

MN66 The Simile of the Quail
Latukikopama Sutta
Dhamma talk by Bhante Vimalaramsi
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Dhamma Sukha Meditation Center Retreat

MN:

1. THUS HAVE I HEARD. On one occasion the Blessed One was living in the country of the Anguttarāpans where there was a town of theirs named Āpaṇa.

2. Then, when it was morning, the Blessed One dressed, and taking his bowl and outer robe, went into Āpaṇa for alms. When he had wandered for alms in Āpaṇa and had returned from his almsround, after his meal he went to a certain grove for the day's abiding. Having entered the grove, he sat down at the root of a tree for the day's abiding.

3. When it was morning, the venerable Udāyin dressed, and taking his bowl and outer robe, he too went into Āpaṇa for alms. When he had wandered for alms in Āpaṇa and had returned from his almsround, after his meal he went to that same grove for the day's abiding. Having entered the grove, he sat down at the root of a tree for the day's abiding.

4. Then, while the venerable Udāyin was alone in meditation, the following thought arose in his mind: "How many painful states has the Blessed One rid us of! How many pleasant states has the Blessed One brought us! How many unwholesome states has the Blessed One rid us of! How many wholesome states has the Blessed One brought us!"

5. Then, when it was evening, the venerable Udāyin rose from meditation, went to the Blessed One, and after paying homage to him, he sat down at one side and told him:

6. "Here, venerable sir, while I was alone in meditation, the following thought arose in my mind: 'How many painful states has the Blessed One rid us of! How many wholesome states has the Blessed One brought us!' Venerable sir, formerly we used to eat in the evening, in the morning, and during the day outside the proper time. Then there was an occasion when the Blessed One addressed the monks thus: 'Monks, please abandon that daytime meal, which is outside the proper time.'

BV:

That means abandon after eating at high noon.

MN:

Venerable sir, I was upset and sad, thinking: 'Faithful householders give us good food of various kinds during the day outside the proper time, yet the Blessed One tells us to abandon it, the Sublime One tells us to relinquish it.' Out of our love and respect for the Blessed One, and out of shame and fear of wrongdoing, we abandoned that daytime meal, which was outside the proper time.

BV:

The reason that that happened was when the Buddha first started teaching, you could go anywhere at anytime. And there was a monk that was coming home when it was very dark from an evening meal and he fell into a cistern. And the Buddha said well this is dangerous let's stop eating these other meals. So he started cutting down on the number of meals that you're supposed to eat and only eat at the proper time.

MN:

"Then we ate only in the evening and in the morning. Then there was an occasion when the Blessed One addressed the monks thus: 'Monks, please abandon that night meal, which is outside the proper time.' Venerable sir, I was upset and sad, thinking: 'The Blessed One tells us to abandon the more sumptuous of our two meals, the Sublime One tells us to relinquish it.' Once, venerable sir, a certain man had obtained some soup during the day and he said: Put that aside and we will all eat it together in the evening.' [Nearly] all dishes

are prepared at night, few by day. Out of our love and respect for the Blessed One, and out of shame and fear of wrongdoing, we abandoned that night meal, which was outside the proper time.

“It has happened, venerable sir, that monks wandering for alms in the thick darkness of the night have walked into a cesspit, fallen into a sewer, walked into a thorn bush, and walked into a sleeping cow;

BV:

Wouldn't that be a shock? (laughs)

MN:

they have met hoodlums who had already committed a crime and those planning one, and they have been sexually enticed by women. Once, venerable sir, I went wandering for alms in the thick darkness of the night. A woman washing a pot saw me by a flash of lightning and screamed out in terror: ‘Mercy me, a devil has come for me!’ I told her: ‘Sister, I am no devil, I am a monk waiting for alms.’—‘Then it’s a monk whose ma’s died and whose pa’s died! Better, monk, that you get your belly cut open with a sharp butcher’s knife than this prowling for alms for your belly’s sake in the thick darkness of the night!’

Venerable sir, when I recollected that I thought: ‘How many painful states has the Blessed One rid us of! How many pleasant states has the Blessed One brought us! How many unwholesome states has the Blessed One rid us of! How many wholesome states has the Blessed One brought us!’”

7. “So too, Udāyin, there are certain misguided men here who, when told by me ‘Abandon this,’ say: ‘What, such a mere trifle, such a little thing as this? This recluse is much too exacting!’ And they do not abandon that and they show discourtesy towards me as well as towards those monks desirous of training. For them that thing becomes a strong, stout, tough, unrotting tether and a thick yoke.

8. “Suppose, Udāyin, a quail were tethered by a rotting creeper and would thereby expect injury, captivity, or death. Now suppose

someone said: The rotting creeper by which that quail is tethered and thereby expects injury, captivity, or death, is for her a feeble, weak, rotting, coreless tether.' Would he be speaking rightly?"

"No, venerable sir. For that quail the rotting creeper by which she is tethered and thereby expects injury, captivity, or death, is a strong, stout, tough, unrotting tether and a thick yoke."

"So too,

{...}

9. "Udāyin, there are certain clansmen here who, when told by me 'Abandon this,' say: 'What, such a mere trifle, such a little thing to be abandoned as this, the Blessed One tells us to abandon, the Sublime One tells us to relinquish.' Yet they abandon that and do not show discourtesy towards me or towards those monks desirous of training. Having abandoned it, they live at ease, unruffled, subsisting on others' gifts, with mind [as aloof] as a wild deer's. For them that thing becomes a feeble, weak, rotting, coreless tether.

10. "Suppose, Udāyin, a royal tusker elephant with tusks as long as chariot-poles, full-grown in stature, high-bred and accustomed to battle, were tethered by stout leather thongs, but by simply twisting his body a little he could break and burst the thongs and then go where he likes. Now suppose someone said: "The stout leather thongs by which this royal tusker elephant is tethered...are for him a strong, stout, tough, unrotting tether and a thick yoke.' Would he be speaking rightly?"

"No, venerable sir. The stout leather thongs by which that royal tusker elephant is tethered, which by simply twisting his body a little he could break and burst and then go where he likes, are for him a feeble, weak, rotting, coreless tether."

"So too, Udāyin, there are certain clansmen here who, when told by me 'Abandon this' abandon that and do not show discourtesy towards me or towards those monks desirous of training. Having abandoned it, they live at ease, unruffled, subsisting on others' gifts, with mind [as aloof] as a wild deer's.

BV:

How aloof is a wild deer's mind? (laughs) Just something to ponder.

MN:

For them that thing becomes a feeble, weak, rotting, coreless tether.

11. "Suppose, Udāyin, there were a poor, penniless, destitute man, and he had one dilapidated hovel open to the crows, not the best kind, and one dilapidated wicker bedstead, not the best kind, and some grain and pumpkin seeds in a pot, not the best kind, and one hag of a wife, not the best kind.

BV:

(Laughter) Cut it out, I'm being a sexist.

MN:

He might see a monk in a monastery park sitting in the shade of a tree, his hands and feet well washed after he had eaten a delicious meal, devoting himself to the higher mind. He might think: 'How pleasant the recluse's state is! How healthy the recluse's state is! If only I could shave off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness!' But being unable to abandon his one dilapidated hovel open to the crows, not the best kind, and his one dilapidated wicker bedstead, not the best kind, and his grain and pumpkin seeds in a pot, not the best kind, and his hag of a wife, not the best kind, he is unable to shave off his hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness. Now suppose someone said: The tethers by which that man is tethered so that he cannot abandon his one dilapidated hovel...and his hag of a wife, not the best kind, and shave off his hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness—for him those are a feeble, weak, rotting, coreless tether.' Would he be speaking rightly?"

"No, venerable sir. The tethers by which that man is tethered so that he cannot abandon his one dilapidated hovel...and his hag of a wife, not the best kind, and shave off his hair and beard, put on the yellow

robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness—for him those are a strong, stout, tough, unrotting tether and a thick yoke.”

“So too, Udāyin, there are certain misguided men here who, when told by me ‘Abandon this’ do not abandon that and they show discourtesy towards me as well as towards those monks desirous of training. For them that thing becomes a strong, stout, tough, unrotting tether and a thick yoke.

12. “Suppose, Udāyin, there were a rich householder or a householder’s son, with great wealth and property, with a vast number of gold ingots, a vast number of granaries, a vast number of fields, a vast amount of land, a vast number of wives, and a vast number of men and women slaves. He might see a monk in a monastery park sitting in the shade of a tree, his hands and feet well washed after he had eaten a delicious meal, devoting himself to the higher mind. He might think: ‘How pleasant the recluse’s state is! How healthy the recluse’s state is! If only I could shave off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness!’ And being able to abandon his vast number of gold ingots, his vast number of granaries, his vast number of fields, his vast amount of land, his vast number of wives, and his vast number of men and women slaves, he is able to shave off his hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness. Now suppose someone said: ‘The tethers by which that householder or householder’s son is tethered so that he can abandon his vast number of gold ingots...his vast number of men and women slaves, and shave off his hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness—for him those are a strong, stout, tough, unrotting tether and a thick yoke.’ Would he be speaking rightly?”

“No, venerable sir. The tethers by which that householder or householder’s son is tethered so that he can abandon his vast number of gold ingots, his vast number of men and women slaves, and shave off his hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness—for him those are a feeble, weak, rotting, coreless tether.”

“So too, Udāyin, there are certain clansmen here who, when told by me ‘Abandon this’ abandon that and do not show discourtesy towards me or towards those monks desirous of training. Having abandoned it, they live at ease, unruffled, subsisting on others’ gifts, with mind [as aloof] as a wild deer’s. For them that thing becomes a feeble, weak, rotting, coreless tether.

BV:

The whole point of this being, it all depends on your attachment to things. You can have a lot of things and not be attached to them at all, and you can let them go reasonably easy - which is something that I did more than once - or you can have very little and be very much attached to it so that you can’t do the things that lead your mind towards more wholesomeness. And it’s all according to your attachment to it.

There are some monks that are very much attached to the idea of one thing or another that they know the rules say you shouldn’t do, but they do them anyway. And that leads to their restlessness, their lack of ability to have a calm mind. Every new (full) moon and new moon when there are enough monks around we sit down and we read the entire Patimokkha - all the rules of the monks. We know the rules. And some monks will come up with all kinds of justification, how to get around this rule or that rule so they don’t have to follow it. But those are the monks that are against meditation because they tried to meditate and their mind - because they know they broke the rule even though they can justify breaking the rule - they know they broke it and they have a guilty mind.

An example of this is when I was in Burma, I was at a meditation centre and there was a Korean monk that came. Now, when he first came he could sit in meditation for between two and three hours without moving. As time went by, a few weeks, he started liking the idea of eating an evening meal. Now, he knows that he’s not supposed to eat anything in the evening, but he ate anyway. By the end of a three-month retreat, he could sit in meditation for about ten minutes before his mind became so active and so hard that he got up

and stopped meditating, and that's just from a simple thing of he ate when he knew he shouldn't.

Now, this comes down to the precepts. Your meditation is not going to be very good if you break a precept.

Now, there's four parts to the speech precept:

- 1) Using harsh language, cursing
- 2) Dividing people, trying to get them to fight with each other
- 3) Gossip, which means made up stories that don't have anything to do with being the truth, and
- 4) Telling lies.

Now, I know that there are some cultures that they have the idea that saying something that is not true is not telling a lie, but they have trouble meditating, they have trouble calming their mind. The precept of not telling a lie means if you knowingly try to mislead someone... little white lies, in Asia, pass time. No matter what somebody thinks, so you say "Hey, how do you like my new shirt?" They will tell you it's absolutely gorgeous, beautiful, they've never seen anything as good as that, and then when they walk away, talk about how ugly it is. Ok, those kind of white lies, they affect your meditation in a very negative way. It's better to say nothing than it is to tell somebody something that's not true.

So, it really turns into a problem after awhile because you start losing confidence in the meditation being good and you start, actually you can start criticizing and saying things - and this is a form of gossip - saying things that aren't necessarily true. Among Buddhist monks gossip is strong. It is, and it's really a shame because there's so many monks that they have the potential of being very good, but they like to get into the stories about what this monk is doing and what that monk is doing and then they go and tell those stories and build on them, and it causes a lot of problems on down the road for the person that does the talking and the person they're talking about. It can cause some real problems. So, we have to be real careful about this sort of thing.

MN:

13. "Udāyin, there are four kinds of persons to be found existing in the world. What are the four?"

14. "Here, Udāyin, some person practices the way to the abandoning of the acquisitions, to the relinquishing of the acquisitions. When he is practicing the way, memories and intentions associated with the acquisitions beset him. He tolerates them; he does not abandon them, remove them, do away with them, and annihilate them.

BV:

I have problems with these kind of descriptions. Now, we're talking about thoughts about past possessions that you had that come back to you, "You know, I used to have a motor cycle. I was hot stuff", and the way you overcome those kind of attachments, and that's what they really are, with the 6Rs. Recognize that that's what your mind is doing, release it, relax, smile, come back to your object of meditation. See, this is why the meditation is all the time, and this is why I scolded you the other day because you wanted to drop your daytime activity meditation... no, no, no, no. If you can't watch your mind all the time, why are you trying to do any meditation at all? So, the whole point being, gotta be able to watch what your mind is doing all of the time, and give it the 6Rs when it tends towards being personal, when it tends towards being serious, when it tends towards your old attachments. You gotta 6R those.

Now, this is what happens after you let them go, they become annihilated. In other words you've let go of the attachment to them, they won't arise anymore. Right? You let go of an attachment to a car or a television or a bicycle, I don't care what it is. If you let go of the attachment to it, it doesn't come up into your mind very much anymore does it? What you think and ponder on, that's the inclination of your mind. You think and ponder on things that you've had in the past, your mind is going to tend towards those things. When you 6R them, now you're letting them be, you're letting them go, you're not feeding the attachment anymore. You're letting go of the attachment. And as you let go of the attachment, that gives you more room for happiness, wellbeing, all of those uplifting things that

I've been talking about for a long time to come up. But the more you hold onto old attachments and allow your mind to go back and play that number again, that is a cause of suffering. The only way to overcome the suffering is by experiencing the cessation of suffering, and how do you do that? The 6Rs!

For however many years we've been alive, we have been allowing our mind to really get involved in thinking about this and thinking about that and just kind of going wherever it wants to go, and because it likes to repeat things it keeps coming back to certain instances: "You know when I was five years old my Mom got mad at me and she slapped me and put me in the closet. Now I'm deathly afraid of the dark." Why are you afraid of the dark now? Because of the attachment of what happened in the past. How do you overcome that fear? By the 6Rs. That is the key. That's the way to let go of old hard feelings and develop new soft feelings. "I always act this way when this person or that person says or does that." Well, you're just re-acting in the way you always act. In other words you're being unconscious. You're acting in an unconscious way.

When you begin to learn more and more about the 6Rs and how they really do work, then you start responding instead of reacting. Somebody comes up to you with an old attachment and instead of your acting like you always act, now you're giving yourself the space to act in a new way, in a way that will be uplifting to you and everybody else around you. What is that? Come on Barb, you got it on the tip of your tongue, let it come out.

S: (student interaction)

BV: And?

S: Re-smile

BV: Ahhhhh, that's it. See, I knew you had it there.

MN:
Such a person

BV: who tolerates these kind of old behaviors

MN:

I call fettered, not unfettered. Why is that? Because I have known the particular diversity of faculties in this person.

BV:

And what is he really saying? I've seen it in myself before I became enlightened.

MN:

15. "Here, Udāyin, some person practices the way to the abandoning of the acquisitions, to the relinquishing of the acquisitions. When he is practicing the way, memories and intentions associated with the acquisitions beset him. He does not tolerate them; he abandons them, removes them, does away with them, and annihilates them. Such a person too I call fettered, not unfettered. Why is that? Because I have known the particular diversity of faculties in this person.

BV:

Why would you be fettered by something like that? Because you allowed those to come up. You allowed your mind to get distracted by them, to get involved with them. And then you start letting them go, which is good, but you still have them coming up.

MN:

16. "Here, Udāyin, some person practices the way to the abandoning of the acquisitions, to the relinquishing of the acquisitions. When he is practicing the way, memories and intentions associated with the acquisitions beset him now and then through lapses of mindfulness. His mindfulness may be slow in arising, but he quickly abandons them, removes them, does away with them, and annihilates them. Just as if a man were to let two or three drops of water fall onto an iron plate heated for a whole day, the falling of the water drops might be slow but they would quickly vaporize and vanish. So too, here some person practices the way...His mindfulness may be slow in

arising, but he quickly abandons them, removes them, does away with them, and annihilates them. Such a person too I call fettered, not unfettered. Why is that? Because I have known the particular diversity of faculties in this person.

17. "Here, Udāyin, some person, having understood that acquisition is the root of suffering,

BV:

Now, we're not always talking about material things when we're talking about acquisition. You hold on to an attachment, you talk about the attachment, tell everybody else around that you have an attachment, and guess what? You're attached.

MN:

... divests himself of the acquisitions and is liberated in the destruction of the acquisitions. Such a person I call unfettered, not fettered. Why is that? Because I have known the particular diversity of faculties in this person.

18. "There are, Udāyin, five cords of sensual pleasure. What are the five? Forms cognizable by the eye that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. Sounds cognizable by the ear that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. Odors cognizable by the nose that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. Flavors cognizable by the tongue that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. Tangibles cognizable by the body that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. These are the five cords of sensual pleasure.

19. "Now, Udāyin, the pleasure and joy that arise dependent on these five cords of sensual pleasure are called sensual pleasure—a filthy pleasure, a coarse pleasure, an ignoble pleasure. I say of this

kind of pleasure that it should not be pursued, that it should not be developed, that it should not be cultivated, that it should be feared.

20. "Here, Udāyin, quite secluded from sensual pleasures,

BV:

How do you become secluded from sensual pleasures? You and you (pointing) can't say. How do you become secluded from sensual pleasures?

ST: ~

BV:

You're sitting in meditation and you close your eyes. The sensual pleasure of seeing doesn't arise. You hear a sound, you don't think about whether you like or dislike that sound, you hear it as sound and let it be and relax and 6R it... with smell, with taste, with tangibles, and with mind. That's how you become secluded from sensual pleasures. It doesn't mean you stop that contact from happening. You can't stop the contact from happening, but as soon as notice it you 6R it, and now you're not grabbing onto it, you're not holding onto it and getting into thoughts about how you like it.

MN:

... secluded from unwholesome states,

BV:

How do you become secluded from unwholesome states? Any hindrance that arises is an unwholesome state. What do you do with unwholesome states?

ST: 6R it.

BV: You got it. Ok.

MN:

... a monk enters upon and abides in the first jhāna which is

accompanied by thinking and examining thought with joy and happiness born of seclusion...

BV:

The reason that the hindrances are necessary and good when they arise is because when you start letting them go they're teaching you where your attachment is. They're teaching you that "That hindrance is me. I don't like it and I want it to be different than it is." whatever that happens to be, and you start seeing it as an impersonal process.

Now, we deal in a world of concepts, ok? This is a concept right here (pointing). What is this thing? This is a chair. Chair is a concept. Take the cushions off, take the pieces apart, where is the chair? The chair is a lot of different things put together to make up the concept that this is a chair. The hindrances are the same thing. They're made up of a lot of little pieces that when you put them together they make up the concept of suffering. They make the concept of restlessness, all of these are concepts. It's a word to describe a bunch of other little things that happen and to make the communication easier we say one word, but there's a lot of other things.

Now, take the word pain. What is pain? Where is pain? How is pain? Arises as an unpleasant feeling. "I don't like that feeling": craving. "I have a story about why I don't like that feeling": clinging. "I have a habitual tendency about that clinging. I always act this way when that kind of feeling comes up." See? That's how it arises. And it's a bunch of little things that make up this idea of what pain is.

But when you start seeing this as an impersonal process, when you start seeing that there is feeling, there is craving, there is clinging, there is habitual tendency, there is birth of action, there is death of action, and the whole ballgame starts over again. And it happens fast. But when you start seeing these more and more clearly, by practicing the 6Rs, you are teaching yourself that this in fact is a process, and you're seeing it directly for yourself. "It's not my

feeling. Did I ask that painful feeling to come up or that unpleasant feeling to come up?" No. It came up because conditions are right.

I walk in here at night and I stub my toe on a chair. Did I ask that feeling to come up? Why did it come up? Because the toe made contact with something that was hard, and an unpleasant feeling arose. And immediately there's "I don't like it", and the story about why you don't like it, and the cursing, and the dissatisfaction, and on and on, that's your habitual tendency. But when your mindfulness is good, you stub your toe, painful feeling is going to come up. You see your mind start going sssshhhh (makes a gesture) around it and you relax that and let it be. And then you start sending loving kindness, you have to come back to your object of meditation.

Where does the loving kindness need to go when you have pain in your body? Your body is telling you right then, right there, "I need love". Every painful feeling that arises is saying "I need love". So give it love, send your message down to that toe that hurts. Let go, relax, keep doing it as long as your mind gets pulled to that sensation. In a very short period of time that pain disappears and you forget about it. You might notice it the next day when you got a blue toe, but then you have to think about "How'd that happen"? See, this is eminently practical stuff.

And the more you get in to practicing the 6Rs, the more you're teaching yourself about how the process works, and when you start seeing that directly for yourself it's not something you're ever going to forget. You know how the process works. It's just whether you want to use the 6Rs to get rid of it or you choose not to and suffer with it. That's where your choice is. "I can suffer or not, it all depends on me. My choice." Can't blame anybody out there for your pain. Nothing out there is responsible for your pain. You're the only one that's responsible for your pain.

You can re-act like you always act when this kind of feeling arises or you can respond. Reaction takes you out of the present moment and has all kinds of suffering in it. Responding keeps you in the present moment, dissatisfaction starts to go away. Your choice, always your

choice. "Well I always act this way when this happens." Fine, you can do that, but don't come complaining to me about it. Right?

There was a girl that, she was having nightmares, I was in Malaysia at the time: she came complaining about these nightmares and she would describe these nightmares down to the tee, I mean she was really getting into it. And finally I said "Well, why do you think you're having nightmares?" "Well," she said, "it might be the night before the nightmare I went to this scary movie". And I said "If you don't want to have nightmares, then don't go to those kind of movies. It's dumb." "Well, I like those kind of movies." "Fine, don't complain to me about your nightmares." You have to be willing to change so that your mind is more uplifted all the time. If you're not willing to change, doing any kind of a meditation retreat is going to be incredibly painful, hard, and you will leave without any advantage at all. If you're willing to change, if you're willing to take a look at "I always act this way when this happens" and you say "Oh, well every time I do that it hurts. I'm not going to do that anymore." You might forget sometimes, but that's ok. Make it into a game and play that game.

I remember I had one student that she was really getting into her anger about a situation and I gave her a whole bunch of pennies and I said "I've already bought all of your hindrances. They're not your hindrances anymore, I bought them from you" and I gave her a whole bunch of pennies. Every time she'd get angry she'd pull out one of those pennies "That's not mine, I gave that one to Bhante." Before long, the heavy-duty emotions started to get in balance because of that. She was willing to change. She saw the pain that she caused herself and she was willing to start letting that go.

Now, the closer you can keep your five precepts without breaking them at all for a continuous stretch of time, the meditation naturally gets easier. Your mind will become more tranquil, more at peace. You'll be able to get into the jhanas more quickly because you don't have so many hindrances because of your past action. So, this is basically what this sutta is talking about. Learning how to let go of your acquisitions so that they won't even arise anymore. What you

think and ponder on, that is the inclination of your mind. You get to choose what you think and ponder on. If it's unwholesome, you can 6R it and let it go. Then you start staying on the wholesome. What's that?

Wishing loving (gesture)... An interesting thing about loving kindness, I read this in a commentary I'm not sure how accurate it is: they said that if you sit down and do loving kindness meditation for half an hour, three times a day, that is the equivalent in merit of feeding a thousand people. Now, how long are you sitting in meditation? How much merit are you bringing up every time you let go of an unwholesome state and bring up that wholesome state? Merit is a real big thing in Asia. Everybody talks about doing things and making merit. You know, "I want to give this to this monk because I'm going to make so much merit." Merit is good actions that leads to happiness. Loving kindness meditation, lots of good merit. More than a little bit, especially when you're doing it with vipassana.

How do you know when you're doing this with vipassana? By your relaxing, that extra step of relaxing, of purifying your mind of craving, feeling that expansion, calm mind, no distractions at all, bring that back to your object of meditation. As you do that over and over again, your mind starts to get the idea that it likes it, and this is kind of a fun game, right? And then you're making so much good merit that eventually the craving will not arise, and you get to experience an unconditioned state: nibbana. That's what we're working for here, that's why we're doing this.

The harder you hold on to wanting to be the same as you always were, the harder you hold onto that, the longer it takes for the meditation to work. It will still work, but it doesn't work near as fast as it could. When you make up the mind that "I want to let go of everything" even the slightest little bitty tiny longing for something.

Now, there's a word in Pali called 'chanda' and it basically means pointing your mind in the direction you want it to go, pointing your mind towards the wholesome. But once you point your mind in that direction, you let it go, you don't hold onto it, you don't keep telling

yourself that. You want to direct your mind towards letting go of suffering. You make that determination in your mind "I'm going to let go of anything that causes suffering to arise" and then you start 6Ring it. Your mind becomes so wholesome, it becomes so uplifted that it will tend towards that, towards that end result. Good stuff, huh? (laughs)

MN:

With the stilling of thinking and examining thought, he enters upon and abides in the second jhāna which has self confidence and stillness of mind without thinking and examining thought with joy and happiness born of collectedness...

BV:

Once you get to the second jhana you really start getting confidence that you know what this process is and how to use the 6Rs. And you start getting confident at being able to use it all of the time. Now, the second jhana is where noble silence occurs. Noble silence. An awful lot of different meditation centers they say you're not supposed to talk. "I don't want you to talk at all", so everybody whispers, but they still wind up talking. But noble silence is letting go of the wish, of verbalizing it. Now you know what that wish is, all you have to bring up is that feeling of peace and calm. You don't have to verbalize it at all. Ok.

MN:

With the fading away as well of rapture a monk abides in equanimity mindful and fully aware still feeling pleasure with the body he enters upon and abides in the third jhāna on account of which noble ones announce he has a pleasant abiding who has equanimity and is mindful...

BV:

When you get to this state you don't have joy arise anymore, but you feel very strong balance of mind. You have full awareness of everything that's happening around you. You hear a sound, but it doesn't make your mind wobble or jump to it because you have

equanimity. It's a balance of mind, distractions just don't get so big anymore. You feel more comfortable than you've ever felt before.

When you start losing tension in your mind, you start losing tension in your body. When you lose tension in your body it's like different parts start to disappear. You'll be sitting there and you'll say "I don't have any legs. Where's my hand? Where's my shoulder?" And it's not that if I come up and touch you, you wouldn't feel that. You would, but you don't have that tension anymore and that's what you're generally feeling when you feel things in your body. So, getting into the third jhana is very nice and this is where your blood starts to purify. All kinds of healing starts to happen in the body. It's really kind of neat.

MN:

With the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy and grief a monk enters upon and abides in the fourth jhāna, which has neither-pain-nor-pleasure and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity...

BV:

When you get into radiating the loving kindness up to the third jhana, you will feel it from your heart. From there on you don't feel it in your heart anymore, you start feeling it in your head, you start radiating loving kindness. And your mind has very strong balance. This is as high as loving kindness will take you, it'll take you to the fourth jhana.

Then you get the rest of the brahmaviharas, and they come up naturally and they come up by themselves. An awful lot of teachers will tell you that you should practice compassion, but compassion comes up by itself when you practicing this way. And there other things that happen while you're in the state of compassion. You're starting to get into the arupa jhanas.

The arupa jhanas take you to the realm of nothingness, with the brahmaviharas. That's as far as the brahmaviharas will go, but they're leading the path that takes you to neither-perception-nor-

non-perception and the cessation of perception and feeling. It's leading you on that path. You go through all of these jhanas faster with loving kindness than with any other kind of meditation, bar none. That's why I like to teach loving kindness, so that your mind can have more and more peace and calm than it's ever experienced before.

MN:

21. "This is called the bliss of renunciation, the bliss of seclusion, the bliss of peace, the bliss of enlightenment. I say of this kind of pleasure that it should be pursued, that it should be developed, that it should be cultivated, that it should not be feared.

22. "Here, Udāyin, quite secluded from sensual pleasures,

BV: And I go through all of the jhānas again.

MN:

{...} ...Now this, I say, belongs to the perturbable. And what therein belongs to the perturbable? The

BV: applied, ah,

MN:

thinking and examining thought that have not ceased therein, that is what belongs to the perturbable.

23. "Here, Udāyin, with the stilling of thinking and examining thought, a monk enters upon and abides in the second jhāna...Now this, I say, also belongs to the perturbable. And what therein belongs to the perturbable? The joy and happiness that have not ceased therein, that is what belongs to the perturbable.

24. "Here, Udāyin, with the fading away as well of joy...a monk enters upon and abides in the third jhāna...Now this, I say, also belongs to the perturbable. And what therein belongs to the

perturbable? The equanimity and pleasure that have not ceased therein, that is what belongs to the perturbable.

25. "Here, Udāyin, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain...a monk enters upon and abides in the fourth jhāna...Now this, I say, belongs to the imperturbable.

BV:

Now, why do I say when you get to the fourth jhana you're considered an advanced meditator? Because you're getting to the imperturbable states because the equanimity is so strong.

MN:

26. "Here, Udāyin, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, a monk enters upon and abides in the first jhāna...That, I say, is not enough. Abandon it, I say; surmount it, I say. And what surmounts it?

27. "Here, Udāyin, with the stilling of thinking and examining thought, a monk enters upon and abides in the second jhāna...That surmounts it. But that too, I say, is not enough. Abandon it, I say; surmount it, I say. And what surmounts it?

28. "Here, Udāyin, with the fading away as well of joy...a monk enters upon and abides in the third jhāna...That surmounts it. But that too, I say, is not enough. Abandon it, I say; surmount it, I say. And what surmounts it?

29. "Here, Udāyin, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain...a monk enters upon and abides in the fourth jhāna...That surmounts it. But that too, I say, is not enough. Abandon it, I say; surmount it, I say. And what surmounts it?

30. "Here, Udāyin, with the complete surmounting of perceptions of gross form, with the disappearance of perceptions of sensory impact, of gross sensory impact, with non-attention to perceptions of diversity, aware that 'space is infinite,' a monk enters upon and abides in the base of infinite space. That surmounts it. But that too, I

say, is not enough. Abandon it, I say; surmount it, I say. And what surmounts it?

31. "Here, Udāyin, by completely surmounting the base of infinite space, aware that 'consciousness is infinite,'

BV:

This is a fun state to get into by the way.

MN:

a monk enters upon and abides in the base of infinite consciousness. That surmounts it. But that too, I say, is not enough. Abandon it, I say; surmount it, I say. And what surmounts it?

32. "Here, Udāyin, by completely surmounting the base of infinite consciousness, aware that 'there is nothing,' a monk enters upon and abides in the base of nothingness. That surmounts it. But that too, I say, is not enough. Abandon it, I say; surmount it, I say. And what surmounts it?

33. "Here, Udāyin, by completely surmounting the base of nothingness, a monk enters upon and abides in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. That surmounts it. But that too, I say, is not enough. Abandon it, I say; surmount it, I say. And what surmounts it?

34. "Here, Udāyin, by completely surmounting the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, a monk enters upon and abides in the cessation of perception and feeling. That surmounts it. Thus I speak of the abandoning even of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Do you see, Udāyin, any fetter, small or great, of whose abandoning I do not speak?" "No, venerable sir."

That is what the Blessed One said. The venerable Udāyin was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

BV:

He went through the whole ballgame, but he didn't say how nibbana

is experienced. When you come out of the cessation of perception and feeling, it's like you have a clean slate, a clean board, and you start seeing how dependent origination arises, and how it ceases. And when you see the final letting go of ignorance, and ignorance is not understanding of the four noble truths, then nibbana occurs. It can't happen any other way. I don't care what any other monk will tell you. It says it so often in the suttas that you can't ignore it. That is how nibbana occurs.

I know that there are some people that say nibbana occurs when you see impermanence, suffering and not-self, but there is a statement in one of the books that says "You can see one or all of the three characteristics without ever seeing dependent origination, but when you see dependent origination, you see all three of those characteristics". You see what it's really saying, it says you have to focus in a different way, not on this impermanence, suffering and not-self. You have to focus on dependent origination and you'll always see that, and it's real apparent. But the way you attain nibbana is by teaching yourself how dependent origination actually works, and you see it so often that not one doubt will ever arise in your mind again. As it says in the Satipatthana sutta:

MN 10 § 46:

"Monks, if anybody should develop these ... foundations of mindfulness in such a way for seven years, one of two fruits could be expected for him: either final liberation here and now, or if there is a trace of clinging left, non-return.

"Let alone seven years, monks. If anyone should develop the mindfulness in this way for six... five... four... three ... two...for one year, one of two fruits could be expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is a trace of clinging left, non-return.

"Let alone one year, monks. If anyone should develop their mindfulness in such a way for seven months...six ...five ...four ... three ... two.. one ... half a month, one of two fruits could be

expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is a trace of clinging left, non-return.

“Let alone half a month, ...

BV: This is what I was saying.

MN:

If anyone should develop these, this mindfulness in such a way for seven days, one of two fruits could be expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is a trace of clinging ..., non-return.

BV:

Time to get busy. (laughs) No pressure, but I expect it by the end of this week, guys. (laughs) Just stay with the 6Rs, keep it light, keep it fun, smile into everything, and when smiling is really hard to do then laugh. Ok? Any questions? Ok, let's share some merit then.

May suffering ones, be suffering free
And the fear struck, fearless be
May the grieving shed all grief
And may all beings find relief.

May all beings share this merit that we have thus acquired
For the acquisition of all kinds of happiness.

May beings inhabiting space and earth
Devas and nagas of mighty power
Share this merit of ours.

May they long protect the Lord Buddha's dispensation.

Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . .

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