

## MN 111 Anupada Sutta - One by One As They Occurred

Presented by Ven Bhante Vimalaramsi

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BV: You get a treat tonight. This is my favorite sutta, you get to listen to my favorite sutta. This is actually a very important sutta because it's a description of Venerable Sāriputta's experience in how to meditate, and all of the stages that he went through to become an arahat. So it's really kind of a interesting thing.

MN 111:

1. THUS HAVE I HEARD. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvatti in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park. There he addressed the monks thus: "Monks."—"Venerable, sir," they replied. The Blessed One said this:

2. "Monks, Sāriputta is wise; ...

BV: Now, anytime you hear the word 'wise', 'wisdom', 'he sees with wisdom' is referring to seeing the process of dependent origination.

So...

MN:

... {repeats: Sāriputta is wise}; Sāriputta has great wisdom; Sāriputta has wide wisdom; Sāriputta has joyous wisdom; Sāriputta has quick wisdom; Sāriputta has keen wisdom; Sāriputta has penetrative wisdom. During half a month, monks, Sāriputta gained insight into states one by one as they occurred. Now Sāriputta's insight into states one by one as they occurred was this:

3. "Here, monks, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, ...

BV: How do you become secluded from sensual pleasures? Anybody?

ST: Non-attachment?

BV: Non-attachment, but there's a little bit more to that. You become secluded from sensual pleasures when you're sitting in meditation, you close your eyes, you don't have the sensual pleasure of seeing. A sound arises, your attention goes to

that, you run the 6Rs, you let it go, relax, smile, and come back to your object of meditation. That way you're not involved with the sensual pleasure of hearing.

I've given a lot of retreats all over the world, and quite often in Malaysia, they put Christian churches right beside meditation centers, and sometimes the Christian churches, they like to sing, and they might sing for two or three or four hours. And you should have heard all of the meditators come and complain to me about that singing: "Oh, it's disturbing my practice!" And my answer is always the same: "Are we being attached to something? Are we demanding that quiet be here all the time?" Well it doesn't meet with reality what's happening. What do you do with that? Your mind goes to it, let it be, relax, don't pay any attention to it anymore. That way you're secluded from the sensual pleasure of hearing, and it's the same with taste, and smell, and touch.

Anytime your mind gets pulled to one of your sense doors: if you see that, let it be, relax, smile, and come back to your meditation. You are being secluded from that sensual pleasure. Being secluded means that you're not caught in the clinging and craving. The sound is just a sound, and it's only sound until you make it something in your own mind, and that means that you're caught by the clinging and the craving.

So...

MN:

... {repeats: quite secluded from sensual pleasures}, secluded from unwholesome states, ...

BV: What does that mean? How are you secluded from unwholesome states? Nobody has any answers here! There's so many people.

ST: ~~~

BV: Well, it's a little bit more than that. The unwholesome states are the hindrances. When a hindrance comes up, what do you do with the hindrance? 6Rs, right? You recognize that your mind is distracted by this hindrance; you release it; relax the tightness caused by this mind's attention moving from one thing to another; you smile, you know we got to do that; return to your object of meditation; and repeat; stay with your meditation object. Being secluded from unwholesome states means that the hindrances don't disturb us.

MN:

... Sāriputta entered upon and abided in the first jhāna, ...

BV: Now jhāna, again, is not a level of concentration, it is a level of understanding. Understanding how to let go of the hindrances until the hindrance fades away. So the first jhāna is the first real glimpse of how you see and understand dependent origination.

MN:

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

4. "And the states in the first jhāna—the thinking, the examining thought, the joy, the happiness, the unification of mind; the contact, feeling, perception, volition, and mind; ...

BV: Now, what did I just say there? The five aggregates. Contact: you can replace that with 'body' if you want in the lower stages, but when you get in the higher stages it's 'contact'. Feeling, perception, thoughts, consciousness. Now, the five aggregates and the four foundations of mindfulness are exactly the same thing. So we're talking about the four foundations of mindfulness, and being able to see the four foundations of mindfulness while you are in the jhāna. This is insight, and the insight that you get is always how dependent origination actually does work. There's a lot of "Oh, wows!" along the way, and you start seeing and recognizing it in more and more subtle ways, how the dependent origination works.

MN:

... the enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—these states were defined by Sāriputta one by one as they occurred; ...

BV: So all of these different things occur while you're in the first jhāna, but they don't all happen at the same time, they happen one by one. When you have joy, you don't have happiness. What's the difference between joy and happiness? Joy, it's described like this in one of the commentaries: suppose you were in the desert and you were very thirsty, and you saw off in the distance there's an oasis. Now, just seeing that oasis makes your mind very happy, but there's excitement in it. Ok? That's joy. Now, you get to the oasis, and it's a pool of water, and you jump in the water and the water is exactly the right temperature, and your mind says "Ah!" and your body says "Ah!" That's happiness. Happiness is a very comfortable feeling in your mind and in your body. This arises right after the joy fades away.

Now, I've talked to a lot of you today, I talked to almost everybody today, and some people are being very attached to the feeling of joy, and they like it so much they just want to have the joy. It's a great feeling, yes it is, but it's just a feeling. Right? So when joy arises, what do you do with the joy? 6Rs. Your mind goes to that feeling, recognize that it's there, allow it to be there, release it, relax, smile, come back to your object of meditation. There's lots better stuff down the road than joy. I promise you that one too. I've been promising people stuff all day. So when the joy fades away, there are other things that will happen, and you will become more peaceful and calm, your mind will stay on your object of meditation without any effort, it'll be there for quite awhile. You might have a distracting thought when you're in the first jhāna, that's what the thinking-examining is all about, but as soon as you notice that, you see it very quickly, and allow it to be, and relax, and then come back.

Ok...

MN:

... {repeats: these states were defined by him one by one as they occurred;} known to him those states arose, known they were present, known they disappeared. ...

BV: What are we talking about here? There are certain levels of feeling: joy is one, happiness is another, equanimity is another. Even when you get into the higher stages of meditation, there is still feeling. Now, when we say: "known to him those states arose, known they were present, known they disappeared" what are we talking about? We're talking about impermanence, we're talking about seeing things come up, they're there, they go away. And this impermanence, you will start to automatically see impermanence as you go deeper into your meditation. Some people teach that the goal of the meditation is to see impermanence, suffering, and not-self. And there's much more to see. You will see these things over and over again, but there's much deeper things to see as you go deeper into your meditation.

MN:

... He understood thus: 'So indeed, these states, not having been, come into being; having been, they vanish.' Regarding those states, he abided unattracted, ...

BV: That means he didn't try to hold onto it, like some people like to do with joy. Don't hold onto it.

MN:

... unrepelled, ...

BV: He didn't try to push anything away.

MN:

... independent, detached, free, dissociated, ...

BV: Now, all of these are talking about the impersonal process that he was seeing. He was seeing that these things arise and pass away by themselves, and there's no controller, they happen by themselves. There's no holding onto anything, there's just allowing, allowing everything to arise and pass away by itself without taking it personally. Taking it personally means, first off, that there is craving: "I am that" and if you have the craving, the clinging follows very closely, and that means your ideas, opinions, concepts, and the idea that all of these is yours gets very much stronger. So when you're in the first jhāna, you see things more clearly, you don't push anything away, you don't hold anything, you don't identify. What you do is see what is happening in the present moment because your mindfulness is so clear and so good.

MN:

... {repeats: free, dissociated}, with a mind rid of barriers. ...

BV: That means, while you're in the jhāna, no hindrances will arise.

MN:

... He understood: 'There is an escape beyond this,' and with the cultivation of that attainment, he confirmed that there is.

BV: He knows that there's still more to go, as you will see for yourself when you start experiencing these states.

MN:

5. "Again, monks, with the stilling of thinking and examining thought, Sāriputta entered upon and abided in the second jhāna ...

BV: Now, what happened between the first jhāna and the second jhāna? While he was in the first jhāna, his mindfulness was very sharp. He was on his object of meditation very easily, and then for whatever reason, either his mindfulness got weak or he just lost his interest in being in that jhāna, he slipped out of the jhāna. Now what does he get to see? Another hindrance, but because you've already had the experience of getting into the first jhāna, it doesn't seem quite so bad to have another hindrance, and you know what to do with it: you 6R your hindrance, relaxing, re-smile, come back to your object of meditation. Now you're starting to see... at this time you're starting to see more closely how everything starts to work, you start to see the craving a little bit. You don't get lost in your hindrance for near as long a period of time, and you start to really develop your mindfulness more and more.

See, the hindrances help you to go deeper because your mindfulness becomes clearer. So the hindrance is a major part of the meditation, and it's very much needed. If you have a practice where the force of your concentration stops the hindrances from arising, what's happening to you is: the force of concentration is suppressing, is pushing down, it's not allowing the hindrance to arise, so it's still there. This is not a pure mind. Why? Because this is where your attachments are, where your subtle beliefs "I am that." that's where they're stored. So each time you go into a jhāna, after you're in it for a little while, mindfulness slips. Now you have another hindrance to work with, and you start looking forward to it because when the hindrance arises and you let it go, you know that you're going to have some great candy after that.

So...

MN:

... {repeats: with the stilling of thinking and examining thought, Sāriputta entered upon and abided 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: Now, what happens when you get into the second jhāna? Up until the second jhāna, you're able to make a wish and verbalize that wish. When you get to the second jhāna, if you try to verbalize the wish, you start to get a headache, you start trying too hard. So you have to let go of the verbalization. That's why I was talking last night about: the second jhāna is where true noble silence is because you don't verbalize. From then on up you don't need to verbalize while you're in the jhāna. Now, what happens is, you start to get a lot of confidence in this

practice. You start seeing that it really works, and the doubt that could arise earlier, it just disappears. You know that this is the right thing, you don't question it anymore.

ST: ~~~

BV: It's the difference between a tranquility jhāna and an absorption jhāna. The absorption jhāna, the way you get to the absorption jhāna, your mind is on your object of meditation, it gets distracted, you let go of the distraction and immediately come back to your object of meditation.

Now, you've heard me talk a lot for the last couple, three days about relaxing and how important that is. What are you doing when you relax? You're letting go of the craving. When you immediately come back to your object of meditation, you're bringing that craving with you, and that changes the entire type of concentration that you develop. Now, when you're practicing the tranquility, your mind is on your object of meditation, gets distracted, let go of the distraction, relax. When you relax, you have a pure mind. You have a mind that doesn't have thoughts in it, but it's very observant, and you bring that mind back to your object of meditation. So you see the difference. You don't go nearly as deep into absorption, and this is why you have the five aggregates, and they are present even when you get into the real deep stages of meditation, which are the immaterial jhānas, and you'll see that in just a minute.

So you have real strong confidence now. You start going: "Oh, this meditation, yeah it's alright! I really, I'm starting to understand it!" And somebody can come up and tell you: "Oh, you don't know what you're doing with this." "No, I do know because I'm starting to see for myself that this is the way it actually works." When you get into the second jhāna, after you've let go that hindrance, you see the dependent origination more clearly. You see how the feeling arises, and you see the tension arise, and the thoughts about, and your habitual tendency. You start seeing that more and more clearly. At first, all it is, is a philosophy to you, but as you start going deeper into the meditation, it changes from philosophy to reality because you are seeing it for yourself. This is a good thing.

MN:

6. "And the states in the second jhāna—the self-confidence, the joy, the happiness, the unification of mind; the contact, feeling, perception, thoughts, and mind; ...

BV: Five aggregates again.

MN:

... the enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—these states were defined by him one by one as they occurred; known to him those states arose, known they were present, known they disappeared. ...

BV: Now, when you get into the second jhāna, the feeling of joy is much stronger. You feel like you're almost floating, and you feel like that with your mind and with your body. When that fades away, you feel more comfortable than you've ever felt before, very peaceful, very calm, very much at ease. That is what the Buddha called 'sukha' or happiness.

There's an interesting thing, you know in Pāli they use the word 'dukkha' a lot; suffering. Dukkha comes from... it is actually two words, 'du' and 'kaha'. Kaha, k-a-h-a, comes from the word 'khanti', khanti in Pāli means 'patience'. 'Du' is a negative, no patience. It's always translated as 'suffering', but the literal translation is 'no patience'. And 'su'...'kha', su is the positive, that means 'there is patience'. A little sidebar. I thought it was kind of neat when I found that out.

Ok...

MN:

7. "Again, monks, with the fading away as well of joy, Sāriputta abided in equanimity, and mindful and fully aware, still feeling happiness with his body, he entered upon and abided in the third jhāna, on account of which noble ones announce 'He has a pleasant abiding who has equanimity and is mindful.'

BV: Now, what happens at the end of the second jhāna? Mindfulness slips. Now you have another hindrance to work with. When you let that go, the joy that you previously experienced is too coarse a feeling for your mind. You start to feel very, very strong balance of mind. You feel more comfortable than you've ever felt in your mind and in your body; no pain will arise. As you let go of tensions and tightnesses in your mind, you let go of tensions and tightnesses in your body. And you're sitting there, and you say: "Well, I don't feel my hands. I don't feel my leg." It's not that you won't feel it. If there was contact, you would feel that, but as you let go of the tension and tightness in your mind, you let go of the tension and tightness in your body; you don't feel your body anymore. That's very comfortable.

Now, one thing that I want you to understand is that you can experience any one of these jhānas while you are doing your walking meditation, or sitting meditation, or washing the dishes, or taking a bath, or vacuuming the rug, whatever. You can experience these states while you're doing other things. This is somewhat different than an awful lot of people teach. They say the only way you can experience a jhāna is while you're sitting in meditation. This is just not true. Can you be happy while you're walking around, and feel very comfortable and at ease? Can you have joy while you're walking around doing this or that? See what I mean?

Yes?

ST: ~~~

BV: Probably. I used to say ninety-five percent, but since coming back to this country, I would have to say ninety-nine percent of the people that are practicing meditation are practicing one form or another of one-pointed concentration. There's not many of us around that are teaching the tranquility, but there's starting to be more. Ok.

Now, one of things that happens when you get into the third jhāna is, your mind starts to gain a very, very strong sense of balance, and you can carry this with you into your daily life and have this sense of balance, and somebody can come up and they say: "I just saw somebody run into your car in the parking lot and they creamed the whole side." And you say: "Hmmm, looks like it got hit doesn't it?" There's no emotional excitement and want for revenge and all of those things. I say that because that's what happens with us. When we were coming here somebody ran into the side of the truck. That's odd, we both looked at it and went: "Yup, it's bent. Ok, let's get in the car and go."

So 'equanimity': in another sutta, they talk about many different kinds of feeling. And it starts off with two different kinds of feeling: painful feeling, pleasant feeling. And then there's three kinds of feeling: painful feeling, pleasant feeling, neither-painful-nor-pleasant. And then there's five kinds of feeling, that is: pleasant physical feeling, painful physical feeling, pleasant mental feeling, painful mental feeling, and equanimity. Equanimity is the highest feeling by far. The other kinds of feeling, when they arise, they have some tensions and tightnesses: the happiness, the joy, all of these kind of things. There's still some mental wobbling with those, but equanimity is just like going out and seeing a lake that has not a

ripple on it. It's just like a piece of glass, and that's the way your mind becomes eventually.

Ok...

MN:

8. "And the states in the third jhāna—the equanimity, the happiness, the mindfulness, the full awareness, ...

BV: Now, when you're practicing absorption concentration, when you get to the third jhāna, you will not hear anything, you will not feel anything. I can come up with a stick and I can hit you, and you don't know that I did it while you're in the third jhāna with absorption. I can move your hands, and they'll stay there for a little while, and go down until they touch a part of your body and just rest there. You don't know that I'm doing it. I can ring a bell really, really loudly right by your ear and you won't hear it. So when you get to the third jhāna with absorption, you do not have what we would call full awareness.

When you're practicing what I'm showing you right now, you hear things. You would hear a motor cycle go by, but it doesn't make your mind wobble and go to it. You just know that that was there, that happened. If I come up and I touch you, you would feel that, but it doesn't make your mind wobble. You have this equanimity, this balance of mind. If I come up and I talk to you, and I say: "We need to talk right now", you would hear that. It would take you a little bit, a few seconds to respond to it, but that's just the way it works. So the equanimity is balance of mind, is a wonderful state of mind to experience. It's really nice.

And the 'full awareness': you're aware if an ant crawls across your arm or your hand, you know that it's there. It doesn't make you react to it, but you know that that is there. When you're in absorption, you don't. So when we're talking about - in the suttas, full awareness - full awareness means that you know what's happening around you, but it doesn't necessarily make you boink (gesture).

ST: What does full absorption mean?

BV: It's... the full absorption means: when you... your mind becomes so absorbed in your object of meditation that you don't know anything but that object of meditation. Ok?

Ok, so...

MN:

... {repeats: the states in the third jhāna—the equanimity, the happiness, the mindfulness, the full awareness}, the unification of mind; the contact, feeling, perception, thoughts, and mind; the enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention— these states were defined by Sāriputta one by one as they occurred; known to him those states arose, known they were present, known they disappeared.

9. “Again, monks, by the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and the previous disappearance of joy and grief, Sāriputta entered upon and abided in the fourth jhāna , which has neither-pain-nor-pleasure and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.

BV: So you... at the end of the third jhāna, mindfulness slips: you have another hindrance; you’re working with that very easily, you’re without any problems; and you let go of that, your mind will go into the fourth jhāna. Fourth jhāna is very, very strong balance of mind. It’s wonderful. You will not feel your body unless there is contact.

Now, when you’re practicing loving kindness meditation, this is as far as you can go with loving kindness meditation. And what happens when you get to this state is, I say: “Ok, now I want you to pick another spiritual friend, and when you see them smiling and happy in your mind’s eye, then pick another spiritual friend.” When you see them smiling and happy in your mind’s eye, then you pick relatives, and it doesn’t matter whether it’s male or female anymore because you have this balance of mind, and you go through three or four, five relatives. When you see them smiling and happy then you go to the next one. After you go through your relatives, then you pick neutral persons. A neutral person is: let’s say you ride on the bus every day to go to work, and you see the same people, but you don’t really talk to them, you know them kind of. Those are neutral persons. So you pick three or four neutral persons, and when you see them smiling and happy in your mind, then you go to the next, and then you go to the next. Then the tough one comes, and that is your enemies. So you start radiating loving kindness to an enemy, and before long you start thinking about how you really don’t like that person, and you really don’t want to be sending loving kindness to them. Then you go back to the neutral person and you start radiating loving kindness, and when you see them smiling and happy, you go back to that same enemy until you see the enemy smiling and happy; they’re not an enemy anymore. And you do this with as many enemies as you have. Now, when you get done with that, then you

come and talk with me some more, and then I'll change your meditation so that you start radiating loving kindness in the six directions and all different things.

ST: ~~~

BV: Well, it might take you this week. It might be that I have to come back for another week so that you could get to the fourth jhāna, but it depends on you. It depends on how closely you follow the directions. If you have resistance to any of the directions and don't follow what I'm telling you, your progress is going to be slow. But I'll tell you that I'm really... I'm used to having at least seventy-five percent of the people go experience jhāna in the first retreat that they do with me, and quite often people will go to the third, fourth, and even higher. I'm not saying it to impress you though.

Yes?

ST: How many hours ~~~

BV: There's no set... the more you sit, the better your chances of getting into the jhāna more quickly. If you distract yourself and talk, and: "Well, I don't feel like sitting now. I'm going to go for a walk." and you don't pay attention to what your mind is doing, of course your meditation is not going to progress very fast. So it just depends on you, how much effort you put into following the directions and only doing the directions.

Since coming back from Asia and coming to this country, the supermarket of spiritual paths, everybody has taken five or six different things and they throw them together and say: "This is what I practice." And I come along and say: "I don't care what you're practicing. You practice what I show you, you will have results very fast. If you don't, you won't." And some people are real attached, and they're going to keep doing their other disciplines and try to work it into what I'm showing them, and they get frustrated after a period of time because nothing is happening for them. I very, very strongly recommend you only do one practice at a time. I don't care whether you practice with me or you practice with somebody else, but do that one practice only. Don't mix and match. It doesn't work. "Well, I do my Tai Chi and then I do my yoga, and now I'm going to do my sitting meditation." It doesn't work. Just do one practice at a time. See whether that practice is agreeable for you, and if it is, stay with it or change, but just do one practice.

Yes?

ST: ~~~

BV: It's not the same, it's just not the same! I mean, you can try to convince yourself that it's the same, but the results will be that you don't get what you're aiming at by putting in extra ingredients. You know, if you make a cake, you got to follow the directions for the cake or else it's not going to be the same kind of cake that you wanted when you're done. And this is the same thing, you have to follow the recipe, and the recipe is very specific for all the different disciplines. Just do one at a time, and then you can stop that one, then say: "Ok, now I want to do this one." You can do that, it's up to you, but I really don't recommend your mixing them.

ST: ~~~

BV: Well, because you can do some exercises, but as a discipline you don't use yoga as your discipline because yoga is not only a physical exercise, it is a mental discipline.

MN:

10. "And the states in the fourth jhāna—the equanimity, the neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, the mental unconcern due to tranquility, ...

BV: Your mind is very peaceful and there's nothing that will disturb you. When you are able to sit in the fourth jhāna for three or four hours, and you get up and you start walking around, you start going: "There's such relief. Oh!" Somebody can come up and tell you disastrous things and your mind just says: "Ok." They come up and they say: "How are you doing?" "Just fine, everything's fine." I had one student that was getting into very strong equanimity, and one day he came in for the interview, and I said: "How are you doing?" He said: "Good. Everything is good." "Do you have much excitement today?" "No, everything is fine." That gets next to real happy when people do that because that means that they're progressing very nicely with their meditation, having that kind of balance.

Now, when you get into the fourth jhāna and you get up and you start to walk, you don't leave your jhāna at the cushion and just go walk, you stay with that jhāna. And it's kind of weird when you're walking because you feel contact, you feel your feet touching the ground, but you don't feel anything between there and your head. It's kind of weird and kind of fun at the same time.

Anyway, you still have...

MN:

... the contact, feeling, perception, volition, and mind; ...

BV: You have the five aggregates.

MN:

... the enthusiasm, decision, ...

BV: Now, the 'decision' is, when you see your mind starting to go away, whether you get involved with that distraction or not. Right? You make a decision when you see it, what to do with it. Either let it go or not. Your choice, but you find over a period of time it's always better to let everything go.

Now, when you get into the fourth jhāna, you will actually start to see your mind wobble before it gets carried away by a hindrance, and when you see your mind wobble, then relax right then and your mind will just settle down and stay on your object of meditation. You will still hear sounds, but they won't make your mind upset at all. Somebody had been crashing around and banging trash cans, and all those kind of noises, and you will hear it and you go: "Oh, ok. Just sound, nothing."

Now, when you get into the loving kindness meditation, you can go as far as the fourth jhāna like I said. Now is when the fun stuff starts.

MN:

11. "Again, monk, with the complete surmounting of perceptions of gross form, with the disappearance of perceptions of gross sensory impact, with non-attention to the perceptions of change, aware that 'space is infinite,' Sāriputta entered upon and abided in the base of infinite space.

BV: Now, when you're practicing loving kindness meditation, you get to the fourth jhāna. What will happen next is, you will start to feel an expansion occur. It's like mind just starts ... growing ... and growing ... and growing, and it goes in all directions at the same time, but there is no center-point, it's just this feeling of expansion. The feeling of loving kindness changes to a feeling of compassion, and you have to describe it to me because I won't tell you what the difference is.

Now, this is the state that the Buddha sat in every morning. He sat in infinite space and having compassion, and over the years it's turned into 'infinite compassion', but it's the first immaterial jhāna that you will experience this, and it is an expansion, it really is. It just keeps on going out in all directions, and it's a real nice pleasant feeling. Your equanimity is very strong.

MN:

12. "And the states in the base of infinite space—the perception of the base of infinite space and the unification of mind; the contact, feeling, perception, volition, and mind; ...

BV: You still have the five aggregates, so you still have contact. If something touches you, you will still know that it's there, but your equanimity is very strong, so it doesn't make you jump at all.

Ok...

MN: ... the enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—these states were defined by him one by one as they occurred; known to him those states arose, known they were present, known they disappeared. ...

BV: So all of these different things are still occurring one thing at a time, and your mindfulness will... you'll be on your object of meditation really nicely for a period of time, and then your mindfulness will slip again. Then you have another hindrance to work with, but by now you look forward to the hindrances because you know the hindrances are teaching you how mind's attention moves. It's teaching you this process of dependent origination, and because your mind is becoming so clear and bright and alert, you start seeing finer and finer parts of the dependent origination. Really gets to be fun.

Yes?

ST: ~~~

BV: It's a feeling, it's a feeling of expansion. Ok. As you go deeper in your practice and you start letting go of the hindrance again, you will experience something that is very, very amazing: the feeling of compassion changes to a feeling of joy. Now, this is not the same kind of joy you experienced in the earlier jhāna, that's gross. I was telling you before there's five kinds of joy. The last kind of joy is called 'all pervading joy' and it's like I take this cup, and I start pouring water in it, and I

keep pouring and it overflows all over. Ok, that's the way joy is. It doesn't have that excitement in it. This is the enlightenment factor of joy.

Now, when you see Buddha images, and you see a little, tiny smile on their face, that's what the artist is trying to show you, that there is this joy. One of the things that happens with this joy is that you can be sitting very nicely and all of a sudden your eyes open, and you think: "Hmmm, that's odd." So you close your eyes, and your eyes open: "Oh." So you close your eyes, and your eyes open. You say: "Well, if you want to stay open, ok stay open. I don't care." You see a lot of Buddha images with the eyes half open. That's another sign of this kind of joy, this all pervading joy.

MN:

13. "Again, by completely surmounting the base of infinite space, aware that 'consciousness is infinite' Sāriputta entered upon and abided in the base of infinite consciousness.

BV: Now, I already told you that the compassion turns into a joy. You will start to see individual consciousnesses arising and passing away. Now, (finger snap) that was a million thought moments. You will see every one of them. It's like watching a movie, but somebody turns down the speed, and you start seeing the flicker ... the picture and then a blank spot ... and a picture and then a blank spot ... and a picture and blank spot, and you will see this at each one of your sense doors. Really kind of an interesting state. This is where you really see up close and personal that everything is in the state of change, whether you like it or not, and there's nobody home, there's no controller. It's just when this sense door - and a lot of it happens through the eye - when this sense door arises, then you're seeing individual ones ... arise and pass away ... arise and pass away, and this is quick.

Now, the whole time that you've been practicing, I've been telling you more and more: "You have to relax." Why? Because you're letting go of the craving. When you let go of the craving, your mind goes deeper and your awareness becomes quicker. So when you get to a state like this, now you're really starting to appreciate why we relax. When you first start meditating, your mind is flip-flopping - goes over here, goes over there - and as you go deeper, then your mind starts moving less and less. When you get into these deeper states, these arūpa jhānas, now your mind is not moving so much, it's vibrating, and as you go from one state to the next, the vibration gets finer, and finer, and finer, until it's hard to tell whether your mind is there or not, whether there's any perception or not. We'll

talk about that in a minute. Ok. So you're seeing all of these individual consciousnesses, and this is called the base of infinite consciousness.

MN:

15. "Again, by completely surmounting the base of infinite consciousness, aware that 'there is nothing' Sāriputta entered upon and abided in the base of nothingness.

BV: Now, what happens is, when you start seeing the individual consciousnesses, you start focusing on the blank spot in between the two pictures, and that starts happening for a longer period of time. Now, when you get into the base of nothingness, the feeling of joy disappears, and a very, very strong feeling of equanimity is there. This is when mind is not looking outside of itself anymore, but you're just seeing factors arise and pass away.

Now, the whole time that you're practicing, you're learning how to adjust your energy. You put too much effort in, you notice you get restless. You don't put enough effort in, you get dull. Now, you start adjusting... as you go deeper and deeper, you start fine-tuning more and more. When you get to this state of nothingness, it really gets interesting. This is probably the most interesting state of meditation that you can experience because there's so much fine tuning that you have to do with your energy all the time. And it's like walking a tightrope that's a spider web - real delicate, little balance - and you put a taste too much energy in, you get restless; not quite enough energy, you get dull. So as you learn this balance, it really is a fun experience, and you're able to see dependent origination very, very clearly in this state.

Yes?

ST: Could you talk a little bit about the difference between equanimity and calm abiding? Because this is ~~ although the Dalai Lama gives that some speed, but there is my confusion about what the similarities are.

BV: You know, I really... the Dalai Lama uses terms that I'm not very familiar with. And I'm going to be seeing him in April, so I get a chance to talk to him and ask him these kind of questions: "What are you talking about with this?" Because when you get into Buddhism, you get into definitions very much. Like the definition of jhāna, what is the definition of jhāna? For most people it means absorption concentration, but that's not what the suttas are talking about. They're talking about stages of your understanding. So I don't know how to answer the

difference between equanimity and calm abiding. I'll have to find out more information. I'll get back to you.

ST: Calm abiding is translated as samatha?

BV: Calm abiding is translated as samatha.

ST: Samatha is translated as calm abiding?

BV: Samatha is translated as calm abiding.

Well, that doesn't necessarily have anything to do with the equanimity. So I would have to say that there is a difference if that's in fact the definition. So the equanimity is balance of mind, and if it's calm abiding, that means peacefulness in your mind, but not necessarily that fine balance that I'm talking about right now. Ok?

So the state of nothingness: now, you think: "Well, if you're in the base of nothingness, that means there's nothing there. Right?"

Well...

MN:

16. "And the states in the base of nothingness—the perception of the base of nothingness and the unification of mind; the contact, feeling, perception, volition, and mind; ...

BV: You see, you still have the five aggregates even in the state of nothingness.

MN:

... the enthusiasm, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—these states were defined by him one by one as they occurred; ...

BV: So there's still all of these different things that are present even though it's in a state of nothingness, but mind is not looking outside of itself anymore. Now you're seeing mind looking at mind. So you get the chance to see these things more clearly. Now, when you get to the base of nothingness, there's a little bit of vibration. Now, as you go deeper, you have another hindrance. Piece of cake, seasoned by the cook. It starts to be automatic.

And then, when you finally let that go...

MN:

17. ... by completely surmounting the base of nothingness, Sāriputta entered upon and abided in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

BV: Now, think about that state; is it there or isn't it there? It's... this state is described in one of the commentaries this way: there's two monks, there's a senior monk and a junior monk, and they're walking along; and the senior monk walks over this little tiny stream; and the junior monk stops and he says: "I want to get a drink"; and the senior monk said: "Ah, there's water. Then go get my towel. I want to take my bath"; and the junior monk said: "There's water, but there's not very much." Ok? This is really an interesting state, and while you're in that state, you don't know that you're in it until you come out of that state.

It says here...

MN:

18. "He emerged mindful from that attainment. Having done so, he contemplated the states that had passed, ceased, and changed,

BV: There's still things that happen while you're in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, but you don't know it until you come out. Now, I've had some students that they get really deep in their meditation, and they'll come to me and say: "I think I was asleep." "Oh." I could say: "Why do you think that?" They say that: "I think I didn't see anything." And I say: "Well, you start contemplating a little bit more deeply, and you'll start remembering some of those things that happened." And I'm not going to tell you the things that happen in that state, but it is quite interesting. Now you're getting down so that there's barely any vibration in mind at all. Ok?

MN:

19. "Again, monks, by completely surmounting the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, Sāriputta entered upon and abided in the cessation of perception and feeling. ...

BV: This means there is no perception, there is no feeling, there is no vibration. It's just like somebody turned off the lights, and you'll be in that state for a period of time. When you come out of that, you will be able to see and recognize the links of dependent origination. You will see how they arise and how they cease,

and when you get to the final letting go of ignorance, that is when Nibbāna occurs. Piece of cake, right?

Now, I've just told you exactly how this works, and there are three paths that you can take to get to the cessation of perception and feeling and seeing dependent origination. This is one path by going through all of the jhānas. Another path... mostly, I like to teach this path because it is very quick and you see the results for yourself very easily. But there are some people that are very, very sensitive to feeling, and they will get to the fourth jhāna and all of a sudden they start having visions, and they start doing things, and there's all kinds of psychic abilities that can occur. It's very difficult on a teacher, I guarantee it. To be with somebody and they say they're sitting, and I went away into town to do something, and they tell me all of the things that I did before I came back, because they were watching me do that, because they developed the divine eye. And the divine ear can occur very easily, so that they can communicate with the devas, and they can communicate with ogres, and hell realms, and all of these kind of things.

ST: ~~~

BV: No, not even close. It's more a hindrance than anything because people start thinking they're really hot stuff if they can fly in the air and do this kind of thing. And it's... I've had two that were very good psychically, and they could do an awful lot of things, but it's hard because I have to keep... I have to be with them a lot and stop them from indulging in things, and stop them from thinking that they're some kind of hot stuff.

Anyway, that's another way of attaining, getting to... eventually to the cessation of perception and feeling. The last way is the way that the Buddha did it, and that is going to the fourth jhāna, then start directing his mind towards past lifetimes and doing that, and eventually you get to see the passing away and arising of beings in different realms: in the deva realms, in the brahma-lokas, in the hell realms, and you can communicate with them, talk to them about: "What did you do to get here?"

Now, each one of these paths will eventually lead you to a very calm period, and that's when the cessation of perception and feeling occur. The fast-track is getting to the fourth jhāna and then start working with the... seeing the past lifetimes.

Now, there's a lot of people now, a lot of hypnotists and that sort of thing, and they say: "Well, I can take you so you can see thirty-four past lifetimes. This is

dangerous stuff if you don't have strong equanimity. We have all done things in the past that we're not very proud of. We have killed, we have raped, we have stolen, we've done all kinds of things. We have broken the precepts many times. When you start remembering past lifetimes, guess what you get to see? Not only some of the good stuff, when you were good you helped people and did kind things and that, but you get to see some of the bad stuff too. So you need to have very strong equanimity, and it's best to be around a teacher. Key, but it is a very interesting path. But eventually your mind will settle down, and then you'll see the arising and passing away of beings, and then your mind will become very calm, and you will see and experience that karma is for real, and with that realization comes the cessation of perception and feeling, then seeing dependent origination.

So there's three paths that you can take, and I much prefer not working with people that are very sensitive to feeling. I like the more intellectual kinds.

Yes?

ST: ~~~

BV: You don't have to leave anything in Buddhism, except everything happens one thing at a time.

ST: ~~~

BV: Yes. Doesn't matter. When it starts happening for you, that vow disappears, I'll tell you that.

Yes?

ST: ~~ karma ~~

BV: Boy, what a big one. Karma means action: we have good action, we have bad action, we have neutral action. There's always a result from action, and that's what we're experiencing right now, is our past karma. That's why we have a physical body right now, because of our past karma.

ST: ~~ karma ~~

BV: Well, I don't quite know how to answer that. I can give you a story. At one time there was a guy that he was with twenty-five or thirty other people and they were robbers, and they got caught by the king. Now, the king's executioner at that time had just died. So he went to these robbers and he said to each one of them: "If you will become my executioner, I'll let you live, but you're going to have to kill all of your other friends." And this one guy said: "Ok." So he did that, and he would kill people that the king told him to kill. Now, he did this for fifty years, and he - this was during the time of the Buddha - and he was getting so old that chopping off people's heads started to get real messy. So he had to stop doing that. And he was getting close to death, and he saw Venerable Sāriputta walking down the road with his alms bowl gathering food, and this executioner came and he gave him one hand of rice, and it made his mind so happy to do that, that when he died he remembered giving the rice to Sāriputta, and he was reborn as a deva. Now, this is somebody that had killed hundreds of people. That doesn't mean that the karma of killing all of those people won't come back at him at some time, but in his next lifetime he was reborn as a deva. Karma is really strange.

And look at Moggallāna, he was an arahat, he was second chief disciple to the Buddha. He was a very virtuous person, but at some time in his long past he had killed his mother and his father. So in his last lifetime, he was beaten and almost killed. They say that all of his bones, there was no part of the bones in his body that was bigger than a grain of rice. That shows you how much he was beaten, and he died from this. Now, this is a very virtuous person, and it took a lot of time: he had to be around a mahākappa and a hundred thousand lifetimes to develop the good qualities to be the second chief disciple. But he still had things in his past that he had to pay for.

Even the Buddha, he had a sore back. In his later life, his back was so sore that he would say: "Continue on." to Ānanda or somebody "Continue on giving the Dhamma talk. My back is sore and I need to rest it." Now, why did he have that pain? Because at some time in the long distance past, he was a fighter and he used to break people's backs, and he still had to pay that karma. Now, this is somebody that is exceptional, I mean more than exceptional. How can you answer when karma is going to happen in a particular way? It's because the conditions, the conditions are right then it will happen in a particular way, but how can you predict it? I don't know.

Anyway, getting back to the sutta...

MN:

... {repeats: Sāriputta entered upon and abided in the cessation of perception and feeling}. And his taints were destroyed by his seeing with wisdom.

BV: What does that mean? That means that his... all of the taints were eradicated, not to come up again by his seeing dependent origination and realizing it. You see, the thing is, over the period of time that you meditate, you have all of these "Oh, wow!" experiences by seeing dependent origination, and it changes your perspective little by little. When you get to experience Nibbāna, right before that you see dependent origination up close and real personal, and you see and realize that this is exactly the way it is. That's why Nibbāna occurs. It's such an "Oh, wow!" that it changes your entire perspective. It changes the way you see the world after that.

Now, there are two parts to the experience of Nibbāna: it's called the path knowledge and the fruition knowledge. The personality change doesn't really occur until the fruition knowledge comes up. People can experience Nibbāna very briefly; they still have work to do. That's one of the things that the Buddha said: "You still have work to do." That means that you have to keep your precepts very, very well. You don't get involved in your sensual pleasures so much, and you start seeing everything the way it actually is through the eyes of dependent origination and the four noble truths. Then you will have a second experience where Nibbāna occurs, and this will be your fruition knowledge. It'll happen sometime in this lifetime.

Now, I'll tell you this: every person that can experience jhāna in this lifetime, can experience Nibbāna. You can. That's why this is so much fun to teach because you're helping people with their potential to experience something that's truly extraordinary, that the Buddha spent forty-five years talking about. "Oh, you can't do that for another five hundred lifetimes." "I'll be darned. I'm here to tell you that you can do it in this lifetime." You have to be able to follow the 6Rs exactly. Follow the directions of the meditation. These are not my directions. I got them from the suttas. And as you do this and follow the directions without adding anything, without subtracting anything, you will be able to experience Nibbāna.

Now, let's go to the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta and see what it says about this.

MN10:

46 "Monks, should anybody develop these four foundations of mindfulness in such

a way for seven years, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, ...

BV: That means you become an arahat.

MN 10:

... or if there is a trace of clinging left, non-return. ...

BV: That means you become an anāgāmi. Now, an anāgāmi is someone that does not have any lust or hatred arise in their mind, ever, for any reason. It just won't come up.

MN 10:

... "Let alone seven years, monks. If anyone should develop the four foundations of mindfulness in such a way for six ... five ... four ... three ... two ... one year, one of two fruits can 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. If anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in such a way for seven months ... six ... five ... four ... three ... two ... one ... a half a month, ...

BV: Now, this is for real.

MN 10:

... one of two fruits can be expected for them: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is a trace of clinging left, non-return.

"Let alone half a month. If anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in such a way for seven days, one of two fruits can be expected: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is a trace of clinging left, non-return.

BV: Ok? That's what the Buddha said. Where all this talk of "Oh, you got another ten lifetimes to go." came from, I don't know.

ST: ~~~

BV: It's some of the cultural stuff, and...

ST: ~~~

BV: Could very well be. Then, and a lot of the cultural things that have been added into Buddhism have diluted the Buddha's teaching, and I'm very much involved with - I'm going to be more and more involved with - going back to the original teaching of the Buddha, and I'm going to be doing it worldwide.

So...

Yeah?

ST: ~~~

BV: Yes. Because you're never going to be returning to the lower realms of human being or lower.

ST: ~~~

BV: It's not arahat. From the brahma-loka that you will be reborn in, if you don't become an arahat in this lifetime, then you will be in that brahma-loka and eventually become an arahat, but you're destined to become an arahat.

ST: ~~~

BV: Is Nibbāna real? Yes, no doubts.

Yes?

ST: ~~~

BV: The Buddha was an arahat.

ST: ~~~

BV: He was a Sammāsambuddha which means he was a teaching Buddha.

ST: ~~~

BV: Their mind is pretty clear. They don't have any ignorance in their mind at all.

ST: ~~~

BV: That's... that's pretty mystical to my way of thinking.

ST: ~~~

BV: Well, it depends on the personality of a person. Right? Sāriputta was considered second to the Buddha in wisdom. He had no psychic abilities at all. But the thing is, some people, their bent is towards intellect, and they're not very sensitive to feeling. Other people are not very intellectual, but they are very sensitive to feeling. Where most people are is in the middle, you have some intellect and some feeling, and that's why this is called the fast-track, going to past lives and that sort of thing.

ST: ~~ Mahāyāna Bodhisatta vow ~~

BV: Don't get restarted on that. I will get into all kinds of trouble as I have very definite beliefs about this and I won't talk about the Bodhisatta vows. Ok? Anybody else have a question? Then let me finish the sutta, so you'll be able to have heard one sutta all the way through.

Ok...

MN 111:

20: "He emerged mindful from that attainment. Having done so, he recalled the states that had passed, ceased, and changed, thus: 'So indeed, these states, not having been, come into being; having been, they vanished.' Regarding those states, he abided unattracted, unrepelled, independent, detached, free, dissociated, with a mind rid of barriers. He understood: 'There is no escape beyond this,' and with the cultivation of that attainment, he confirmed that there is not.

BV: Always, up until this, when Nibbāna occurred for him, he was always confirming that there's something beyond this, and now he's saying: "This is it. That's as far as we can go".

MN:

21. "Monks, speaking rightly, were it to be said of anyone: 'He has attained mastery and perfection in noble virtue, mastery and perfection in noble collectedness, attained mastery and perfection in noble wisdom, attained mastery

and perfection in noble deliverance,' it is of Sāriputta indeed that rightly speaking this should be said.

22. "Monks, rightly speaking, were it to be said of anyone: 'He is the son of the Blessed One, born of his breast, born of his mouth, born of the Dhamma, created by the Dhamma, an heir of the Dhamma, not an heir of material things,' it is of Sāriputta indeed that rightly speaking this should be said.

23. "Monks, the matchless Wheel of Dhamma set rolling by the Tathāgata is kept rolling rightly by Sāriputta."

That is what the Blessed One said. The monks were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

BV: So this is a very deep sutta, but it has an awful lot of good information in it. I told you a lot about what you can expect, and if you follow the directions like I'm giving them, I very much look forward to seeing all of you do well with the meditation and progress very well.

Ok, does anybody have any last questions before...

Yes?

ST: ~~~

BV: You don't have to be sorry.

ST: ~~~

BV: See, the whole idea of Nibbāna, it's really help for a lot of philosophers to talk about and try to figure out, but the only way that I look at Nibbāna is that this is an unconditioned state. How can you talk about something with conditioned words and ideas when you're trying to describe something that's unconditioned. So I don't.

Yes?

ST: ~~~

\*\*\* Bhante's personal story begins \*\*\*

BV: When I was a layman, I was a master at suffering. So I started looking for meditation because I heard that meditation is supposed to make you good. Now, this was in the 60's, and I ran across Don Juan and Carlos Castenada books, and it got me real interested in going deeper. I very much respect Carlos Castenada for those books because he helped me a lot, even as dumb as he was, but I got to figure out a lot of stuff by his being dumb.

So now in 1974, I ran across a guy that was teaching meditation. Now, I'd asked other people how to meditate, and they told me: "Well, you just sit down and meditate." So I went to this guy and he happened to be teaching Mahasi Sayadaw's method of meditation, and that was the clearest method that I'd run across. So I started doing it and I decided that: "I don't want to be a layman anymore." So I sold my house and got rid of my car, and got rid of all the furniture, and got down to a backpack, and I started travelling around in California. I kept on practicing this kind of meditation because there were some books that were available then. And I went out and I headed to a big retreat by myself, and I got to a place that I didn't understand, so I said: "Ok, I need a teacher."

So in the back of this book, there's a thing in Burma... there's a place in Burma, that they're teaching them this where Mahasi Sayadaw was living. So I called up an operator on the telephone, and I said: "I don't know if you can do this or not. I want to talk to somebody in Burma and I want to find out more about meditation, and she said: "Well, let me work on it a little while." And I went to work the next day, I came home, the phone's ringing, I pick up the phone, and she says: "There's Burma for you." So I started talking to these people in Burma, but I wanted to come there and meditate. At the time, they were only allowing four hundred and seven days to get into or to be in Burma, and they said: "Well, why are you wanting to come here? There's a meditation center on the east coast, there's a meditation center on the west coast. Go there and meditate."

So because I was on the west coast, I went to the west coast meditation center, and I meditated there for a month and it was very interesting. And the teacher at that time, he'd been a Sri Lankan monk, he was an American, but he ordained in Sri Lanka for three years and came back to America, disrobed. He asked me to stay at the meditation center and help them, and I wound up staying there for a year and a half, where I happened to meet Munindra. Munindra was a little Indian man that was very famous, and he was a teacher of Joseph Goldstein's, and I got to hang out with him for a few months.

And after that I was in Hawaii for a couple of years, and then I came back and I wanted to be with people that were dying, and my mother ran a nursing home. So I went to visit her, and I said: "I want to work here." And I knew she was very skilled at being able to recognize when someone was going to die in two to three days. So she would tell me and I would spend all of my time with them, talking with them, trying to get them to remember when they did happy things, that sort of thing. So I got a chance to be with them as they were dying, and I wanted the actual experience.

Then it got time to stop doing that, and I went to San Francisco just as Sayadaw U Silananda came from Burma, and he was starting up a meditation center in San Francisco. So I met him, we got along very well, I asked him if I could be his attendant, and I was his attendant for two years. Now, he was very much into Mahasi Sayadaw method of teaching.

After that, I decided I wanted to... still as a layman I decided I wanted to take some time off from the spiritual path to see if I'm better with some money. And I started my own construction company and started working very hard, and in a couple of years I was earning lots and lots of money. So I figured: "Well, I know how to do that."

And then I decided I would was going to go to Asia, and see what it was like there. So I went to Thailand, and I went to a meditation center in Thailand, and it was close to the anniversary of my father's death. So I thought: "Out of respect for my father, I will ordain for one year and share the merit of that with him." And I had to ordain for one year, and that was twenty-one years ago.

I went to Burma, I was there in 1988 when they had all their social unrest, so they were shooting people, and they asked us to leave, and I had to leave, and then it took me over a year to get a visa to go back into Burma. When I went back into Burma, I started practicing meditation with Sayadaw U Janaka, who's very famous in Burma. After that, I became rather disillusioned with the Mahasi method, and I saw that it didn't really work the way the suttas talk about the experience of Nibbāna.

So when I went back to Malaysia and they kept on asking me to teach vipassanā, and I kept on saying: "No, I won't do that." because I didn't have confidence that it was the right path. So what I did was started teaching loving kindness

meditation, and I became rather famous in Malaysia, and Thailand, and a little bit in Burma, not much, but Indonesia and Singapore.

I was travelling all over the place, and then I was asked to go to the largest Theravada monastery in Malaysia, K Sri Dhammananda's place at Brickfields. Now, he'd been teaching there for forty years, and every Friday night he gave a Dhamma talk, and there was four or five hundred people that showed up. And then I went to that center, he asked me if I would start giving Dhamma talks to... every other Friday. And the way he introduced me was, I was a little bit shy, and he said: "There's going to be this ceremony, and I want you to come." And then he introduced me as being a monk who's going to be staying there, and he said: "As a matter of fact, why don't you give the Dhamma talk?" he says to me. "An hour and a half will be good." And I went: "Oh, oh!" But I got through it, and then every Friday he wanted me to give an hour and a half or two-hour Dhamma talk.

When I come back to this country, everybody's attention span is fifteen minutes, so here I am giving two-hour Dhamma talks. But while I was with him, I met Punnaji, and that's where he and I had some major talks about letting go of commentaries and just going to suttas and studying suttas. And that's what I did for a period of time, and I started seeing the difference between the way most people were teaching, and the way the Buddha was teaching.

And this is why I've developed this meditation the way that I have because it stays in agreement with the Buddha's teaching; it doesn't contradict. And you say: "Well, the Buddha never said anything about the 6Rs." That's true, but he did say something about right effort. Now, there's four parts to right effort: noticing when mind is unwholesome, letting go of the unwholesome, bringing up the wholesome, keeping mind wholesome. Now, how about this: recognize when mind is unwholesome and let it go, relax, smile, and stay with your object of meditation. "Oh, that's the 6Rs isn't it?" Isn't that something? See, it's in agreement. He might not have used those exact things, but I'm sure he didn't because I don't even know if they had any Rs.

ST: ~~ spiritual ~~

BV: There are suttas that talk about this. Ok? And what I teach you is called 'breaking down the barriers'. So that you're walking down the road with a family member, somebody you're neutral to, and somebody that's an enemy. And some people come up and they say: "Ok, we got you four, one of you has to die", and you have to choose. Now, when you love everyone as you love yourself, you

cannot choose. You say: "Well, I'll kill myself, sacrifice myself." But you love everyone equally, they're not able to choose. This is what breaking down the barriers does, it helps put mind in a very strong state of balance.

Ok, I told my story. I have had the opportunity to be with a lot great monks, like K Sri Dhammananda, and Punnaji, and U Silananda was... he was one of the most... had one of the most amazing minds I've ever run across. Now, he memorized this many books (gesture), twelve, fourteen books. When I say memorize, I mean, I'd open up a page and I read one line, and then I say: "Continue." Ok? Now, he took a state test, he was number one in the country, he didn't make a mistake. You're only allowed to make six mistakes if you're going to pass this test. So his mind was truly amazing. He could memorize anything very, very quickly.

But I had met some other people in Burma that their mind was even sharper. There was one monk that he was ninety-five, ninety-six years old when I met him. He could remember anything that was said, and he could repeat it three years later. He just had to hear it one time. He had a mind that was very similar to Ānanda's, he could hear something one time, he had it.

ST: ~~~

BV: Well, he was very intelligent to start off with, you have to be to have that kind of memory. And he took an interest in what he was listening to. You know, in the suttas it says you 'give ear'. Well, he did; he really paid attention closely; he didn't let his mind ho-hum around. While someone was speaking Dhamma, he heard it. Quite an amazing person. Ok?

Let's share some merit.

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 Buddha's dispensation.

Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . . Sadhu

Prepared by Chris Farrant 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2012  
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