

Lesson 1 of the SATIPATTHANA SUTTA & MEDITATION CLASS @ WU PIN CHEN SEAH by Bro. Teoh Kian Koon.

Date: 16/2/2014 **Time:** 3.00pm - 6.00pm

Audio : <http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Teoh-WPCS-140216.mp3>

Short notes taken to assist in the understanding of the sutta.

Introduction

Sutta is the **discourse** of the Buddha and before we go into the SATIPATTHANA SUTTA proper, I just want to explain a little bit about this word SATIPATTHANA. SATIPATTHANA consist of two words. SATI is Mindfulness and Patthana is the Foundation. So Satipatthana means the **foundation of mindfulness**. It is about how one develops this SATI or mindfulness **cultivation** via anchoring the mind to the **Four Foundations of Mindfulness** that are **very essential** for your cultivation. Some books used the words **arousing of mindfulness**. Some used the words **establishment of Mindfulness**. All three have their usage and appropriateness. Foundation means you need something that is very firm for you to stand on. So the Four Foundations of Mindfulness are very important for you to develop the cultivation of this meditation. The Buddha said if you develop SATI on these Four Foundations, enlightenment in the here and the now will be possible. The sutta can also help in the arousing and establishment of mindfulness needed to cultivate this meditation.

Then in the opening statement of the sutta (1st page 2nd paragraph) the Buddha said,

“Ekayano ayam bhikkhave maggo sattanam visuddhiya soka-pariddavanam samatikkhamaya dukkhadomanassanam atthagamaya hayassa adhigamaya nibbanassa sacchikiriya, yadidam cattaro satipatthana” and the English translation, is on page 33. Here the Buddha, they called Him the Blessed One. The translated version is, ‘Then the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus as follows’: “This is the only way, O bhikkhus, for the **purification** of beings, for the **overcoming of sorrow and lamentation**, for the **destruction of suffering and grief**, for reaching the **right path**, for the attainment of **Nibbana**, namely, the **Four Foundations of Mindfulness**.”

So, whatever meditation you do, finally, if it cannot bring you back to the cultivation of the **Four foundations of Mindfulness**, then that is **not the** meditation as taught by the Buddha, understand or not? In the SATIPATTHANA SUTTA, the 1st Foundation of Mindfulness is **KAYANUPASSANA**. **Kaya** is the physical body ‘**nu**’ comes from the word ‘**anussati**’ which is **to contemplate** while ‘**passana**’ comes from the word ‘**Vipassana**’ which is **to insight into**, hence the word KAYANUPASSANA means **mindfulness** to develop the **contemplative** wisdom and **to insight** into the **3 characteristics of nature** via mindfulness of the **1st Foundation** which is the KAYA or the physical body.

BUDDHANUSSATI means contemplation on the 9 great virtues of the Buddha, and then there is DHAMMANUSSATI and SANGHANUSSATI - these are the various objects of contemplation as recommended by the Buddha to develop the **contemplative wisdom**, whereas when it comes to development of insight it is **VIPASSANA** Bhavana. ‘**Vi**’ is the 3 Universal Characteristics, and **PASSANA** is to insight into the 3 Characteristics of nature but in the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, the 1st foundation of mindfulness is not KAYAPASSANA, instead it is KAYANUPASSANA, understand or not? Which means you made use of the 1st Foundation of Mindfulness which is mindfulness of the KAYA to develop the **Contemplative Wisdom** and **to insight** into the **Universal Characteristics of Nature** and that is the purpose of KAYANUPASSANA.

Similarly, the **2nd Foundation** of Mindfulness is **VEDANANUPASSANA**. Vedana is feeling, so Vedananupassana means to **contemplate and insight** into the characteristics of nature via mindfulness on the Foundation of Vedana (Feeling) and subsequently the **3rd Foundation** of Mindfulness is CITTA. CITTA here means the **CONTENT OF CONSCIOUSNESS** - all of your mind states, or content within. So the **3rd** foundation of mindfulness is **CITTANUPASSANA**. Then the last Foundation of mindfulness is **DHAMMANUPASSANA**, which means you reflect, contemplate and insight into the Characteristics of Nature to develop the **insight Wisdom** needed for enlightenment or liberation of mind via the **4th foundation** of dhamma.

Dhamma is the **teaching** of the Buddha which includes all of the **essential truths** that he had proclaimed, that's why within the last foundation, DHAMMANUPASSANA, the **1st Category** of practice is **mindfulness** on the **5 mental Hindrances**, then; you have to develop **mindfulness** of the **5 aggregates of form and mind** which is the **2nd Category of Practice**. Then, the **3rd Category** of Practice which is Mindfulness of the **6 internal Sense Bases and the 6 external Sense Bases**. This is to enable you to understand **how you function** as a Human Being. How **upon contact** of mind and the **internal sense bases** sense door **consciousness** comes to be? How it then conditioned you into the various mind states that triggered off the so called **reactions of mind** to arise the **evil roots** or **defilements** that actually brings about suffering to the living being. Then after that you moved on to the **4th Category of Practice** which is Mindfulness of the **7th Factors of Enlightenment**. So when you are aware of the **7th Factors of Enlightenment**, then you know you are much closed to Enlightenment because if you are not close, the Factors of Enlightenment will not arise. As the Factors of Enlightenment arise, it will prepare you to develop the **insight wisdom** to become enlighten.

The last Category of Cultivation within DHAMMANUPASSANA is the cultivation of **mindfulness** of the **4 Noble Truths**. Within these 4 Noble Truths cultivation, you got the **3 Turnings** which the Buddha talked about under the **DHAMMACAKKAPPAVATTANA SUTTA**, or the **1st Sermon** which he delivered immediately after his enlightenment to the 5 Ascetics. So, this Four Noble Truths are the most important especially the **4th Noble Truth** which is the Noble Eight Fold Path as the last cultivation. Within the Noble 8-fold path there is 7th noble path factor of SATI or mindfulness. That one you need to fulfill the cultivation of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, and that's why the 4 Foundations of Mindfulness is the **only way** and without that you **cannot** awaken. Even after you had developed certain insight, especially insight with respect to the 3 Universal Characteristics of Anicca, dukka and Anatta you still need to cultivate the balance of the Noble 8-fold path factors. So this aspect of cultivation is the most important. So that's why I always tell you all, whatever meditation you do in the name of meditation, if it doesn't bring you back to the 4 Foundations of Mindfulness and finally to cultivate the Noble 8 Fold Path in daily life through Heedfulness, that is not the meditation as taught by the Buddha. So, these Four Foundations of Mindfulness will complete the whole cultivation of the 4 Noble Truths, especially the 4th Noble Truths, which is the Mindfulness of the cultivation of the Noble 8 Fold Path which will lead to the end of all suffering, which will lead to the enlightenment in the here and the now.

There is also the assurance given by the Buddha at the end of the Sutta, on Page 51 – Assurance of Attainment. The Buddha assures all the monks at the time, and he said: "Verily, O bhikkhus, should any person maintain the Four Foundations of Mindfulness or the Four Arousings of Mindfulness in this manner for seven years then by him one of two fruitions is proper to be expected: Knowledge here and now means Sainthood or, if some form of clinging is yet present, the Anagami state or the state of a Non-Returning (the Third State of Supramundane Fruition of Fulfillment)."

"O bhikkhus, let alone seven years. Should a person maintain these Four Foundations of Mindfulness or Four Arousings of Mindfulness cultivation, in this manner, for six years.....for five years.....four years....three years....two years....one year, then by him one of two fruitions is proper to be expected: knowledge here and

the now; or, if some form of clinging is yet present, the state of Non-Returner which is the Anagami state, the 3rd state of Sainthood, then the Buddha continues...

“O bhikkhus, let alone a year. Should any person maintain these Four Arousings of Mindfulness, in this manner, for seven months, then by him one of two fruitions is proper to be expected: Knowledge here and the now; or, if some form of clinging is yet present, the state of Non-Returner”, which is the 3rd state of Sainthood.

“O bhikkhus, let alone seven months. Should any person maintain these Four Arousings of Mindfulness in this manner for six months....five months....four months....three months....two months....one month....half-a-month, then by him one of two fruitions is proper to be expected: Knowledge here and the now; or, if some form of clinging is yet present, the state of Non-Returning.”

“O bhikkhus, let alone half-a-month. Should any person maintain these Four Arousings of Mindfulness in this manner for a week which is 7-days, then by him one of two fruitions is proper to be expected: Knowledge here and the now; or, if some form of clinging is yet present, the state of Non-Returning.”

“Because of this was it said: “This is the only way, O bhikkhus, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of suffering and grief, for reaching the right path, for the attainment of Nibbana, namely, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.”

Thus, spoke the Blessed One. Satisfied, the bhikkhus approved of his words.”

This is how powerful this Four Foundations of Mindfulness is and now that you had understood its importance it will give you a lot of confidence. Just like during the Buddha time. He spoke this Sutta which gave a lot of confidence to the monks at that time. And the reasons why I want to quote all these are because I want you to be motivated also. A lot of people always complaint or grumble to me, “Brother Teoh, it is so difficult, I don’t think I can do it, no way, they said.” If you yourself also lack confidence, then how can you develop the cultivation? Understand or not? The Buddha already given you the assurance, i.e. you only need one week actually, that’s all you need, if you diligently cultivate. So, one week is very fast, isn’t it? Our retreat got 10 days, isn’t it? You got surplus 3 days. That’s why when you understand this Sutta, you will understand how to develop the cultivation, and you will progress very fast if you are really serious about the cultivation via your great faith in the Buddha’s words. And through this very strong saddha or faith in the Buddha and his teaching it will bring forth the other spiritual Faculties that are needed for you to develop this cultivation.

So, this is the introduction on how important this Sutta is, how powerful this Sutta is and how it is connected to his other teaching. Okay, so far any question or not? When you had completed the cultivation of the four foundations of mindfulness your personality and character will change for the better and you will be very noble in every aspect of your life and you will have more and more **gentleness, pleasantness and all those good virtues** like generosity, humility, kindness, sincerity, respect for others, metta, karuna, mudita and uppekkha ... etc - you will have them. Okay, 5.30 p.m., we should end. Next lesson we are going to start officially, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. Eng Bee was the one who proposed this TOPIC and she had brought about the conditions for us to have this sharing. She is the one who had initiated it and she had spent quite a bit of time writing up all those format to share and to teach, which was very good.