

# Manual of Mindfulness of Breathing

## Ānāpāna Dīpani

by

*Ledi Sayādaw Mahāthera,  
Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D. Litt.*

Translated into English by  
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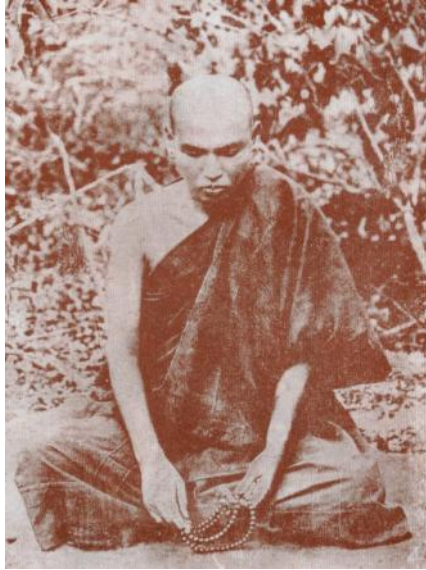
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## Editor's Foreword

The Venerable Ledi Araññavihāravāsī Mahāthera of Monywa, better known as the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D. Litt., is described in the short biography reproduced at the end of this work as “perhaps the outstanding Buddhist figure of this age.”

The essential meaning is that if one is established in mindfulness of the body, one can successfully undertake the work of tranquillity and insight, because one has firm control over one's mind and thus it is certain that in this very life one cannot miss Nibbāna. If, however, like the madman, one has no control over one's mind because one continues to live apart from the work of mindfulness of the body, one is unable to approach the work of tranquillity and insight, and hence will miss Nibbāna.

There are many degrees of control over one's mind. In this world, ordinary persons who are not insane have sufficient control over their minds to perform their various day to day tasks, to fulfil both their individual and social responsibilities. This is one kind of control.

“Making the mind extremely delighted” (*abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ*) means that when the perception of the mind is extremely clear, one makes the mind extremely delighted by repeatedly entering the first and second jhānas (which are associated with rapture, *pīti*).

Of this there can be little doubt, and this is the very reason why every attempt should be made to make known to Western readers—and in particular English-speaking readers—as many as possible of the numerous works originally written by him either in Pāli or Burmese. These works are clear and precise expositions of Buddhism, suited to people of wide and differing abilities and understanding, and are invaluable aids for the study and practice of Dhamma in all its aspects.

Of works already translated into English every credit must be given to the Pali Text Society, England, for publishing as early as 1913-14, in their Journal for those years, a translation of selected passages of *Yamaka Pucchā Vissajjanā*—“Some Points in Buddhist Doctrine”—and again in their Journal for 1915-16 a translation, by U Shwe Zan Aung, B.A., of the *Paṭṭhānuddesa Dīpanī* or “Philosophy of Relations.”

But it is to Burma that so much is owed for continuing with the translation into English and publication of the works of this Sayādaw, through the medium of the periodical *The Light of the Dhamma*, which was printed by the Union Buddha Sāsana Council Press. The Inaugural Number of this periodical first appeared in 1952 but, unfortunately,

publication ceased about eleven years later in 1963, though the publication was revived about 1979.

During these first eleven years some seven major works or *Dīpanīs*, translated by various hands, had been published, in serial form, in *The Light of the Dhamma*, and all these works continue to be available, both separately and combined together in one volume, *The Manuals of Buddhism*, published by the Department of Religious Affairs, Rangoon. Regrettably this book, as well as other Buddhist publications, are often extremely difficult to obtain outside Burma and sometimes can be found only in public, university, or Buddhist libraries.

Although in the short biography reproduced hereafter a figure of more than seventy works is shown to have been written by the Venerable Sayādaw, when shorter articles not already recorded and many relevant letters, etc., are included, the final figure may well exceed a hundred, as further research continues and an attempt is made to compile a comprehensive list. In addition, two separate biographies which have been written about Ledi Sayādaw still await a competent translator into English and a donor to sponsor publication.

The reputation of Ledi Sayādaw still lives on in Burma and in the Buddhist world. He was a bhikkhu of great learning and a prolific writer with a unique style of exposition, and although there are some traditionalists who do not support or agree with some points in his interpretations, there are others who find them of great interest. He was also an austere bhikkhu, yet a very human one, who would often write a whole treatise or a long letter in reply to a question asked by one of his supporters or enquirers.

Apart from accepting many bhikkhu-students from various parts of Burma in order to impart Buddhist education to them, Ledi Sayādaw also toured many regions of the country for the purpose of propagating the Buddha Dhamma. He often delivered discourses on the Dhamma, established Abhidhamma classes and meditation centres, and composed Abhidhamma verses or Abhidhamma summaries, which he taught to his Abhidhamma classes.

In the year 1910, while residing at Masoyain Monastery in Mandalay, the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw—together with the *Abhidhaja Mahāraṭṭhaguru*, Masoyain Sayādaw of Mandalay (President of the Sixth Great Buddhist Council), the Venerable Sayādaw U Nyāṇa (who also translated into English Ledi Sayādaw's *Paṭṭhānuddesa Dīpanī* (or *Paccayuddesa Dīpanī*)—"The Concise Exposition of the Paṭṭhāna Relations," but published under the title *The Buddhist Philosophy of Relations*), and U Shwe Zan Aung B.A.—founded the Burma Buddhist Foreign Mission. This project was carried on by the Masoyain Sayādaw of Mandalay until the death of his English-educated colleague in

this undertaking, the Sayādaw U Nyāṇa, some thirteen years after the death of the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw in 1923.

There are still monasteries in Burma where his teachings and expositions are preserved and continue to be studied, such as the Kyaikkasan Ledi Meditation Centre in Rangoon, as well as the one established by Ledi Sayādaw himself near Monywa under the name Leditawya Monastery.

It is well known that at Mandalay in Burma in 1856 King Mindon (1852-77) conceived the meritorious idea of having the Pāli Tipiṭaka carved on marble slabs in order to ensure the preservation of the Teaching. The work took from 1860 to 1868 and involved 729 slabs. In 1871 King Mindon convened the Fifth Buddhist Council. Outside Burma, however, it is not so well known that a similar mark of respect for the works of the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw was made by his supporters at Monywa in Upper Burma after his death. This recognition and treatment of a Buddhist monk's works must be unique and gives some indication of the immense importance attached to them.

In view of the importance of Ledi Sayādaw's works and the difficulty of obtaining them in the West, every effort must be made to collect as many of them as possible, either in Pāli, Burmese, or translation, and make them accessible to the West by adding them, by way of presentation, to the large number of his works already held by the British Library in London, where they would continue to be available to bhikkhus, scholars, students, and other readers.

In undertaking the printing of the *Ānāpāna Dīpanī*, however, a small effort is being made to make this essential exposition available to interested students and readers in both the East and the West. This is done with the earnest wish that others will be encouraged thereby to help make the works of the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw known to a wider audience.

The Venerable Ledi Sayādaw wrote the *Ānāpāna Dīpanī* in Burmese, but the retention or use of Pāli words in translations has always been considered essential; for, in case any doubt might arise as to the translator's rendering, the quoting of the Pāli ensures that a clear and definite meaning, which may vary in accordance with the context in which they are used, is most often to be found in the original Pāli and its Commentaries. In addition to the invaluable aid it provides for students and other interested readers, as a means of reference for study purposes the inclusion of Pāli also adds to the translation the savour of the language of the Buddha himself, as found in the Pāli Canon, together with the voice of elucidation of its commentators.

S.S.  
Southsea, 1996

Davidson

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# Ānāpāna Dīpanī

*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa*

## I. Request and Acceptance (*abhiyācaka, paṭiññāna*)

On the repeated request of the Lekaing Myosa Wunshindaw Kinwun Mingyi, I proceeded to Mandalay on the 11<sup>th</sup> waning day of the month of Tabaung 1265 B.E. (March 1904), and delivered sermons to the monks and the laity for three days and three nights while sojourning in front of the Kinwun Mingyi's house.

While I was thus engaged, the Kinwun Mingyi's son, who is the myo-ok of Pathein, and one Maung Khin who is the head clerk of the Deputy Commissioner's office in Mandalay, requested me to write a manual on the practice of mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*) for their lifelong guidance and benefit. In accordance with that request, I, the presiding Sayādaw of Ledi Forest Monastery of Monywa, shall now expound concisely the Ānāpānasati Sutta as given in the *Uparipaṇṇāsa* of the Majjhima Nikāya (MN No. 118).

## II. Exhortation to Practise and Strive for Spiritual Success

*Tiṇṇaṃ aññataraṃ yāmaṃ,  
Paṭijaggeyya paṇḍito.*

The wise man should cleanse himself by putting forth effort towards the attainment of spiritual success during at least one of the three periods of life.

Dhammapada, 157

In accordance with the above admonition from the Dhammapada, wise and good people who have the ability to see clearly the relation of cause and effect should, right from the first period of life, renounce and relinquish success in the attainment of wealth (*bhoga-sampatti*) and put forth effort to attain spiritual success (*bhava-sampatti*). If effort during the first period of life is not possible, effort should be made during the second period of life. If effort during the second period of life is not possible, effort should be made as soon as one enters the third period of life. The essential point is that if one remains obsessed with material

prosperity during all the three periods of life, one fails to take full advantage of the opportunity this life offers to win manifold higher benefits, for this life is like a great “wishing tree” from which one may pluck many desirable things.

As life today is highly uncertain and beings are liable to die and disappear quickly and unexpectedly, one should demarcate the age of 50 or 55 as the end of the period for seeking material prosperity. Thereafter, one should renounce and relinquish material prosperity and put forth effort to obtain spiritual success so that one can achieve the advantages offered by one’s encounter with a Buddha-sāsana, so difficult to meet.

There are many ways of striving to obtain spiritual success. There is first the way of King Temi and King Hatthipāla, who renounced the pleasures and enjoyments of throne and palace while still young, during the first period of life, and adopted the lives of ascetics in the forest. There is also the way of the long line of 84,000 kings from King Maghadeva to King Nemi, who ruled their kingdoms and enjoyed the pleasures and luxuries of royalty during the first and second periods of life, but who stepped down in favour of their eldest sons during the third period of life. They then led secluded lives in the royal gardens practising the meditation on the four sublime states (*brahmavihāra-bhāvanā*) until they attained the jhānas (meditative absorptions), and continued to live in solitude enjoying the pleasures of these attainments until their deaths.

Then there is the way of the universal monarch, King Mahāsudassana, who did not even leave his royal palace to live in the royal gardens, but continued to reside in the great golden palace called “The Palace of Dhamma,” ornamented with precious gems built for him by Sakka, the king of the devas in the Tāvātimsa heaven. He continued to live alone in that rich palatial residence practising the four sublime states until he attained the jhānas.

There is also the way of the king of Takkasīlā, who on seeing the instructions for the meditation on in-and-out breathing inscribed on the golden palm leaves sent to him by the king of Rājagaha, continued to reside alone on the uppermost storey of his seven-storied palace practising the meditation on in-and-out breathing until he attained the fourth jhāna.

Wise Buddhists of the present day should emulate these distinguished personages of great future destiny, and select and adopt one or other of the practices aimed at spiritual success. Although, during the first period of life, they may pursue and live amidst the pleasures and enjoyments made possible by material prosperity, they should in good time renounce and relinquish their interest and concern with material wealth and all activities related to this goal. They should renounce and relinquish such practices as unchastity and association with friends and companions,



which are habits inimical to the development of concentration (*samādhī-bhāvanā*). Retaining contact only with the person who serves them food, they should engage in the practices which lead to spiritual success.

### III. Drift in Past Saṃsāra Because of Unstable Mind

Here, for ordinary householders, practising for spiritual success means firmly establishing oneself in morality with right livelihood as the eighth precept (*ājīvaṭṭhamakasīla*), [1] and assiduously practising mindfulness of the body (*kāyagatā-sati*), tranquillity meditation (*samathakammaṭṭhāna*), and insight meditation (*vipassanā-kammaṭṭhāna*) within this lifetime, while one is yet in possession of the difficult achievements of obtaining a human birth and encountering the Buddha-sāsana.

Before acquiring tranquillity and insight, one must practise mindfulness of the body, which is one of the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*). I shall now explain with an example why it is necessary to practise the foundations of mindfulness at the outset.

In this world, a madman who has no control over his mind is unable to work either for his own benefit or for the benefit of others. Even when eating his meals, he is liable to upset his plate and walk away. Far is it for him to be able to concentrate on work for the benefit of others. When this mad person is properly treated, he becomes sane and stable in mind and is then able to work for both his own benefit as well as for the benefit of others, just like other normal people.

Similarly, when ordinary normal persons in this world, those with ordinary sane minds, undertake the subtle work of meditation for tranquillity and insight, they resemble the mad man without control over his mind. For example, when paying respects and reverence to the Buddha, the minds of normal persons do not remain steadily and continuously concentrated on the Buddha's noble and incomparable qualities. Even when repeating the stanza for recollection of the Buddha (*iti pi so bhagavā ...*), their minds wander, and if they were obliged to start again from the beginning whenever their attention strayed, their task of repeating the stanza would never be successfully completed. It is only because they have committed the stanza to memory that they can repeat it to the end. The same occurs in relation to any subject of meditation. This is how ordinary persons—who are normally considered sane—are established as mad persons in the relation to the meditative development of concentration and wisdom.

Let all take heed! For in the case of such persons who have no control over their minds, far from being able to achieve the path, fruit, and

Nibbāna (*magga-phala-nibbāna*), it is uncertain whether they can even obtain a rebirth in one of the happy worlds (*sugati-loka*).

In this world, people who have no control over their legs cannot successfully perform work that requires the use of legs. People who have no control over their hands cannot successfully perform work that requires the use of hands. People who have no control over their tongues and mouths cannot successfully perform work that must be performed with their tongues and mouths. People who have no control over their minds cannot successfully perform work that must be performed with the mind. The work of meditative development is work that must be performed solely with the mind. Hence it is that worldlings, both lay and ordained, who have no control over their minds cannot successfully practise the development of meditation. Their work consists merely of imitation.

Consider the case of a boatman who has not mastered the art of steering a boat floating down with the swift and strong currents of a great river, his craft filled with merchandise. During the night, he does not see the towns, havens, and anchorages that lie along the banks. During the day, although he can see the towns, havens, and anchorages, he is unable to stop and anchor at any of them because he cannot steer his boat, and thus he drifts down to the ocean looking at those towns, havens, and anchorages with longing and admiration.

In this example, the great river with the swift and strong currents, together with the ocean, is *saṃsāra*, the round of rebirths, with its four floods (*ogha*). The boat laden with merchandise is the aggregates (*khandha*) of a being. The boatman who cannot control his boat is a worldling (*puthujjana*). Stretches of the river lined with forests, where no towns, havens, and anchorages exist, are the world cycles where no Buddha-sāsanas appear. The period of night when the boatman cannot see the towns, havens, and anchorages may be compared to the plight of those beings who, though reborn in this world during the time of a Buddha-sāsana, nevertheless remain ignorant or unmindful of it because they happen to be in one or another of the eight inopportune places (*aṭṭhakkhaṇas*). [2]

The period of day when the towns, havens, and anchorages can be seen, but the boatman is unable to stop and anchor at any of them because he cannot steer his boat and thus drifts down to the ocean looking at them with longing and admiration—this may be compared to the plight of those beings who, though Buddhists, do not make any effort to practise meditation and thus resemble insane persons having no control over their minds. They are unable to attain the towns, havens, and anchorages that are the absorptions achieved through tranquillity exercises (*samatha-jhāna*), insight knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), path

knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), fruition knowledge (*phala-ñāṇa*), and Nibbāna. Paying respects to and evoking admiration for the Three Gems (the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha), they drift without control to the world cycles devoid of a Buddha-sāsana, posing as *payātagas* and *payāamas* (lay-donors of pagodas and shrines), as *kyaungtagas* and *kyaungamas* (lay-donors of monasteries), as *dāyakas* (donors) of the four requisites to the Sangha, as ordinary bhikkhus and famed mahātheras (great elders) honoured for the extensiveness and profundity of their learning.

This is the picture of the drifting that has occurred to beings in the infinitely long past *saṃsāra*, the round of rebirths.

## IV. Mindfulness of the Body before Tranquillity and Insight

If beings in this present life, therefore, fail to practise mindfulness of the body (*kāyagatā-sati*) and thus continue to live without control over their minds, they will drift and founder in future *saṃsāra* just as they have done in the past, even though they may be Buddhists. Absence of control over the mind is the certain path of drift in *saṃsāra*, because without control over the mind the work of tranquillity (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*) cannot be undertaken. Gaining control of the mind is, on the other hand, the certain path to Nibbāna, because it enables the work of tranquillity and insight to be undertaken. The practice of mindfulness of the body is the effort to gain control of the mind.

Even though one is unable to undertake the higher work of tranquillity and insight, the Buddha said that if one can firmly control one's mind and keep it successfully at will within one's body, one enjoys the flavour of Nibbāna:

Those who have missed mindfulness of the body have missed Nibbāna.

Those who have not missed mindfulness of the body have not missed Nibbāna.

Those who have not utilised mindfulness of the body have not utilised Nibbāna.

Those who have utilised mindfulness of the body have utilised Nibbāna.

*Amataṃ tesaṃ viraddhaṃ, yesaṃ kāyagatā-sati viraddhā.*

*Amataṃ tesaṃ aviraddhaṃ, yesaṃ kāyagatā-sati aviraddhā.*

*Amataṃ tesaṃ aparibhuttaṃ, yesaṃ kāyagatā-sati aparibhuttā.*

*Amataṃ tesaṃ paribhuttaṃ, yesaṃ kāyagatā-sati paribhuttā.*

Ānguttara Nikāya, Ekaka-nipāta, Amata-vagga

Within the Buddha-sāsana, keeping the morality consisting of sense control (*indriyasamvara-sīla*) is another kind of control. It is not, however, control that can be called dependable.

Establishing oneself in mindfulness of the body, being the proximate cause (*padatṭhāna*) of the meditative development of tranquillity and insight, is control that is firm. The attainment of access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*), attained just before entering any of the jhānas, is control that is firmer. Firmer still is the attainment of absorption concentration (*appanā-samādhi*), attained during the jhānas. The attainment of the eight stages of absorption are controls that become progressively firmer as each higher stage is attained. In the matter of tranquillity, the attainment of the higher spiritual powers (*abhiññās*) represents the highest control.

This is the path of tranquillity called *samatha-yānika*.

The path of insight is called *vipassanā-yānika*.

Here ends the section showing that mindfulness of the body must precede the work of tranquillity and insight.

## V. Why Mindfulness of Breathing Should Be Practised

Hence, people of the present day who have encountered the Buddha-sāsana, whether lay or ordained, should abhor and fear the uncontrolled mind and should adopt and practise, as quickly as possible, one of the exercises in mindfulness of the body given in the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta (MN 10) in order to gain secure control over their minds.

In the Kāyagatā-sati Sutta (MN 119), eighteen exercises in mindfulness of the body are described, namely, mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*), mindfulness of the bodily postures and movements (*iriyāpatha*), clear comprehension of acts and deeds (*sampajañña*), attention to the impurities of the body (*paṭikkūla*), analysis of the elements (*dhātu-vavatthāna*), nine cemetery contemplations (*sīvathikā*), and the four jhānas.

In the Ānāpānasati Sutta (MN 118), it is shown how the work of mindfulness of the body, and the four absorptions of tranquillity meditation (*appanā-jhānas of samatha-bhāvanā*), insight meditation (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*), the development of the path (*magga-bhāvanā*), and the realisation of the fruit (*phala-sacchikiriya*)—these last two being known as true knowledge and deliverance (*vijjā-vimutti*)—are accomplished by the practise of mindfulness of breathing alone.

It is also usual for all Buddhas to attain Supreme Enlightenment by means of mindfulness of breathing, and having attained Buddhahood, all

Buddhas have continued to remain established in mindfulness of breathing without a break until they attained Parinibbāna.

Of the forty prescribed exercises of tranquillity meditation, mindfulness of breathing is the easiest to establish continuously at all times. The Buddha also extolled this meditation subject more highly than he did other subjects. The commentators too called *ānāpānasati* “the plane of great personages” (*mahāpurisa-bhūmi*). But mindfulness of breathing is not a meditation subject suitable for ordinary persons. It is suited only to persons of great wisdom.

Hence I now propose to expound concisely the *Ānāpānasati Sutta* as found in the Majjhima Nikāya (MN 118), for the benefit of those wise people wishing to attain spiritual success and to reap the benefits offered by this rare encounter with a Buddha-sāsana, thus emulating the way of the aforementioned King Pukkusāti of Takkasilā, who spent the rest of his life alone on the top storey of his seven-storied palace practising meditation beginning with mindfulness of the body until he achieved the fourth jhāna. [3]

## VI. Mindfulness of Breathing Leads to Nibbāna

O bhikkhus! If mindfulness of breathing is cultivated and developed many times for a lengthy period, the four foundations of mindfulness are fulfilled and perfected.

If the four foundations of mindfulness are cultivated and developed many times for a lengthy period, the seven factors of enlightenment are fulfilled and perfected.

If the seven factors of enlightenment are cultivated and developed many times for a lengthy period, knowledge and deliverance are fulfilled and perfected.

*Ānāpānasati bhikkhave bhāvitā bahulikatā cattāro satipaṭṭhāne paripūrenti.*

*Cattāro satipaṭṭhānā bhāvitā bahulikatā satta bojjhaṅge paripūrenti.*

*Satta bojjhaṅgā bhāvitā bahulikatā vijjā vimuttiṃ paripūrenti.*

*Ānāpānasati Sutta, MN 118*

Here, knowledge (*vijjā*) means the four path knowledges (*magga-ñāṇa*), and deliverance (*vimutti*) the four fruition knowledges (*phala-ñāṇa*). The essential meaning is that if mindfulness of breathing is practised assiduously for days and months, the work of the four foundations of mindfulness, the seven factors of enlightenment, and knowledge and

deliverance is automatically accomplished. The four foundations of mindfulness, the seven factors of enlightenment, and knowledge and deliverance comprise the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiya-dhammā*), and hence it means that the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment are automatically accomplished. This ends the exposition of the prefatory section of the *Ānāpānasati Sutta*.

## VII. Posture for Meditation

O bhikkhus! In this *Sāsana* a bhikkhu, having gone to a forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to a quiet place, sits down cross-legged with his upper body erect, keeping his attention firmly fixed on the object of meditation.

*Idha pana bhikkhave bhikkhu araṅṅagato vā rukkhamūlagato vā suññāgāragato vā nisīdati pallaṅkaṃ ābhujitvā ujum kāyaṃ pañidhāya parimukhaṃ satim upatthapetvā.*

Here, in the *sutta*, the Buddha says “sits down cross-legged” because the cross-legged posture is especially suitable for meditation. But any of the four postures diligently adopted will suffice.

This ends the posture for meditation.

## VIII. The First Tetrad

(I) The yogī (one devoted to mental training) mindfully exhales an out-breath, and mindfully inhales an in-breath. [4]

(II) When a long breath is exhaled, he knows that he exhales a long out-breath. When a long breath is inhaled, he knows that he inhales a long in-breath. When a short breath is exhaled, he knows that he exhales a short out-breath. When a short breath is inhaled, he knows that he inhales a short in-breath.

(III) While exhaling, he tries to experience the entire out-breath—its beginning, middle, and end. While inhaling, he tries to experience the entire in-breath—its beginning, middle, and end.

(IV) As he exhales, he tries to allay and calm down the out-breath. As he inhales, he tries to allay and calm down the in-breath.

(I) *So sato’va assasati sato’va passasati.*

(II) *Dīghaṃ vā assasanto dīghaṃ assasāmīti pajānāti. Dīghaṃ vā passasanto dīghaṃ passasāmīti pajānāti. Rassaṃ vā assasanto rassaṃ assasāmīti pajānāti. Rassaṃ vā passasanto rassaṃ passasāmīti pajānāti.*

(III) *Sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī assasissāmīti sikkhati. Sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

(IV) *Passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati. Passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

In the first stage, the attempt has to be made to keep the attention firmly fixed on the out-breath and the in-breath.

In the second stage, the attempt has to be made to perceive the long and short out-breath and in-breath respectively as long and short.

In the third stage, the attempt has to be made to experience the entire out-breath and in-breath—the beginning, middle, and end.

In the fourth stage, the attempt has to be made to allay and calm down the out-breaths and in-breaths until they become extremely gentle.

In the first stage, it is as yet not possible to perceive such details as the length of the out-breaths and in-breaths. In this stage, one has to keep one's attention on the tip of the nose or the upper lip, as the case may be, wherever the striking of the out-breaths and in-breaths can be clearly grasped, and the attempt must be made to be aware of every out-breath and in-breath that occurs. The attempt must be made for one or two hours, or for whatever length of time one is able to put forth effort, during which the attention must be firmly tied to the tip of the nose or the upper lip. The attempt must be persisted with until every out-breath and in-breath is perceived, without any breath escaping attention.

In the second stage, when the keeping of the attention on the out-breaths and in-breaths has been mastered, one has to attempt to perceive the long out-breath and in-breath as long, and the short out-breath and in-breath as short. Even during the space of one sitting, long as well as short breaths occur. Every long breath and every short breath must be perceived as such, and the perception must cover every breath, without missing even one out-breath or one in-breath. When the out-breaths and in-breaths are exhaled and inhaled slowly, they are long; and when they are exhaled and inhaled quickly, they are short. Thus, perceiving the long and short out-breaths and in-breaths consists of perceiving the slow and quick out-breaths and in-breaths.

In the third stage, when the perception of the long and short out-breaths and in-breaths has been mastered, every breath occurring within the body must be experienced in its entirety, right from its starting point within the body through its middle to the point where it ends within the body, the extremities of the breath (start or end as the case may be) being at the tip of the nose and at the navel.

In the fourth stage, when the experiencing of every breath in its entirety has been mastered, the coarse or rough breaths must be calmed down and allayed by degrees, making them more and more gentle and delicate, until ultimately the stage is reached when one thinks that one's out-breaths and in-breaths have entirely disappeared.

## IX. The Method of the Commentary

In the Commentary (Aṭṭhakathā) there are three main stages of effort, namely:

1. Counting (*gaṇanā*): attention is placed on the out-breaths and in-breaths by counting them.
2. Connection (*anubandhanā*): attention is placed directly on the out-breaths and in-breaths and is made stronger and firmer, but the counting is discontinued.
3. Fixing (*ṭhapanā*): the effort is intensified until the higher stages of attainment are achieved.

There are two places where the out-breath and in-breath may be grasped: the tip of the nose and the upper lip. For some people the striking of the breath is clearer at the tip of the nose; for others, it is clearer on the upper lip. Attention must be placed on the spot where the perception is clearest, which may be called the "spot of touch." At the outset, effort must be made to keep the attention on the "spot of touch" by counting the number of times the out-breath and in-breath strike that spot. In the next stage, effort must be made to keep the attention on the out-breath and in-breath continuously, without the aid of counting. Finally, effort is applied to make the attention stronger and firmer.

### Counting

There are two methods of counting—slow and fast—according as the attention is weak or strong. In the beginning, the mind is untranquil and disturbed and the attention weak, and thus one is not mindful of every breath that occurs. Some breaths escape detection. Only those breaths that are clearly perceived with mindfulness are counted, while those that are not clearly perceived are left out of the reckoning. Counting thus progresses slowly. It is the slow stage.

Counting is done in six turns (*vāra*). In the first, counting proceeds from one to five; then, in the second, from one to six; in the third, from one to seven; in the fourth, from one to eight; in the fifth, from one to nine; and in the sixth, from one to ten. After the sixth turn, one must begin again from the first. Sometimes these six turns are counted as one.



First place the attention on the “spot of touch,” and when an out-breath or in-breath is clearly perceived, count “one.” Continue counting “two,” “three,” “four,” etc., when the ensuing out-breaths and in-breaths are clearly perceived. If any of them are not clearly perceived, stop the progressive counting by continuing to count “one,” “one,” “one,” etc., until the next clear perception of out-breath and in-breath, when the counting advances to “two.” When the count reaches “five” in the first turn, start again from one. Proceed in this way until the sixth turn is completed. Since only those breaths that are clearly perceived are counted, it is called the slow count.

When the counting has been done repeatedly many times, the number of breaths that are clearly perceived will increase. The spacing between each progressive count will decrease. When every breath is clearly perceived the counting will progress uninterruptedly and become fast. One must proceed until no breath is missed out from the counting.

It is not necessary to do the counting orally; a mental count is sufficient. Some people prefer to count orally. Others count one bead at the end of each sixth turn, and they resolve to count a certain number of rounds of beads a day. The essential thing is to make the perception clear and the attention strong and firm.

## Connection

When the stage is reached where every out-breath and in-breath is clearly perceived with the aid of counting, when no out-breath or in-breath escapes attention, the counting must be discontinued, and the connection (*anubandhanā*) method adopted. Here, the connection method means putting forth effort to keep the attention on the “spot of touch,” and to perceive every out-breath and in-breath without counting them. It means repeating the effort made in the counting stage in order to make perception clearer and attention stronger and firmer, but without the aid of counting.

How long is this effort by the connection method to be pursued? Until there appears the *paṭibhāga-nimitta*, the “counterpart sign” (i.e., a mental image that appears when an advanced degree of concentration is reached).

When attention becomes fixed on the out-breaths and in-breaths (i.e., when a certain degree of concentration is achieved), manifestations appear such as masses of fluffy wool, gusts of wind, clusters of stars, gems, pearls, or strings of pearls, etc., in various shapes, groups, and colours. These are called counterpart signs. The effort in the connection method must be continued until such time as the counterpart sign appears clearly on every occasion that effort is made.

## Fixing

During the stages of counting and connection, attention must still be kept on the “point of touch.” From the time the counterpart sign appears, effort must be made according to the third stage, the method of fixing (*ṭhapanā*). Counterpart signs are manifestations and resemble new mental objects. Not being natural phenomena, they easily disappear, and once they disappear, it is difficult to invoke them into sight again. Hence, when a counterpart sign appears, it is necessary to put forth special effort with added energy in fixing the attention on it to prevent it from disappearing; one must strive to make it become clearer day by day. The putting forth of this special additional effort is known as the method of fixing.

When the stage of fixing is reached, the seven unsuitable things (*asappāya*; see just below) must be shunned, while the seven suitable things (*sappāya*) must be cultivated. The ten kinds of proficiency in meditative absorption (*dasa appanā-kosalla*), too, must be accomplished.

The seven unsuitable things are: unsuitable (1) place, (2) village where almsfood is obtained, (3) talk, (4) friends and associates, (5) food, (6) climate, and (7) bodily postures; these things are called “unsuitable” because they cause deterioration of one’s meditation. The seven suitable things are the exact opposites: the place, village, talk, friends, food, climate, and postures which cause one’s meditation to improve.

The ten kinds of proficiency in meditative absorption are: (1) cleanliness of body and utensils, (2) harmonising the five spiritual faculties (*indriya*), (3) proficiency in the object of attention, (4) controlling the exuberant mind, (5) uplifting the depressed mind, (6) making the dry mind pleasant, (7) composure towards the balanced mind, (8) avoiding persons who do not possess concentration, (9) associating with persons who possess concentration, and (10) having a mind that is always bent towards meditative absorption.

Equipping and fulfilling oneself with these aforementioned qualities, one must make specially energetic efforts for days and months to fix one’s attention on the counterpart sign so that it becomes firm. This effort of fixing the attention (*ṭhapanā*) must be put forth until the fourth jhāna is attained.

## The Signs

I shall now show differentially the signs that appear during the three stages of effort, and the types of concentration achieved during these stages.

The image of the out-breath and in-breath that appears in the stage of counting is called the preparatory sign (*parikamma-nimitta*). In the stage

of connection, it is called the acquired sign (*uggaha-nimitta*). The manifestation that appears in the stage of attention is called the counterpart sign (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*).

The meditative concentration achieved during the appearance of the preparatory sign and acquired sign is “preparatory concentration” (*parikamma-bhāvanā-samādhi*). The meditative concentration developed with the attention fixed on the counterpart sign during the stage of fixing but before the attainment of full absorption (*appanā*) is called “access concentration” (*upacāra-bhāvanā-samādhi*). The four jhānas are called “concentration by absorption” (*appanā-bhāvanā-samādhi*).

In the counting and connection stages, the out-breath and in-breath—the objects of meditation—gradually become allayed and calm down. Ultimately they are apt to become so subtle that they seem to have disappeared altogether. When this occurs, one must continue to fix the attention on the “point of touch” and must attempt to grasp the out-breath and in-breath at that point. When the out-breath and in-breath are perceived again clearly, it will not be long before the counterpart sign appears, which signals that the access to jhāna (*upacāra-jhāna*) has been attained. Here, *upacāra-jhāna* means the access concentration of sense-sphere meditation (*kāmāvacara-bhāvanā upacāra-samādhi*) which has overcome the five hindrances (*pañcanīvaraṇa*).

The calming down of the out-breath and in-breath to the point of disappearance, mentioned in the method given in the Commentary, occurs automatically and need not be specifically attempted. I have myself seen yogis in whom out-breath and in-breath have calmed down to the point of disappearance. In the sutta however, where it is said, “*Passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati, passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati,*” the meaning is that when the stage of connection is reached, the process of calming down the out-breath and in-breath must be specifically attempted.

When the out-breath and in-breath apparently disappear, people who are not proficient in the work of meditation are apt to think that the out-breath and in-breath have really disappeared or stopped. Then they are apt to discard the work of meditation. Let all be heedful of this fact.

## X. The Commentary Reconciled with the Sutta

It is now necessary to reconcile the method given in the Commentary with the Ānāpānasati Sutta.

The counting stage, when the attention is fixed on the “point of touch” and the attempt is made to fix the attention on the breath by counting—

this is the first stage of the first tetrad of the sutta. In this stage, the main work is to overcome the mind's habit of repeatedly wandering off from the object of attention to other objects, and it is for this purpose that the method of counting is adopted. The time is not yet ripe for perceiving the long and short breaths, but in accordance with the text of the sutta, "The yogī mindfully exhales an out-breath, and mindfully inhales an in-breath (*sato va assasati, sato va passasati*)," effort must be confined to keeping the attention fixed on the out-breath and in-breath.

In this particular, the Commentary says:

The sole function of counting is to cut short the wandering tendencies of the mind, acquired in the long series of previous rebirths, that makes it stray from inside the body to outside objects, and to keep the attention firmly fixed on the internal objects of out-breath and in-breath (*bahivisaṭṭavitakkavicchedaṃ katvā assāsapassāsārammaṇe sati-saṅghapanatthaṃ yeva hi gaṇanā*).

After the counting stage, when the connection stage is reached, effort must be put forth according to the second stage of the first tetrad, described thus in the text: "When a long out-breath is exhaled, he knows that he exhales a long out-breath; when a long in-breath is inhaled, he knows that he inhales a long in-breath (*dīghaṃ vā assasanto dīghaṃ assasissamīti pajānāti*, etc.)." Here, attention has to be fixed on the "spot of touch," and with the attention so fixed, the long and short breaths have to be perceived. In doing this, it is not necessary to trace the entire breath from beginning to end. All one must do, while keeping the attention fixed on the "spot of touch," is to make an additional endeavour to be aware of the length of the breaths that brush the "spot of touch." Long breaths brush the spot for a long period, while short breaths brush the spot for a short period. The mind can become extremely expansive, and thus one can be aware of the long breaths and short breaths that go out and come in even while keeping one's attention steadily fixed on the "spot of touch."

When the long and short breaths have been clearly and distinctly perceived, effort has to be made to perceive the entire structure of each breath—the beginning, the middle, and the end—even while keeping the attention fixed on the "spot of touch," in accordance with the sutta statement, "While exhaling, he tries to perceive the entire out-breath—its beginning, middle, and end; while inhaling, he tries to perceive the entire in-breath—its beginning, middle, and end (*sabbakāyappaṭisaṃvedī assasissāmīti sikkhati, sabbakāyappaṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati*)."

When an out-breath is released, it must not be done unmindfully, but one must be fully aware of it right from its start within the body and follow it along its course until it reaches its end within the body at the "spot of touch," and it is with this added endeavour of being aware of it in its totality that the breath must be released. Similarly, when an in-

breath is inhaled, one must do so with awareness right from its start within the body at the “spot of touch” and follow it until it reaches its end at the navel within the body.

While thus following the out-breaths and in-breaths from beginning to end, the attention must be continually fixed on the “spot of touch.” The breaths must not be followed from beginning to end by allowing the attention to leave the “spot of touch.” If a resolute endeavour is made to follow the out-breaths and in-breaths without allowing the attention to leave the “spot of touch,” then, even while the attention continues to be fixed on the “spot of touch,” the form and shape of the out-breaths and in-breaths will gradually appear clearly in their entirety.

When the beginning, middle, and end of the out-breaths and in-breaths have been clearly perceived, if the rough and coarse breaths do not become automatically calmed and allayed to the point of disappearance, then, in accordance with the text of the fourth section of the first tetrad of the sutta, where it is said, “As he exhales, he tries to allay and calm down the out-breath: as he inhales, he tries to allay and calm down the in-breath (*passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati, passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati*),” a special additional endeavour must be made to make them gentler and gentler, and this must be pursued with resolution, not left unmindfully to take its own course.

In the method given in the Commentary, however, it is stated that the out-breaths and in-breaths become calmed down and allayed of their own accord even from the stage of counting, and in my own experience, I have come across persons whose breaths have automatically disappeared.

In this particular, this is what the Commentary says:

From the time of effort according to the method of counting, in due course, when through the coarse out-breaths and in-breaths becoming calmed down and allayed, the anxieties and cares of the body become tranquillized, both body and mind become light, and the physical body rises in space.

*Gaṇanā vassen’eva pana manasikārakālato pabhuti anukkamoto oḷārika-assāsapassāsa nirodhavasena kāyadarathe vyupasante kāyopi cittampi lahukaṃ hoti. Sarīraṃ ākāse laṅghanākārappattaṃ viya hoti.*

I have known people whose bodies have risen about the height of four fingers’ breadth in the air.

When this stage is reached where the out-breaths and in-breaths disappear, then, without taking the attention off the “spot of touch,” an attempt must be made to perceive the disappeared out-breaths and in-

breaths. When they are perceived again clearly, the counterpart sign (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*) appears. At that stage, the mental hindrances such as fear, dread, sleepiness, indolence, etc., are overcome, and the access to jhāna is attained.

This ends the reconciliation between the Commentary and the Ānāpānasati Sutta.

This also ends the account of the counting, connection, and fixing (*gaṇanā, anubandhanā, ṭhapanā*) methods of the Commentary, where seven stages are given, viz., counting connection, touching, fixing, observing, turning away, and purification (*gaṇanā, anubandhanā, phusanā, ṭhapanā, sallakkhaṇā, vivaṭṭanā, and pārisuddhi*). [5]

The first tetrad is the main and essential stage. At the present day, if work in the first tetrad is successfully accomplished, one can proceed to tranquillity (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*) as one desires.

Here ends the first tetrad.

## XI. The Second Tetrad

I shall now show the second tetrad of the sutta which is to be attempted or practised in the fixing stage, the stage of the full absorption or jhāna. The text states:

1. “Experiencing rapture, I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.
2. “Experiencing happiness, I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.
3. “Experiencing the mental functions, I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.
4. “Allaying and calming down the mental functions, I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.

1. *Pītipaṭisaṃvedī assasissāmīti sikkhati, pītipaṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

2. *Sukhapaṭisaṃvedī assasissāmīti sikkhati, sukhapaṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

3. *Cittasaṅkhāraṃ paṭisaṃvedī assasissāmīti sikkhati, cittasaṅkhāraṃ paṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

4. *Passambhayaṃ cittasaṅkhāraṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati, passambhayaṃ cittasaṅkhāraṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

1. What is meant by “experiencing rapture” (*pītipaṭisaṃvedī*) is putting forth effort, when the counterpart sign appears, until the first and second jhānas are attained, in which rapture (*pīti*) predominates.

2. What is meant by “experiencing happiness” (*sukhapaṭisaṃvedī*) is putting forth effort until the third jhāna is attained, in which happiness (*sukha*) predominates.

3. What is meant by “experiencing the mental functions” (*cittasaṅkhāraṃ paṭisaṃvedī*) is putting forth effort until the fourth jhāna is attained, in which the mental function (*citta-saṅkhāra*) of equanimous feeling (*upekkhā vedanā*) predominates.

4. What is meant by “allaying and calming down the mental functions” (*passambhayaṃ cittasaṅkhāraṃ*) putting forth effort to allay and calm down the coarse feelings (*vedanā*) and perceptions (*saññā*).

The Commentary associates this tetrad with full absorption in jhāna, but the experience of rapture, joy, and calm is also associated with the access to jhāna (*upacāra-jhāna*), attained after the first appearance of the counterpart sign.

This ends the second tetrad.

## XII. The Third Tetrad

I shall now show the third tetrad of the sutta, which gives the practice when entering jhāna or full absorption.

1. “Experiencing the mind (consciousness), I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.

2. “Making the mind extremely delighted, I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.

3. “Making the mind extremely concentrated, I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.

4. “Freeing the mind (from the defilements, hindrances, etc.), I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.

1. *Cittapaṭisaṃvedī assasissāmīti sikkhati, cittapaṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

2. *Abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati, abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

3. *Samādahaṃ cittaṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati, samādahaṃ cittaṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

4. *Vimocayaṃ cittaṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati, vimocayaṃ cittaṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

1. “Perceiving the mind” (*citta-paṭisaṃvedī*) means entering the four jhānas repeatedly in order to make the perception of the mind extremely clear.

2. “Making the mind extremely delighted” (*abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ*) means that when the perception of the mind is extremely clear, one

makes the mind extremely delighted by repeatedly entering the first and second jhānas (which are associated with rapture, *pīti*).

3. “Making the mind extremely concentrated” (*samādahaṃ cittaṃ*) means that when the mind is extremely delighted, one makes the mind extremely concentrated by entering the third and fourth jhānas.

4. “Freeing the mind” (*vimocayaṃ cittaṃ*) means freeing the mind of obstacles by repeatedly entering the four jhānas.

The Commentary associates this tetrad too with jhānic absorption, though it contains practices associated with the access to jhāna as well.

This ends the third tetrad.

## XIII. The Fourth Tetrad

I shall now show the fourth tetrad which gives the method of proceeding from mindfulness of breathing to insight (*vipassanā*).

1. “Contemplating impermanence, I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.

2. “Contemplating detachment, I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.

3. “Contemplating cessation, I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.

4. “Contemplating abandonment, I will exhale and inhale,” thus he trains himself.

1. *Aniccānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati, aniccānupassī passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

2. *Virāgānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati, virāgānupassī passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

3. *Nirodhānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati, nirodhānupassī passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

4. *Paṭinissaggānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati, paṭinissaggānupassī passasissāmīti sikkhati.*

The way to proceed to insight (*vipassanā*) will be dealt with later (see [SXVII](#)).

## XIV. How the Foundations of Mindfulness are Fulfilled



The Buddha said that those who accomplish mindfulness of breathing also fulfil the function of the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*). I shall here give just the essential meaning.

In the four tetrads dealt with above, effort in the first tetrad, which includes the counting and connection methods (*gaṇanā, anubandhanā*), consists entirely of the application of mindfulness to contemplation of the body (*kāyānupassanāsatipaṭṭhāna*). Out-breath and in-breath, being part of the corporeality group (*rūpa-kāya*), are called body (*kāya*). Thus the *Ānāpānasati Sutta* says, “This is a certain body among the different kinds of bodies, namely, out-breath and in-breath (*kāyesu kāyaññatarāhaṃ bhikkhave etaṃ vadāmi yadidaṃ assāsapassāsā*).”

Effort in the second tetrad consists of the application of mindfulness to contemplation of feelings (*vedānānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*). The text says, “This is a certain feeling among the different kinds of feelings, namely, this mental advertence to out-breath and in-breath done thoroughly and well (*vedanāsu vedanaññatarāhaṃ bhikkhave etaṃ vadāmi, yad-idaṃ assāsapassāsānaṃ sādhukaṃ manasikāro*). “Thoroughly and well” (*sādhukaṃ*) indicates the special endeavour that is required in experiencing rapture (*pītipaṭisaṃvedī*), etc. Here, while attention continues to be placed on the out-breath and in-breath, effort is made to clearly perceive the feelings with wisdom, and thus work in the second tetrad is called the application of mindfulness to contemplation of feelings.

Work in the third tetrad consists of the application of mindfulness to contemplation of mind (*cittānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*). Here also, while attention continues to be placed on the out-breath and in-breath, effort is made to clearly perceive the mind with wisdom.

Work in the fourth tetrad, such as contemplation of impermanence (*aniccānupassī*), is the application of mindfulness to contemplation of mind objects (*dhammānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*). Here again, while attention continues to be placed on the out-breath and in-breath, effort is made to clearly perceive the overcoming of such unwholesome states as covetousness (*abhijjhā*) and grief (*domanassa*) with wisdom. The sutta says, “Seeing thoroughly with wisdom that which is the overcoming of covetousness and grief, he takes good care of it (*yo yaṃ abhijjhādomanassānaṃ pahānaṃ, taṃ paññāya disvā sādhukaṃ ajjhupekkhitā hoti*).” Because such things (*dhamma*) as impermanence are contemplated together with the out-breath and in-breath, it is also proper to call it the application of mindfulness to contemplation of mind objects.

## **XV. How the Enlightenment Factors are Fulfilled**

I shall now show how a person who fulfils mindfulness of breathing also fulfils the seven factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*).

Since the work of mindfulness of breathing consists of making mindfulness (*sati*) firmer and stronger every day, it amounts to practising the enlightenment factor of mindfulness (*sati-sambojjhaṅga*). Says the sutta: “When, to a yogī practising mindfulness of breathing, mindfulness becomes firm, and there is no moment when he is without mindfulness, then the enlightenment factor of mindfulness is accomplished.”

The progress the person practising mindfulness of breathing makes in developing wisdom, and in discerning the various phenomena associated with that practice, is the enlightenment factor of investigation of phenomena (*dhammavicaya-sambojjhaṅga*).

The progress of energy in the work of mindfulness of breathing is the development of the enlightenment factor of energy (*virīya-sambojjhaṅga*).

When the stage of “experiencing rapture” (*pītipaṭisaṃvedī*) is reached, the progressive development of rapture is the development of the enlightenment factor of rapture (*pīti-sambojjhaṅga*).

When rapture is attained in the work of mindfulness of breathing, the disturbing states of indolence and torpor become allayed and calmed; the progressive development of this calming down is the development of the enlightenment factor of calmness (*passaddhi-sambojjhaṅga*).

When calmness develops, concentration (*samādhi*) develops: this is the enlightenment factor of concentration (*samādhi-sambojjhaṅga*).

When concentration develops, there is no longer any occasion for anxiety and concern arising out of an inattentive mind, and thus the enlightenment factor of equanimity is developed (*upekkhā-sambojjhaṅga*).

The sutta shows in detail how the seven factors of enlightenment become accomplished by accomplishing each of the four foundations of mindfulness.

## **XVI. How Knowledge and Deliverance are Achieved**

To show how to proceed from mindfulness of breathing to insight, path knowledge, and fruition knowledge (*vipassanā*, *maggā-ñāṇa*, *phala-ñāṇa*), the Buddha said in the Ānāpānasati Sutta:

O bhikkhus, how must the seven factors of enlightenment be developed and much practised in order to accomplish knowledge and deliverance? O bhikkhus, in this Sāsana, a bhikkhu develops and cultivates the enlightenment factor of mindfulness ... the enlightenment factor of equanimity, which is dependent on (or bent on) Nibbāna, which is secluded from the defilements, where the passions are absent, where the defilements cease, where the defilements are relinquished. It is in this way that the seven factors of enlightenment must be developed and cultivated to accomplish knowledge and deliverance.

*Kathaṃ bhāvitā ca bhikkhave satta bojjhaṅgā kathaṃ bahulikāṭā vijjāvimuttiṃ paripūrenti? Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu sati-sambojjhaṅgaṃ ... upekkhā-sambojjhaṅgaṃ bhāveti vivekanissitaṃ virāganissitaṃ nirodhanissitaṃ vossaggaparināmiṃ. Evaṃ bhāvitā kho bhikkhave satta sambojjhaṅgā evaṃ bahulikāṭā vijjāvimuttiṃ paripūrenti.*

Seclusion, dispassion, cessation, and relinquishment (*viveka*, *virāga*, *nirodha*, *vossagga*) are all names for Nibbāna. “Practising with the aim of achieving Nibbāna in this very life,” is what is meant by *vivekanissita* (dependent on seclusion), etc. It is also called *vivaṭṭanissita*., “dependent on the ending of the round.” If effort be made merely to acquire merit, it is *vaṭṭanissita*, “dependent on the round (of existence).”

If one practises according to the counting method, the connection method, and the fixing method (whereby one gains access to *jhāna* (*upacāra-jhāna*) and full absorption (*appanā-jhāna*)), one achieves the four foundations of mindfulness and the seven factors of enlightenment. But if one does so with inclination towards the *deva* and *brahma* existences after death, the seven factors of enlightenment become “dependent on the round.” If one stops short with the attainment of access, absorption, and contemplation of impermanence, one is liable to become inclined towards dependence on the round. Hence the words “which is secluded from the defilements, where the passions are absent, where the defilements cease, where the defilements are relinquished (*vivekanissitaṃ*, *virāganissitaṃ*, *nirodhanissitaṃ*, *vossaggaparināmiṃ*),” emphasise the need to put forth effort with a view to attaining the ending of the round in this very life, and not stopping short with such attainments as access to *jhāna* and absorption. “The ending of the round” (*vivaṭṭa*) means Nibbāna.

At the present day, people within the Buddha-sāsana have the opportunity to work towards the attainment of Nibbāna, the ending of the round, and hence they should concentrate with all their might to reach this attainment. It is because they desire this ending of the round that they must strive towards true knowledge and deliverance (*vijjā-vimutti*). And, in order to achieve knowledge and deliverance, they must set up the seven factors of enlightenment (*satta bojjhaṅga*). In order to set up the

seven factors of enlightenment, they must set up the four foundations of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhāna*). In order to set up the four foundations of mindfulness, they have to undertake the work of mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*). If mindfulness of breathing, the four foundations of mindfulness, the seven factors of enlightenment, and the two states of true knowledge and deliverance are accomplished, the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*) are also accomplished. This is the condensed meaning of the Ānāpānasati Sutta.

The way to achieve this true knowledge and deliverance speedily is no other than what has been shown in the fourth tetrad, where it is said “he trains to contemplate impermanence as he exhales and inhales, etc. (*aniccānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati*).” If after the seven factors of enlightenment are set up, the knowledge and deliverance of the path and fruit of the stream-winner (*sotāpatti-magga-phala*) are achieved, one can attain, in this very life, the “ending of the round” of Nibbāna with the groups of existence still remaining (*sa-upādisesa-nibbāna*), where wrong views (*diṭṭhi*) and doubts (*vicikicchā*) cease, and deliverance is obtained from unwholesome conduct (*duccarita*), evil livelihood (*durājīva*), and liability to rebirth in the world of misery (*apāya loka*; i.e., rebirth as an animal, an unhappy spirit, or in hell).

## **XVII. How to Proceed to Vipassanā**

I shall now show concisely the work of the fourth tetrad.

### **When Can One Proceed to Vipassanā?**

As the Ānāpānasati Sutta and its Commentary explain the order of practice in mindfulness of breathing, one is to take up work in the fourth tetrad only after one has attained the four jhānas. If one can adhere strictly to this order of practice, that is ideal, but if one cannot follow this sequence one may proceed to *vipassanā*, or insight, from the third jhāna. It is also permissible to proceed to *vipassanā* from the second jhāna, or from the first, or from the access stage prior to full attainment of jhāna, or from the connection stage, or even from the counting stage after one has overcome the wandering tendencies of the mind.

### **Two Methods**

One may proceed to *vipassanā* while still keeping the attention on the out-breath and in-breath, or one may treat the mindfulness of breathing as preparatory work and then proceed to *vipassanā* by taking any portion

of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandhā*) one wishes as the object of attention.

In the *Ānāpānasati Sutta* that is dealt with here, in accordance with the passage, “he trains in contemplating impermanence, and thus he exhales and inhales” (*aniccānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati*, etc.),” the method given associates the work of insight meditation directly with mindfulness of breathing. The point of the text is that, when one breathes in and out, one must do so while making a special endeavour to advert to their impermanent nature and to clearly perceive that impermanent nature.

## From the Counting and Connection Stages

In these two stages, the work consists solely of keeping the attention on the out-breaths and in-breaths and perceiving them with wisdom. Hence, if one wishes to proceed to *vipassanā* from these stages, the effort must be based on corporeal phenomena (*rūpa-dhamma*).

## From the Fixing Stage

At the level of access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*), there are two stages: contemplation of feeling (*vedanānupassanā*) and contemplation of mind (*cittānupassanā*). The second tetrad (wherein it is said, “experiencing rapture ... experiencing joy”) is the contemplation of feeling stage. The third tetrad (wherein it is said, “experiencing the mind ...”) is the contemplation of mind stage. If one wants to proceed to *vipassanā* from the contemplation of feeling stage, the effort must be based on the mental phenomenon (*nāma-dhamma*) of feeling (*vedanā*). If one wishes to proceed from the contemplation of mind stage, the effort must be based on the mental phenomenon of mind (*citta*). If one wishes to proceed from the level of full absorption (*appanā-samādhi*), the effort can be based either on feeling or mind, or on any of the *jhāna* characteristics of the *jhāna* that one has attained.

## Vipassanā based on Corporeal Phenomena

When effort in the counting stage is accomplished, instead of proceeding next to the connection stage, one must proceed to the stage of insight into impermanence (*anicca-vipassanā*) in accordance with the text, “he trains to contemplate impermanence, and thus he exhales and inhales” (*aniccānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati*, etc.).

The momentary concentration (*khaṇika-samādhi*) which one achieved in the counting stage must be treated as access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*). A person who wants to practise *vipassanā*, being an ordinary human being, may not find it possible to put forth effort twenty-four hours a day. He must therefore allocate three or four hours a day and put

forth effort punctually and regularly every day. When he starts to practise, he must first overcome the wandering tendencies of the mind and establish mindfulness on the breath. It is only after he has overcome the mind's wandering tendencies that he can direct the mind towards *vipassanā*. He must not relinquish mindfulness of the breathing, but must remain established in it until he achieves insight and attains knowledge of the path and fruit (*magga-ñāṇa and phala-ñāṇa*). Even when he enters fruition, he must treat mindfulness of breathing as access concentration.

### **Five Stages of Purity (*visuddhi*)**

In the path of *vipassanā*, there are five stages of purity: (i) purity of view (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*), (ii) purity of escape from doubts (*kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi*), (iii) purity of wisdom distinguishing the real path from the false path (*maggāmagga-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*) (iv) purity of wisdom in the practice (*paṭipadā-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*), and (v) purity of wisdom (*ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*). [6]

### **Purity of View in regard to Corporeal Phenomena (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi in rūpa*)**

I shall now show how purity of view (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*) in corporeal phenomena (*rūpa-dhamma*) is achieved. [7]

In the corporeal phenomena of out-breath and in-breath, there are always present eight corporeal elements: earth (*paṭhavi*), water (*āpo*), fire (*tejo*), wind (*vāyo*), colour (*vaṇṇa*), odour (*gandha*), taste (*rasa*), and nutriment (*ojā*). [8] When sound is produced, it contains nine elements, the additional element being sound (*sadda*). Among all these elements, the basic elements are earth, water, fire, and wind.

The earth element (*paṭhavī-dhātu*) is the functional quality of hardness. In all corporeal phenomena there exists this basic quality of hardness. In those things in which the earth element predominates, the quality of hardness can be touched or felt, but not in such things as sunbeams and moonbeams. Its existence, however, can be logically realised. For example, how can the water element bind if there is nothing solid to bind? How can the fire element burn if there is nothing solid to burn? How can the wind element produce motion if there is nothing solid to push?

In the corporeal groups of the out-breath and in-breath, the binding function that causes the grouping is that of the water element. The heat and cold in the groups are caused by the fire element. Motion is caused by the wind element. In out-breath and in-breath, it is the wind element that predominates. If one can appreciate the existence of these four primary elements in out-breath and in-breath, then one can appreciate their existence in the whole body, and in pursuance of that appreciation, if one can penetrate and perceive their existence in out-breath and in-breath, then one can also penetrate and perceive them in the whole body.

In ultimate reality, there exist in the out-breath and in-breath only these four primary elements of earth, water, fire, and wind. It is when the eye of wisdom penetrates and perceives these primary elements that one can be said to perceive reality. If the perception does not penetrate far enough and fails to reach these four elements, but stops short at such things as the shape and form of the out-breaths and in-breaths, then one is still on the path of personality view (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), according to which: “The beginning of the out-breath is at the navel. Its end is at the tip of the nose. It originates once at the beginning. It disappears once at the end. There is no repeated origination and disappearance in the middle. Similarly for the in-breath.” This is the belief that is firmly and deeply rooted in the minds of worldlings (*puthujjana*). One must rid oneself of this deep and firm root in the perception of one’s body by ridding oneself of it in the out-breaths and in-breaths.

The way to rid oneself of it is as follows: When the eye of wisdom penetrates to these four primary elements and the ultimate reality is perceived, such things as shape and form in the out-breath and in-breath disappear, and every time one contemplates them, the deep and firm root of personality view disappears. One perceives that there is in reality no shape and form—no out-breath and in-breath. One perceives that there exist only the four primary elements. Thus purity of view (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*) is achieved.

It is the same with respect to the other parts of the body such as head-hairs, body-hairs, etc. There exists, on the one hand, the deeply rooted habitual perception of shape and form, such as, “This is head-hair,” and on the other, there exist the four primary elements. When these four primary elements are penetrated and clearly perceived with wisdom in the head-hairs, the deeply rooted wrong perception of shape and form will disappear. It will be perceived that the head-hairs do not exist in reality. When it is thus seen, purity of view in the head-hairs is achieved. Proceed in the same way in the case of the other parts of the body such as body-hairs, etc.

This ends purity of view regarding corporeal phenomena.

### **Purity of View in regard to Mental Phenomena (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi in nāma*)**

There is the mind that adverts to the objects of out-breath and in-breath. There is the mind that adverts towards the four primary elements. There are attributes of that mind such as mindfulness, energy, and knowledge (*sati, viriya, ñāṇa*). These are all mental elements (*nāma-dhātu*). The function of knowing the objects is the mind (*citta*). That of attending to them again and again is *mindfulness*. That of putting forth effort is *energy*. That of proficiency is *knowledge*.

Thinking and perceiving, “I shall advert *my* mind towards out-breath and in-breath,” is the work of the deeply rooted view in the mind. One must overcome this deeply rooted view. How? The advertence to out-breath and in-breath is a functional element—a mental element. When that element appears in the mental organ, advertence towards out-breath and in-breath occurs. It is a purely mental functional element. It is not corporeal. It is not the function of the aggregate of corporeality. It is not an entity or being. It is not the function of a being. It is not an “I,” nor is it the function of an “I.” It is an element which, in the Abhidhamma, is called *citta*, or *viññāṇa*, or *nāma*. It is thus that one must try to perceive. Let it not be confused and mixed up with the aggregate of corporeality, or taken as a being or “I.” When it is clearly perceived thus, purity of view in a mental element is achieved, and when purity of view in mind is achieved, it is also achieved in the other mental elements of mindfulness, energy, and knowledge.

This ends purity of view in mental phenomena. This also ends the explanation of purity of view.

### **Purity of Escape from Doubt (*kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi*)**

When the functions of the five elements consisting of the four corporeal elements and one element of mind are penetrated and perceived with wisdom, effort must be made to achieve the wisdom of purity of escape from doubt (*kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi-ñāṇa*). This wisdom is achieved by attaining the wisdom which discerns dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda-ñāṇa*). [9]

*Kaṅkhā* means *vicikicchā* (doubt). In the infinitely long *saṃsāra*, there are many wrong views and wrong theories about the functions of the five elements mentioned above to which beings subscribe. These beings lean towards these wrong views and wrong theories, such as belief in self and permanence, because they do not know the dependent origination of the corporeal and mental elements. This is ordinary doubt. Perplexity regarding the sixteen points mentioned in the suttas, such as “Have I not existed in the past?” (*ahosiṃ nu kho ahaṃ atītamaddhānaṃ*), etc., are special kinds of doubt (see MN Sutta No. 2).

Of the four kinds of corporeal elements that exist within the body, there are some that are caused by kamma; others that are caused by mind (*citta*); still others that are caused by temperature (*utu*); and still others that are caused by nutriment (*āhāra*). These four causes of corporeal phenomena must be known.

Within the body, there are corporeal phenomena caused by kamma that are incessantly arising without a moment’s break like the continuous flow of a river. There are also corporeal phenomena caused by mind that are thus continuously arising. Similarly, there are also corporeal phenomena caused by changes in temperature, and corporeal phenomena caused by the nutriment that is ingested.



In the case of the mind element, there are occasions of mind arising in dependence on particular objects of thought (such as out-breath and in-breath), each particular thought being connected with and dependent on each particular out-breath and in-breath as the case may be, like the connection and dependency of shadows and reflection on sunlight.

This shows concisely the dependent origination of the five basic elements. If this dependent origination can be realised with wisdom, purity of escape from doubt is accomplished. The views of self and permanence will be overcome.

This ends the discussion of purity of escape from doubt.

## Conclusion

Thus there are five basic elements: earth, water, fire, wind, and mind. There are four causes of the corporeal elements: kamma, mind, temperature, and nutriment. There are two causes of mental elements: external sense objects and internal sense organs. Differentiating them into corporeal and mental phenomena, these things, together with their arising and disappearance, must be repeatedly discerned by applying the three characteristics (*lakkhaṇa*)—impermanence, suffering, and selflessness. For example, corporeality is impermanent in the sense of being subject to decay; suffering in the sense of being fearful; and not-self in the sense of being without substance (*rūpaṃ aniccaṃ khayattaṅgena, dukkhaṃ bhayattaṅgena, anattā asāraṅkataṅgena*). One must contemplate them thus until they are perceived with wisdom. Thus one must put forth effort for insight.

This shows concisely how to proceed to *vipassanā* according to the formula “Contemplating impermanence, I will exhale and inhale (*aniccānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati*), etc.” as given in the fourth tetrad of the *Ānāpānasati Sutta*.

Another way is to view one’s own corporeal and mental phenomena as one ordinarily knows them until one penetrates and perceives them with wisdom, treating the attention on out-breath and in-breath as access concentration. Here, *upacāra* or access may be explained as follows: When a yogī begins to put forth effort, he must first concentrate and tranquillize his mind, and he views out-breath and in-breath for this purpose. He follows this procedure on every occasion that he puts forth effort. This prior concentration and tranquillization is the business of access concentration. It is only after the mind has been concentrated and tranquillized that one may proceed to view whatever part of the body one desires.

This shows concisely how to proceed to *vipassanā* from the counting stage. More detailed expositions may be found in my *Āhāra Dīpanī* (Manual of Nutriment) and *Anatta Dīpanī* (Manual of Non-Self).

When proceeding to *vipassanā* from the connection stage, or from the access concentration of the fixing stage, or from the full absorption of the first, second, third, and fourth jhānas of the fixing stage, the method may be gathered from what has been shown in the case of the counting stage.

As regards the three remaining purities, the ten kinds of insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), and the knowledge of the path and fruit of stream-winning (*sotāpatti-magga- and phala-ñāṇas*), see the *Kammaṭṭhāna* (Meditation Subject) section of my *Paramattha Saṅkhitta* (Summary of the Ultimate).

This ends the concise exposition of the meditation subject of mindfulness of breathing, as given in the *Ānāpānasati Sutta* and its Commentary.

This ends the *Ānāpāna Dīpanī*,  
the Manual of Mindfulness of Breathing.

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## A Short Biography

### ***The Venerable Mahāthera Ledi Sayādaw, Aggamāhapaṇḍita, D. Litt.***

Known to scholars of many countries, the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw, *Aggamāhapaṇḍita*, D. Litt., was perhaps the outstanding Buddhist figure of this age. With the increase in interest in Buddhism in Western lands, there is a great demand for his Buddhist discourses and writings.

Bhikkhu Nyāṇa, who was later known as Ledi Sayādaw, was born on Tuesday, the 13<sup>th</sup> waxing of Nattaw, 1208 B.E. (1846 C.E.) at Saing-pyin Village, Dipeyin Township, Shwebo District. His parents were U Tun Tha and Daw Kyone. Early in life he was ordained a novice and at the age of twenty a bhikkhu, under the patronage of Salin Sayādaw U Paṇḍicca. He received his monastic education under various teachers and later was trained in Buddhist literature by the Venerable Sankyaung Sayādaw, *Sudassana Dhaja Atulādhpati Sīripavara Mahādhamma Rājādhirājaguru* of Mandalay.

He was a bright student. It was said of him: "About 2000 students attended the lectures delivered daily by the Venerable Sankyaung

Sayādaw. One day the Venerable Sayādaw set in Pāli twenty questions on the *pāramī* (perfections) and asked all the students to answer them. None except Bhikkhu Nyāṇa could answer those questions satisfactorily.” He collected all these answers and when he attained fourteen years (*vassa*) as a bhikkhu, while still at San-kyaung monastery, he published his first book, *Pāramī Dīpanī* (Manual of the Perfections).

During the reign of King Theebaw he became a Pāli lecturer at Mahā Jotikārāma Monastery in Mandalay. A year after the capture of King Theebaw, i.e., in 1887 C.E., he moved to a place north of Monywa Town, where he established a monastery under the name of Ledi-tawya Monastery. He accepted many bhikkhu-students from various parts of Burma and imparted Buddhist education to them. In 1897 C.E. he wrote in Pāli *Paramattha Dīpanī* (Manual of Ultimate Truths), a commentary on the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*.

Later, he toured many parts of Burma for the purpose of propagating the Buddha Dhamma. In the towns and villages he visited he delivered various discourses on the Dhamma and established Abhidhamma classes and meditation centres. He composed Abhidhamma rhymes or Abhidhamma summaries and taught them to his Abhidhamma classes. In some of the principal towns he spent a rains retreat imparting Abhidhamma and Vinaya education to the lay devotees. Some of the Ledi Meditation Centres still exist and are still famous. During his life he wrote many essays, letters, poems, and manuals in Burmese. He has written more than seventy manuals, of which seven have been translated into English and published in 'The Light of the Dhamma.' *Vipassanā Dīpanī* (Manual of Insight) was translated by his disciple Sayādaw U Nyāṇa, Paṭhamagyaw. *Paṭṭhānuddesa Dīpanī* (A concise exposition of the Buddhist Philosophy of Relations) was originally written in Pāli and translated by Sayādaw U Nyāṇa. *Niyāma Dīpanī* (Manual of Cosmic Order) was translated by U Nyāṇa and Dr Barua and edited by Mrs Rhys Davids. *Sammāditṭhi Dīpanī* (Manual of Right Understanding) and *Catusacca Dīpanī* (Manual of the Four Noble Truths) and *Alin-Kyan* (An Exposition of Five Kinds of Light), translated in part only, were all translated by the editors of 'The Light of the Dhamma'. *Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī* (Manual of the Factors Leading to Enlightenment) was translated by U Sein Nyo Tun, I.C.S. (Retd.) and *Maggāṅga Dīpanī* (Manual of the Constituents of the Noble Path) was translated by U Saw Tun Teik, B.A., B.L., and revised and edited by the English Editorial Board of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council.

He was awarded the title of *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* by the Government of India in 1911 C.E. Later, the University of Rangoon conferred on him the degree of D. Litt. (*Honoris Causa*). In his later years he settled down at Pyinmana where he died in 1923 C.E. at the ripe age of 77.

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## Appendix — Ledi Sayadaw's Works

Below are some of the *ṭīkās*, manuals, essays and letters written by the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw.

### In Pāli

*Paramattha Dīpanī*. (Manual of Ultimate Truths) or *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha Mahāṭīkā*.

*Nirutti Dīpanī*. or *Vuttimoggallāna ṭīkā*.

*Anu-dīpanī*.

*Vibhatyattha ṭīkā*.

*Vaccavācaka ṭīkā*.

*Sāsanasampatti Dīpanī*.

*Sāsanavipatti Dīpanī*.

*Paṭṭhānuddesa Dīpanī*.\*

*Sammādiṭṭhi Dīpanī*.\*

*London Pāli Devi Questions and Answers*.

*Exposition of Buddhism for the West*.

*Padhāna Sutta* (Pāli and word for word meanings).

*Anattavibhāvanā*.

*Yamaka Pucchā Vissajjanā*.

*Niyāma Dīpanī*.\*

*Vipassanā Dīpanī*.\*

### In Burmese

*Rūpa Dīpanī*. (Manual of Material Qualities).

*Lakkhaṇa Dīpanī*. (Manual of Characteristics of Existence).

*Pāramī Dīpanī*. (Manual of Perfections).

*Vijjāmagga Dīpanī*. (Manual of the Way to the Holy Path-Knowledge).

*Nibbāna Dīpanī*. (Manual of Nibbāna).

*Mahāsayana Dīpanī*. (Manual of Great Lying Down).

*Uttamapurisa Dīpanī*. (Manual of the Real Superman).

*Paṭiccasamuppāda Dīpanī*. (Manual of Dependent Origination).

*Āhāra Dīpanī*. (Manual of Nutritive Essence).

*Anatta Dīpanī*. (Manual of Non-Self).

*Anatta Dīpanī*. (New).

*Kammaṭṭhāna Dīpanī*. (Manual of Meditation Subjects).

*Ānāpāna Dīpanī*. (Manual of Mindfulness of Breathing).

*Catusacca Dīpanī*. (Manual of the Four Noble Truths).\*

*Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī*. (Manual of the Factors Leading to Enlightenment).\*  
*Somanassupekkhā Dīpanī*. (Manual of Joy and Equanimity).  
*Bhāvanā Dīpanī*. (Manual of Mental Concentration).  
*Sukumāra Dīpanī*.  
*Saccattha Dīpanī*.  
*Sāsanadāyajja Dīpanī*.  
*Rogantara Dīpanī*.  
*Dhamma Dīpanī*.  
*Dānādi Dīpanī*.  
*Maggaṅga Dīpanī*. (Manual of the Constituents of the Noble Path).\*  
*Goṇasurā Dīpanī*.  
*Niyāma Dīpanī*. (Manual of Cosmic Order).  
*Sīlavinicchaya Dīpanī*;  
*Virati-sīlavinicchaya Dīpanī*.  
*Ṇaparibhoga-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.  
*Dīghāsana-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.  
*Asaṅkhāra-Sasaṅkhāra-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.  
*Sikkhā-gahana-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.  
*Cetīyaṅgana-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.  
*Upasampadā-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.  
  
*Decision on Ājivaṭṭhamaka Sīla*.  
*Decision on Vikālabhojana-sikkhāpada*.  
*Saraṇa-gamaṇa-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.  
*Paramattha Saṅkhitta*.  
*Vinaya Saṅkhitta*.  
*Sadda Saṅkhitta*.  
*'Alphabets' Saṅkhitta*.  
*Prosody Saṅkhitta*.  
*Alaṅkā Saṅkhitta*.  
*Spelling Saṅkhitta*.  
*Paramattha Saṅkhitta*.  
 Chapter on Material Qualities (in brief).  
  
*Nibbāna-vissajjanā Manual*.  
*Ledi Questions and Answers*.  
*Questions on Sotāpanna*.  
*Sāsanavisodhanī*, Vols. I, II & III.  
*Gambhīra-kabyā-kyan*. (Manual of Profound Verses).  
 Open letter for abstention from taking beef.  
  
 Letter of reply to U Ba Bwa, Township Officer of Dedaye, saying that he could not go on a pilgrimage to Ceylon that year.  
  
 Admonitory letter to U Saing, Headman of Saingpyin Village, for abstention from taking intoxicants.

Admonitory letter to the inhabitants of Dipeyin Township for abstention from taking intoxicants.

Admonitory letter prohibiting lotteries and gambling.

An advice to hold a lighting festival at the Bo Tree within the precincts of Ledi Monastery, Monywa.

Letter to U Hmat, a ruby merchant of Mogok.

Inscription at Sihataw Pagoda, written by the Venerable Mahā-thera Ledi Sayādaw at the request of U Hmat.

Epic on Saṃvega.

**The English translations of the works marked (O)** are printed in a single volume: *The Manuals of Buddhism* and published by: The Deputy Director, at the Religious Affairs Dept. Press, Yegu, Kabā-Aye P.O., Rangoon, Burma.

## Works Available from BPS

*The Manual of the Supreme Man* (Uttamapurisa Dīpanī) (BP 420S)

*The Requisites of Enlightenment* (Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī) (BP 412S)

*Manual of Insight* (Vipassanā Dīpanī) (**Wheel No. 31/32**)

*The Noble Eightfold Path and its Factors Explained* (Maggāṅga Dīpanī) (**Wheel No. 245/247**)

*The Buddhist Philosophy of Relations* (Paṭṭhāna Dīpanī) (**Wheel No. 331/333**)

*The Five Kinds of Light* (Alin-Kyan) (BP 426S)

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## Notes

1. These are eight precepts: to abstain from (1) killing, (2) stealing, (3) sexual misconduct, (4) false speech, (5) malicious speech, (6) harsh speech, (7) idle chatter, and (8) to live by right livelihood. They are sometimes undertaken by more earnest practitioners in place of the usual Five Precepts. **[Back]**

2. The eight inopportune occasions (*akkhaṇa*): At the time a Buddha-sāsana exists one has been reborn (1) in hell, (2) as an animal, (3) in the realm of ghosts, (4) among the formless gods, (5) in a remote country where the Dhamma is not known, (6) as one who holds wrong views, or (7) as one mentally deficient; or (8) one is reborn with all the right

conditions but at a time when the Buddha-sāsana does not exist. See Dīgha Nikāya III 264–65, 287. [\[Back\]](#)

3. According to the Majjhima Nikāya Commentary, King Pukkusāti actually left his palace and became ordained as a novice monk. His meeting with the Buddha is related at Majjhima Nikāya No. 140. He died in an accident before he could take higher ordination. [\[Back\]](#)

4. For some reason, Ledi Sayādaw (or his translator) follows the ancient Vinaya Commentary (no longer extant) which explains *assāsa* and its verb *assasati* as meaning “breathing out,” and *passāsa* and its verb *passasati* as meaning “breathing in.” The Sutta Commentaries explain the words in the opposite way, which seems much more cogent (see *Visuddhimagga*, VIII 164). Those accustomed to the usual translation, and the practice which counts a full breath as beginning with the in-breath and ending with the out-breath, should simply transpose the two phases as given here. [\[Back\]](#)

5. At Vism VIII 189, eight stages are mentioned. Of those not elaborated by Ledi Sayādaw, “touching” is simply the touch spot at the nostrils or upper lip where the breath is to be noted; “observing” is insight meditation; “turning away,” the supramundane path (of stream-entry, etc.); “purification,” the fruit. The eighth, not explicitly mentioned here, is “looking back at these” (*tesaṃ paṭipassanā*), explained as reviewing knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇā*). [\[Back\]](#)

6. These are explained in detail at Vism XVIII–XXII. [\[Back\]](#)

7. “Purity of view” is defined as the correct seeing of mental and corporeal phenomena (*nāma-rūpa*), which one accomplishes by discerning these phenomena by way of their characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause. See Vism XVIII 2–4. [\[Back\]](#)

8. These eight are called the “inseparable corporeal phenomena” (*avinibbhoga-rūpa*) because they occur together in every material body. [\[Back\]](#)

9. See Vism XIX 1–2. [\[Back\]](#)