the Dhamma** (i.e. The 4 Noble Truths, 5 aggregates of Form & Mind, the 5 spiritual faculties, etc.)

Understanding these **3 great spiritual laws** is likened to **understanding** the **secret of Life**, giving rise to the **wisdom** to enable one to **truly live** life. Having these right views will lead to the understanding of **non-delusion, non-attachment, non-grasping** and **non-clinging** etc., hence **freeing** and **liberating** one's mind from all suffering.