

MN 118 Mindfulness of Breathing - Ānāpānasati Sutta
Dhamma talk by Bhante Vimalaramsi

MN:

(INTRODUCTORY SECTION)

1. THUS HAVE I HEARD. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvatti in the Eastern Park, in the Palace of Migāra's Mother, together with many very well known elder disciples—the venerable Sāriputta, the venerable Mahā Moggallāna, the venerable Mahā Kassapa, the venerable Mahā Kaccāna, the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhita, the venerable Mahā Kappina, the venerable Mahā Cunda, the venerable Anuruddha, the venerable Revata, the venerable Ānanda, and other very well known elder disciples.

2. Now on that occasion elder bhikkhus had been teaching; and instructing new bhikkhus; some elder bhikkhus had been teaching and instructing ten bhikkhus, some elder bhikkhus had been teaching and instructing twenty...thirty...forty bhikkhus.. And the new bhikkhus, taught and instructed by the elder bhikkhus, had achieved successive stages of high distinction.

3. On that occasion—the Uposatha day of the fifteenth, on the-full-moon night of the Pavāraṇā ceremony—the Blessed One was seated in the open surrounded by the Saṅgha of bhikkhus. Then, surveying the silent Saṅgha of bhikkhus, he addressed them thus:

4. "Bhikkhus, I am content with this progress. My mind is content with this progress. So arouse still more energy to attain the unattained, to achieve the unachieved, to realise the unrealised.. I shall wait here at Sāvatti for the Komudi full moon of the fourth month."

5. The bhikkhus of the countryside heard: "The Blessed One will wait there at Sāvatti for the Komudi full moon of the fourth month." And the bhikkhus of the countryside left in due course for Sāvatti to see the Blessed One.

6. And elder bhikkhus still more intensively taught and instructed new bhikkhus; some elder bhikkhus taught and instructed ten bhikkhus, some elder bhikkhus taught and instructed twenty...thirty...forty bhikkhus. And the new bhikkhus, taught and instructed by the elder bhikkhus, achieved successive stages of high distinction.

7. On that occasion—the Uposatha day of the fifteenth, the full-moon night of the Komudi full moon of the fourth month—the Blessed One was seated in the open surrounded by the Saṅgha of bhikkhus. Then, surveying the silent Saṅgha of bhikkhus, he addressed them thus:

8. “Bhikkhus, this assembly is free from prattle, this assembly is free from chatter. It consists purely of heartwood. Such is this Saṅgha of bhikkhus, such is this assembly. Such an assembly as is worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of reverential salutation, an incomparable field of merit for the world—such is this Saṅgha of bhikkhus, such is this assembly. Such an assembly that a small gift given to it becomes great and a great gift greater—such is this Saṅgha of bhikkhus, such is this assembly. Such an assembly as is rare for the world to see—such is this Saṅgha of bhikkhus, such is this assembly. Such an assembly as would be worth journeying many leagues with a travel-bag to see—such is this Saṅgha of bhikkhus, such is this assembly.

9. “In this Saṅgha of bhikkhus there are bhikkhus who are arahants with taints destroyed, who have lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, reached their own goal, destroyed the fetters of being, and are completely liberated through final knowledge—such bhikkhus are there in this Saṅgha of bhikkhus.

10. “In this Saṅgha of bhikkhus there are bhikkhus who, with the destruction of the five lower fetters, are due to reappear spontaneously [in the Pure Abodes] and there attain final Nibbāna, without ever returning from that world—such bhikkhus are there in this Saṅgha of bhikkhus.

BV: Now this is called the third stage of enlightenment. This is called anāgāmi. If you attain this stage of anāgāmi in this lifetime, you will

never be reborn as a human being. You will be reborn in a special kind of brahama loca, and there you will attain arahatship, and from there, when you die from that realm, there is no more becoming.

MN: 11. "In this Saṅgha of bhikkhus there are bhikkhus who, with the destruction of three fetters and with the attenuation of lust, hate, and delusion, are once-returners, returning once to this world to make an end of suffering—such bhikkhus are there in this Saṅgha of bhikkhus.

BV: Now, this is the second stage of sainthood. The letting go or destruction of three fetters means, not, having any more belief in a self, not ever having any doubt that this path is the correct path. And not having any beliefs in wrong rites or rituals. Now the attenuation of lust, hate and delusion, what that means is these are weakened a lot. The lust is weakened a lot. The hatred is weakened very much. Your mind is more clear. You're not caught by deluded thinking, so much. Now what it means by being a once returner, when you are, when you have attained the second stage of sainthood, that means that at the most, you will come back to the human realm, one more time. If you don't attain nibbana, or if you don't attain arahatship, then, then you die from this realm, you'll be reborn in a brahma loca, and then, you will attain nibbana.

MN: 12. "In this Saṅgha of bhikkhus there are bhikkhus who, with the destruction of the three fetters, are stream-enterers, no longer subject to perdition, bound [for deliverance], headed for enlightenment—such bhikkhus are there in this Saṅgha of bhikkhus.

BV: Now when you are a stream enterer, that means you're at the first stage of enlightenment, and they call that: "falling into the stream". And with that, you lose the belief in self completely; you don't have any doubt in the path; you don't have any belief in wrong rites and rituals. Now all of the other fetters, are weakened just a little bit. At the most, you will be reborn seven times. You will never be reborn any lower than a human being. You won't be reborn as an animal; you won't be reborn in the hell realms. You will only be reborn, as a human being, or, deva loca or brahma loca. When you

become, a sotāpanna, that's what it's called, being a stream enterer, that means that you will not break the five precepts for any reason at all. That's why you never are reborn any lower than human being, because you keep the five precepts. You won't break the five precepts for any reason.

MN: 13. "In this Saṅgha of bhikkhus there are bhikkhus who abide devoted to the development of the four foundations of mindfulness—such bhikkhus are there in this Saṅgha of bhikkhus. In this Saṅgha of bhikkhus there are bhikkhus who abide devoted to the development of the four right kinds of striving...

BV: That means the four right kinds of effort.

MN: of the four bases for spiritual power...of the five faculties...of the five powers...of the seven enlightenment factors...of the Noble Eightfold Path— such bhikkhus are there in this Saṅgha of bhikkhus.

14. "In this Saṅgha of bhikkhus there are bhikkhus who abide devoted to the development of loving-kindness ...of compassion...of altruistic joy...of equanimity...

BV: Now these are the four brahma-vihāras.

MN: of the meditation on foulness...

BV: That means, taking the meditation of the thirty two parts of the body. So, if you have a lustful character, it will help put your mind in balance, so that you don't have lust arising so strongly.

MN: of the perception of impermanence —

BV: It doesn't mean sitting and thinking about, how everything changes, it means seeing impermanence very clearly.

MN: such bhikkhus are there in this Saṅgha of bhikkhus.

BV: Now also, this perception of impermanence, is talking about, going into, some of the higher jhānas, where you see, into the arūpa jhānas and I'll talk about that in a little while, where you see change happening all the time.

MN: In this Saṅgha of bhikkhus there are bhikkhus who abide devoted to the development of mindfulness of breathing.

(MINDFULNESS OF BREATHING)

15. "Bhikkhus, when mindfulness of breathing is developed and cultivated, it is of great fruit and great benefit. When mindfulness of breathing is developed and cultivated, it fulfils the four foundations of mindfulness. When the four foundations of mindfulness are developed and cultivated, they fulfill the seven enlightenment factors. When the seven enlightenment factors are developed and cultivated, they fulfill true knowledge and deliverance.

16. "And how, bhikkhus, is mindfulness of breathing developed and cultivated, so that it is of great fruit and great benefit?"

17. "Here a bhikkhu, gone to the forest or to the root of a tree or to an empty hut, sits down; having folded his legs crosswise, set his body erect, and established mindfulness in front of him, ever mindful he breathes in, mindful he breathes out.

BV: The word "mindful" is a little bit tricky sometimes. Everybody feels that they should know what it means, but it's always kind of fuzzy. "Mindfulness" means your attention, that's all. "Mindfulness of breathing" means being attentive with breathing.

MN: 18. "Breathing in long, he understands: 'I breathe in long'; or breathing out long, he understands: 'I breathe out long..' Breathing in short, he understands: 'I breathe in short'; or breathing out short, he understands: 'I breathe out short.' He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body.'

BV: Now, let's back up just a little bit. He understands when he's breathing in and he understands when he's breathing out. That doesn't mean focusing on any one place. Ninety five percent of the people that practice mindfulness of breathing, put their attention at their nostril tip, and focus their attention there, but clearly, you have never heard me say the word "nose" in the directions, because it's not here. It's knowing when you breath in, and knowing when you breath out. Not focusing on any one place, but if you want to put your attention on one place, it doesn't matter, just don't focus your mind there. Now the, breathing in or breathing out experiencing the whole body means: when you breath in, you know when you breath in. You see the start of it, you see the end of it. When you breath out, you know when you breath out. You see the start of the out-breath, and the end of it, that's all that means.

Now:

MN: He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in tranquilizing the bodily formation'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out tranquilizing the bodily formation.'

BV: Now, tranquilizing the bodily formation, that, is, what I'm talking about when I say: "Relax your mind. Let go of the tension in your head. Calm your mind." On the in-breath, let go of the tension, calm. On the out-breath, let go of the tension, calm. Now, at first you might miss some in-breath or some out-breath, so what? That's all right, it doesn't matter. Catch it the next time. So you miss the in-breath, don't start thinking about how you missed it, just let it go, ok? It doesn't matter. If you need to swallow, swallow. Let your body be on automatic. Your mind, open up and relax, ok? If you notice that you're paying attention to that, then you treat that just like a wandering thought. As soon as you see your mind has gone there: "Ok". Let it go. Calm. Let go of the tension in the head. Come back to the breath. You're going to hear me continually say: "the breath", not: "in-breathing and out-breathing", and you're never going to hear me say: "noting" anything. It's recognizing when your mind is distracted. Letting go of the distraction, calming your mind, relaxing the tension in your head, coming back to your object of meditation.

Now, as you do this, you will start to experience some degrees of calm, where your mind feels very much at ease, you feel tranquil, you feel very nice. So, we'll go on with this and I'll explain the next part in just a moment.

MN: 19. "He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing [joy]'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing [joy]."

BV: What this short little description is talking about, is the experience of both the first, and second jhāna. Let me read what it says; this is a standard description, of what you go through with each one of the jhānas – it goes through the book here. (Note: as in sutta MN-30- Shorter Discourse – Heartwood (H:) starts at § 13)

H: Here, quite secluded from sensual pleasures,

BV: And what that means is letting go of see, you close your eyes. If there's sound hitting your ear, you let go of that, calm your mind, come back to the breath. Any taste, any smell, you do the same thing. This is what it means by letting go of the sensual pleasures, by secluding yourself from sensual pleasures.

One of the sensual pleasures that's very difficult to let go of, is thinking. We have the habit of thinking a lot. And it's very easy to get caught in that thinking, and be away from the breath for a period of time. It doesn't matter. As soon as you recognize that your mind has gone away from your object of meditation, even if you're in mid-sentence, just let it go, never mind. Calm your mind, relax the tension in your head, come back to, the breath again.

Now, the next one is:

H: secluded from unwholesome states,

BV: Being secluded from unwholesome states, there are times that, let's say during the day, you were sitting in meditation or you were doing something and somebody came up to you, and they got you angry, and you thought about that anger all day. And then you sit in

meditation, and what do you think about? Same thing. But this is an unwholesome state. So while you're sitting in meditation, you try to recognize when you have this emotional state come up, now I use anger as a thing to recognize, but it's any emotional state: anxiety; fear; depression; sadness; attachment to happiness – all of those are emotional states. Now your directions are very clear. When your mind has gone away from your object of meditation, let it go; calm your mind; feel your tension go away in your head; gently come back to your object of meditation. Now the nature of these kind of thoughts, and feelings is that they don't go away right away, it's just like the pain that arises in your knee, or your back, or wherever it happens to be. But as you continually open up and allow that, feeling, either physical or emotional. To be, calm your mind, come back to your object of meditation, you are letting go of unwholesome states. Now the letting go of the unwholesome states, your mind becomes more and more clear. Finally, when you completely let go of that state, your mind becomes very happy. And with that happiness, there is relief. And with that relief, some joy starts to arise. Now when you sit in meditation, you will have joy arise, but your mind will stay on your object of meditation very well. You don't have a lot of distracting thoughts; you might have a few. But very quickly, your mind recognizes that; you let it go, and calm, and then you come back. Now this is the state of the first jhāna. Now,

H: a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with [joy and happiness] born of seclusion.

BV: After the joy fades away, your mind becomes very, very tranquil. And at ease, and you feel very, very comfortable. This is the feeling of happiness. You will gain a jhāna, and you will be able to sit in that for a period of time, and then you say: "Well, it's time to get up and I have to go do this or do that." The next time you sit, you have an active mind, and it takes a long time to calm your mind. You might be able to get in to that jhāna, you might not. It depends on a lot of different things. Now, one of the things that it really depends on, it's such a pleasant feeling, that your mind gets attached to it, and you think before you sit: "Ah, I'm going to have that state again." And

what doesn't come? It will never come, because, of that desire. Now you can knock yourself out of the jhāna, and get into the sloth and torpor, very quickly, by paying attention too much to the joy and not coming back to your object of meditation. See?

Now the hindrances, there are five. There's lust, or greed. There's hatred, or aversion. There's sloth and torpor. That's sleepiness and dullness. There's anxiety and remorse - that's restlessness. And doubt. Now the doubt that you have is, whether I should eat this kind of food or that kind of food tonight – that's not the kind of doubt. The kind of doubt that I'm talking about is whether I'm doing this right or not. "I don't feel like ... I just don't know." It's doubt in what you're doing with the meditation. Or doubt that you can experience one of these jhānas.

Now, the reason that these are called hindrances, is because they take your mind away from your object of meditation, and you're not meditating anymore, you're thinking about one of those hindrances. In the case of sloth and torpor, you're caught by the hindrance very much, and you get drowsy, and you're sleepy, and you can't pull out of it. The thing with the hindrances, and it gets, more subtle as you go into the higher stages, is that there's always identification with that hindrance. "I want something. I don't want something. I'm sleepy. I'm restless. I don't know." There are these, subtle, ego identifications with each one of the hindrances, and it stops you from meditating. So, when you remember the instructions, and that is: no matter what pulls your mind away, you let it go; you don't continue thinking about it. You let it be there by itself, calm your mind, gently redirect your attention back to your object of meditation. When you do that enough, you will be able to overcome the hindrance.

Now, the second jhāna.

H: Again, with the stilling of applied and sustained thought, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the second jhāna, which has self confidence and singleness of mind without applied and sustained thought, with [joy and happiness] born of a [composed mind].

BV: Now, with the second jhāna, you stay on your object and you don't have any wandering thoughts anymore. The joy that arises is stronger. It lasts for longer. When that fades away, the happiness that arises and tranquility that arises, is stronger, very comfortable. You are starting to gain some equanimity. You're starting to gain some balance of mind, when you get into the jhānas. As you go higher and higher, the equanimity gets stronger and stronger. When you are practicing this kind of meditation, let's say you have sensation arise and you let that sensation go and you come back to your breath again, you keep calming your mind. You are starting to see the true nature of that sensation. And the true nature of that sensation is, that it is changing, all the time. Doesn't stay the same. It changes because, you were sitting a little while ago and you didn't have it and now all of a sudden, you have it. And it's there for a little while, and then it disappeared. And it changes in, intensity sometimes; it changes in place, sometimes; it will move around sometimes; it's always changing. And, you notice that it is definitely unsatisfactory. It's painful, a form of dukkha. And as you let that sensation go, and be there by itself, then you, calm your mind and come back to the breath, you're seeing that that sensation is not yours. You don't have any control over it. You didn't ask the sensation to come up. If you start identifying with that sensation, the sensation gets bigger and SO intense. As you try to control that sensation with your mind, that sensation gets bigger and more intense.

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That's because you're taking it personally: "I am that." But as you allow that sensation to be there, and calm your mind and redirect your attention, you're not taking that sensation personally. And when you're not taking that sensation personally, you're seeing how it really, comes up by itself; it's there for a little while; it's unsatisfactory; it goes away by itself. So you're seeing its true nature. In each one of the jhānas, you will see this. You can have sensation arise, and if your mind grabs on to that sensation and says: "I don't like it." You're not in the jhāna anymore. Ok?

So, the happiness you get from a composed mind, a composed mind means a mind that's still. It's not wandering around very much. Now you still have observation thoughts. Observation thoughts are thoughts about what's happening right now, in your mind. "Ah, there's joy in my mind right now. Mind is very still and very calm. Mind feels very comfortable." Those kind of thoughts are observation thoughts. Any other kind of thought, about what happened yesterday or what's going to happen later – those are distraction thoughts. those are wandering thoughts. You don't have those when you get into the third jhāna. Or the second jhāna, excuse me.

Now, we get back to the sutta.

MN: 'He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing pleasure'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing pleasure.'

BV: This is talking about the third jhāna, and the third jhāna is described this way:

H: " Again with the fading away as well of joy, a bhikkhu abides in equanimity, and mindful and fully aware. Still feeling happiness 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: The joy fades away. Your mind becomes more and more still. There's not so much movement in your mind anymore, and you start to experience very comfortable feelings, at this point, you don't really have any pains arising. You start to feel more and more soft, in your body, more and more soft in your mind. It's very comfortable. And this comfortable feeling is the most comfortable you've ever felt in your life, but, you don't become attached to it, because you have equanimity. Now your awareness is very, very sharp. Your mindfulness is very clear. You're able to see what your mind is doing; if it starts to move away, you can let it go right then and calm, and stay on your object more easily.

Ok –

MN: He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the mental formation'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the mental formation.' He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in tranquillizing the mental formation'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out tranquillizing the mental formation.'

BV: This is talking about getting into the fourth jhāna. Now the fourth jhāna, is, a very, very, high state. Before you get into the jhānas, your mind has a lot of movement in it, a lot of wandering thoughts, a lot of getting caught in emotional states. Now, as you get into the jhāna, your mind has less movement in it., and you let go of the applied and sustained thought, and there's less movement still. Now it's starting to vibrate more instead of move. You still have the joy in your mind. You still have happiness arising in your body and in your mind. Now, as you start to go deeper into your practice, as you keep on calming your mind on the in-breath and calming your mind on the out-breath, you naturally will let go of the movement of joy – it's too coarse. And mind becomes more subtle. Now you only have happiness arising in your mind, and that is a fine, fine kind of feeling, where joy is a more coarse kind of feeling. Joy has excitement in it. Happiness doesn't. Now, as you continue on with the practice, and you get into the fourth jhāna, it's described this way:

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

BV: Even the feeling of happiness, is too coarse. So you go deeper than that. Now, all of these different jhānas that I've described so far, are what we call, part of the emotional body. When you get in to equanimity, into the fourth jhāna, now you're starting to work in the purely mental realms. You don't have feelings arise in the body so much. Your body is very soft. Your mind is exceptionally sharp. You see when your mind starts to move just a little bit, and you can let it go and calm right then. Your mindfulness is outstanding. Clarity, is,

something that you've never experienced before. Right. It's a state that arises naturally. And you keep on going. You get up into the fourth jhāna you are able to go through the other jhānas and get to the fourth jhāna very quickly. Now you have good, agility of mind. Your mind is very clear; your mind is very alert, and your mind is very agile.

OK –

MN: 20. "He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the mind'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the mind.'

BV: That again is talking about the fourth jhāna, experiencing the mind completely, seeing what your mind is doing in the moment. Now this practice is not only about sitting in meditation. This practice is about being able to watch what your mind is doing in the present moment, and open up and relax. That's why when you come and you do a retreat, I tell you to keep your attention, and keep relaxing your mind, while you're walking, while you're sitting, while you're taking a bath, while you're eating, while you're doing anything. Now the reason I tell you to do this in retreat, is so that you can be able to do this while you are doing your daily activities out in the real world. You start to notice more and more how your mind gets tight and tense, by over thinking. And then you relax it, let it go, calm your mind. So, this practice is about learning how to recognize what your mind is up to, all the time, And relax it; let go of the tension. And that directly leads to happiness arising.

MN: {...} 'I shall breathe in gladdening the mind'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out gladdening the mind.'

BV: Now, when you get, into the jhānas, each one of the jhānas, you're able to experience joy. Now I know, I just got through talking about the first two jhānas, experiencing, this kind of joy that's very happy, and it's uplifting. The other kind of joy that arises is more subtle. And it's, how can you describe it? It's called all pervading joy. And it's like, filling a cup, and keep filling it even though it's over-running. It just kind of bubbles out everywhere. But it's not this

excited kind of joy. This is more subtle kind of joy. And it's very nice and it's very pleasurable. But it doesn't have that excitement in it. Now, as you, continue on with your practice, the gross movements of your mind start to become finer, and finer, and finer, until it's vibration. So your mind isn't moving around very much at all; it's just sitting and vibrating, and that's what it's talking about, stilling the mind by letting go on the in-breath, letting go on the out-breath, and that causes your mind to become more and more still. Less movement in the mind.

MN:

He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in liberating the mind'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out liberating the mind.'

BV: Liberating the mind here means: letting go of all the hindrances; letting go of the lower jhānas; not being attached, to anything. Not liking, not disliking; your mind is in a state of equanimity.

Ok.

MN: 21. "He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in contemplating impermanence'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out contemplating impermanence.'

BV: Now, contemplating impermanence here means getting into what we call the immaterial plane. Now, when you were in the lower jhānas, the first, second, third, third jhāna, those are the emotional jhānas. The fourth jhāna has four sub-sections, and this is what we call the immaterial realm. Now what I generally do, so that it keeps things clearer in your mind, I say it's the fifth jhāna, sixth jhāna, seventh jhāna, eighth jhāna. But in reality, these are all part of the fourth jhāna, and there is no fifth jhāna, sixth jhāna ... but it just helps keep it clear. Now, with the fifth jhāna, it's described this way:

H: "Again, with the complete surmounting of perceptions of form, by the disappearance of all sense resistance, and by the non-attraction to the perception of variety, aware that 'space is infinite', a bhikkhu

enters upon and abides in the base of infinite space.”

BV: Now, what happens is, as you're in the fourth jhāna, and you keep on calming your mind, and you keep on relaxing your mind more and more, and you will get to a place where your mind becomes very subtle, and then you start feeling your mind open up. And you start feeling, you get bigger, and bigger, and bigger. And it's continually getting expanding. Now this is part of, seeing impermanence, because you're seeing how this change is always happening, you're not attached to it at all. But you're seeing how it is, boring. Now you keep coming back to the breath; you keep relaxing your mind more; you keep opening your mind more, and that feeling starts to fade away, and you start to notice that the breath is more subtle, and you can start to see, different, kinds of consciousnesses arising. One of the ways you can see the consciousnesses, now this doesn't happen with everyone, but one of the ways you can see the consciousnesses arising, is you start seeing the breath as broken movements. That's one way. You start seeing consciousness arise, you still have feelings that can arise in the body, and you see feelings arise and pass away. You see consciousness just continually coming up and going away, coming up and going away, coming up and going away. Now,

H: “Again, by the complete surmounting of the base of infinite space, aware that `consciousness is infinite.’

BV: Always coming up, going away, always changing, but it's always there.

H: a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of infinite consciousness.”

BV: Thus, you're seeing impermanence very much now. You're seeing how things continually are changing.

Ok –

MN: He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in contemplating fading away'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out contemplating fading away.'

BV: Now this is talking about the seventh jhāna. This is described as:

H: "Again, by completely surmounting the base of infinite consciousness, aware that 'there is nothing' a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of nothingness.

BV: Now at this state, your mind has become very subtle, and you are letting go, more and more of, concepts, in your mind, of how things are. By seeing how mind becomes infinite, and space becomes infinite, you let go of a limited idea of mind. By seeing consciousness continually arising and passing away, you let go of an idea that consciousness is a permanent thing. By letting go, of consciousness, and seeing that there is nothing, you are really letting go of a lot of different kinds of concept, of, how you perceive, everything with your mind. Because now you're seeing that there's mind, recognizing, nothing. But, this state is very interesting. It's very subtle. You still have the factors of enlightenment arising; you still have the five aggregates arising. You can still have things to see, but it's not mind looking outside of itself any more, because there's nothing there to see. Now, it's only seeing these different things arising in your own mind.

MN: He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in contemplating cessation'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out contemplating cessation.'

BV: Now this is called the eighth jhāna.

H: "Again, by completely surmounting the base of nothingness, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

BV: Now, your mind before, got very big. Now your mind starts to get small, and smaller, and smaller, and smaller, and it gets so fine, that it's difficult to tell whether it's there or not.

S:~

BV: Not like floating.

S: ~

BV: This is all different perceptions of mind. It's not blank. Your mindfulness is still there. You have energy. You have joy. You have investigation. You have stillness. You have tranquility. You have equanimity. But it gets very fine, very subtle. That's why this is called cessation, because you can't tell, sometimes, whether there's a mind there or not, or whether there's a perception of anything or not.

Now –

MN: He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in contemplating relinquishment'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out contemplating relinquishment.'

BV: Now, I was talking about vibration before. Now your mind is vibrating at such a high speed, that you can't tell whether it's moving or not, or whether it's vibrating or not, and eventually, it gets to a place where it turns off, and this is called, the cessation, of perception and feeling. You don't have any perception; you don't have any feeling. It's just like somebody turned off the light. When you're in this state, you don't know you're in this state. There's no knowing – there's no perception at all. Now this in Pāli, is called nirodha-samāpatti. Nirodha-samāpatti - cessation of perception and feeling. Now, this is not the state of nibbana, yet. Let me define the word "nibbana", because there's some mis-understanding, sometimes. The word "nibbana" means putting out the fire. Ok? That's literally what it means, putting out the fire. The fire of craving. Now, there's two different kinds of nibbana. One is a mundane kind of nibbana – it's very worldly. Now, every time you have an emotional state, and you finally let that go, that is a state of nibbana. But it's mundane. The super mundane nibbana, that is other-worldly. That's the one that we're working for. Ok? Now the way you attain the super-mundane nibbana, is by having, this nirodha-samāpatti,

occur. And then, when you come out of nirodha-samāpatti, what do you see? You see Dependent Origination, forwards and backwards. Dependent Origination has twelve links, and you see it very quickly, and you see, this is the cause of that, that is the cause of this, and you see the cause and effect relationships, but it's fast. Bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing. While it's going up, you're seeing the second noble truth. While it's coming down, you're seeing the third noble truth. This is how you experience the super-mundane nibbana. When you get down to the letting go of ignorance, there is a change, that happens. There is a letting go, that happens in your mind, and this is how you get to become a saint. This is how you become a sotāpanna. Quite nice, actually. And there's all kind of things that happen after that, but I'm not going to tell you about it. But it is a very, very, wonderful thing to happen. Very good.

MN: 22. "Bhikkhus, that is how mindfulness of breathing is developed and cultivated, so that it is of great fruit and great benefit.

BV: Now, if, you see Dependent Origination, the more clearly you see it, that depends what state you get to. If you see it, very, very quickly, that means that you're a sotāpanna. If you see it, - more clearly, and not quite so quickly, that means that you get to the state of sakadāgāmi, that's the second state. Then, if you see it, even more clearly for a longer period of time, that means you become an, anāgāmi, that's the third stage of sainthood. If you see it very, very clearly, and you can contemplate it for a period of time, that, means that you get to become, an arahat.

MN:

(FULFILMENT OF THE FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF MINDFULNESS)

23. "And how, bhikkhus, does mindfulness of breathing, developed and cultivated, fulfill the four foundations of mindfulness?

24. "Bhikkhus, on whatever occasion a bhikkhu, breathing in long, understands: 'I breathe in long,' or breathing out long, understands: 'I breathe out long';

BV: Now this is kind of an interesting, statement, 'on whatever occasion'. This means during your daily life, too. When you notice that your mind is very tight, very tense, come back to the breath, calm your mind on the out-breath, and on the in-breath. Let go of the tension in your head. When you see that you're over-thinking, you're thinking, thinking, thinking, thinking, thinking all the time. As soon as you can recognize that, then, you want to let go of the thinking mind, and let go of that tightness in the head. It's very, very easy to see that tightness. Open up and calm your mind, and just one or two breaths, relax. Then you can go back to thinking after a while. But you'll notice that your mind, becomes more alert, when you let go of that tension. When you let go of the constant thinking. Now the way you get into your intuitive mind, is not by thinking. It's by having a quiet mind. Then you will intuitively know the right thing to do at the right time. Your intuitive mind is a very quiet voice, in your head. If you're thinking a lot, you'll miss it. But if you calm your mind more and more, your mind becomes more at ease, now this is during your daily activities, while you're walking from here to there, on whatever occasion, feel your mind open up and relax. Let go of the thinking so much. The thinking is only habitual. You feel like you have to be thinking, or you're not doing something. But you miss a lot, by thinking too much. So try, during your daily activities, to have, a mind that recognizes this tension, and feel it open up and calm.

Ok –

MN: breathing in short, understands: 'I breathe in short,' or breathing out short, understands: 'I breathe out short';

BV: This just means – you know when you're breathing. You can do this while you're walking; you can do this while you're standing; you can do this while you're sitting; it doesn't matter. The way the walking meditation is taught, by most people, is that you put your attention on your feet, and pay attention to your feet. But that's not what the instructions are here. The instructions here are: On whatever occasion – you know when you're breathing in; you know when you're breathing out, so you calm your mind then. Keep on opening up and relaxing your mind. Let go of thoughts when they

come in. You're not trying to suppress thoughts; you're not trying to force thoughts not to arise, but as soon as you recognize you're thinking, just let it go. Calm your mind. You start to feel more of a sense of

1:08:02 Break: end of tape one - start of tape two -----

... you let go of anxieties and restlessness. You let go of worries and doubts. Your mind becomes much more alert, and much more in the present moment.

Ok –

MN: a bhikkhu trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body'; trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body';

BV: This means that you know when you are breathing in, from the start to the finish, and you know when you are breathing out, from the start to the finish, that's all.

MN: trains thus: 'I shall breathe in tranquillizing the bodily formation'; {...}

BV: Here we go again. The tranquilizing of the bodily formation is letting go of the tension, in the head. Feeling your mind open up and become calm. Now, with every time you open up and become calm, your mind becomes more alert, and with that, there's less dukkha arising. So very important. On the in-breath, to tranquilize, the bodily formation. That means tranquilize any tension you have in your body too. But the subtle tension is in the head, and this is what most people miss. They don't recognize when they have tension in their head. So now as you become more used to doing this meditation, you will start to recognize when your mind gets tight, and as soon as you recognize that, then you can let it go. Feel your mind open up and relax. But it takes some effort at first.

Ok –

MN: on that occasion a bhikkhu abides contemplating the body as a body, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief for the world.

BV: Covetousness is lust, and grief is aversion. So what you're really putting away, is: "I like this, I don't like that." Ok? Now when you are very much alert, you'll see the tension start to arise when you like something, and you want it, and you feel your mind go out and grab it. You'll see that that causes tension, and, you'll start to let it go. As you let go of the things that you really want, now this is the thinking about what you want, a lot, let's say you want to buy a new car. How much do you think about buying a new car, before you actually buy it? That desire comes up many, many times. That desire coming up, pulls your mind out of the present moment – now you're in a daydream land, and you're in your imagination. This is the time when accidents happen. Or, if you have dislike, dislike of a situation, the situation goes away, but your mind still dislikes it, and it goes over, and over, and over. Now, I was just talking to a lady today that told me of a dissatisfaction she had fifteen years ago, and she was still angry about it. Her mind became just like a rock, when she was talking. And I started teasing her about it; I said: "Look at how you feel right now." And she got a very terrible look on her face; I said: "Look at what your mind is doing right now. Feel how tight your mind is right now. The cause of that happened fifteen years ago, but you're still holding on to that. Open up and relax. It's not important. What happened in the past, happened in the past. Your worrying about it, your disliking it, only causes you to have more pain." So as you start to recognize that tight mind, you start to recognize some of your old ways of thinking, and old ways of acting, and, when I let go of that tight mind, then you let go of the memory, and you just let that feeling be there by itself, and calm your mind, and come back to the breath, and relax. Your mind will go back to that old memory again. Then, you let it go again, until, it fades away by itself. This is not suppressing, anything. This is, allowing, thoughts and feelings to be there, but not getting involved in them, not getting wrapped up in them, because when you're wrapped up in thoughts of either liking this, or disliking that, you don't even know where you are anymore.

You don't even know you have a body; you don't know where your body is; you don't know that you're driving a car, or walking across a street, because you're so much involved in the thinking about. So this meditation is learning how to let go of the thinking mind, by recognizing how much tension arises in your head, because of the thinking, and you open up and relax. As you do it more and more, your mind naturally, becomes, calm, and with that calmness, there's clarity of mind. There is a letting go of emotional states. Now, after I talked to this lady for a little while, I said: "Ok, now you go meditate." And when she came back from the meditation, she was all smiles, and the reason that she was all smiles, was because she finally did let go of the dissatisfaction that she's been having come up over and over again for a long time. Now, for the rest of the day, she was smiling, and she was happy, because she let go of an attachment, and that's what the meditation is all about. It's being able to recognize that mind that gets tight and attached, and open it up and allow that feeling to be there by itself. Relax. Come back to the breath a few times.

MN: I say that this is a certain body among the bodies, namely, in-breathing and out-breathing. That is why on that occasion a bhikkhu abides contemplating the body as a body, ardent, fully aware, and mindful,

BV: Now, when you let go of the tension in your head, your mind is fully aware, and clear, Your attention is bright. You know where you are; you know what you are doing. You're not pulled away, by that thinking mind.

MN: having put away covetousness and grief for the world.

25. "Bhikkhus, on whatever occasion a bhikkhu trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing [joy]'; trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing [joy]';

BV: Now as you let go of the like and dislike of things when they come up, and your mind becomes more at ease, you will start to experience what we call, a jhāna. Now the first jhāna, it takes some

effort, to stay on your object of meditation. And you can see your mind move and you let go of the movement, bring your mind back to your object of meditation. That's called, applied thought, and sustained thought. Staying with your object of meditation, is sustained thought. Your mind that lets go of the distraction and, comes back to your object, that's applied thought. Learning how to let go of discursive thinking, wandering mind. Now, when you do this, your mind will start to become more and more calm, and it will stay on the object of meditation. By your mind staying on the object of meditation, you experience joy. It's a very pleasant feeling; it's an uplifting feeling; you feel light and you feel happy, smiling. After the joy fades away... Now, if you get involved in the joy, that's the fastest way to make the joy go away. When you start thinking about the joy, and how you like it and you really... this is a great feeling, and I want it to stay forever, and that's the fastest way to make it go. So, you allow, the feeling of joy to be there, just like you allow the feeling of pain, or dissatisfaction. You open up your mind and relax; come back to your object of meditation. That is how to make the joy last for a longer period of time. But eventually the joy will fade away. Now, on the other side of the joy, there is, very strong tranquility. Now the joy is a feeling that has some excitement in it, but the tranquility is feeling very calm. And then you start to feel, very much at ease. So, the joy arises, then there's tranquility, and then there's, comfortable feeling. The comfortable feeling is what we call happiness, and, you have a mind that's very unified; you have a mind that's very composed, and still. These are all of the, different aspects, of the first jhāna. Now, the second jhāna, is, a little bit more subtle. It doesn't take, very much, effort at all, to stay on your object of meditation. Where you were in the first jhāna, it took some effort. The second jhāna, is, much, much, easier. The joy that arises, is a little bit stronger. It lasts for a little bit longer; it's more pleasurable. After that fades away, the tranquility, lasts for longer, more peaceful, more calm. And the comfort, lasts for longer. Now in the description of the second jhāna, they describe this as having self confidence. You have self confidence once you experience the second jhāna. You have, no doubts arising that this is nice. It's good. When you get to the second jhāna, you've let go of a lot of emotional states. Now, by your letting go of emotional states, that means that you're able to

see things more clearly; your daily activities, you're able to recognize easier, how your mind gets tight and tense, and you let it go. In other words, you have more confidence, in your daily activities, in dealing with whoever or whatever you have to deal with. Where, before you started meditating, you might have fear coming up, when you meet somebody else, and you have trouble talking with them, by the time you get to the second jhāna, you feel more at ease. You feel, more, comfortable, more confident, in what you're doing in the present moment. So this meditation is not just about sitting in meditation. This meditation is very much about, living. And, you can experience joy, more and more often, while you're out there. It will come up, much more, many more times. Ok, the second jhāna, has a lot more composure of mind; in other words, your mind will naturally stay on your object of meditation for a longer period of time.

Now –

MN: trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing pleasure'; trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing pleasure';

BV: This is talking about getting in to the third jhāna. The third jhāna, has, no more joy arising in it. The third jhāna has, very, very strong comfortableness, and equanimity. Your mind is in a sense of balance. You have very strong mindfulness. You see when your mind just starts to move a little bit, and you can let go of the tension and calm your mind and come back. And you have full awareness. Now, full awareness means, when you're practicing the meditation, you'll hear sound. If someone comes up and they touch you, you'll know it. When you're practicing, other than, this kind of meditation, when you're practicing concentration meditation instead of tranquility meditation, when you get to the third jhāna, you don't really have much feeling in your body any more. I could come up to you with a stick and hit you, and you wouldn't notice. I could move your hands in all different kinds of postures, and you wouldn't notice. So, when you're practicing concentration, and you get into the third jhāna, you don't have full awareness. But when you practice tranquility, you do have full awareness. You know what is happening around you, but it doesn't make your mind shake very much. Your mindfulness is very

strong. Your attention, will go to that, but it doesn't shake. You calm your mind, come back to your object, very easily.

MN: trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the mental formation'; trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the mental formation'; trains thus: 'I shall breathe in tranquillizing the mental formation'; trains thus: 'I shall breathe out tranquillizing the mental formation'—

BV: Now this is talking about getting into the fourth jhāna. Where the feeling of comfortableness and happiness, is even too coarse. Now you let go completely, this is called: "going beyond pleasure and pain". You have neither pleasure nor pain. It doesn't actually mean that you don't experience pleasure or pain, it means that your mindfulness is so incredibly good, and your mind is in such a state of equanimity, that it doesn't make your mind move, at all. So you can have a pain arise in your knee, but your mind goes: "Uh, never mind." It doesn't even go to that sensation, it just stays on the breath. You know that there's that sensation there, but it doesn't bother you, because your mind is in such a strong state, of equanimity, balance. Now this is where in some of the suttas, they describe this state as having a mind that is very manageable. A mind that is wieldy. A mind that is very composed, and very still. This is what the fourth jhāna is all about. It's very strong mindfulness. Mindfulness means attention. You can see your mind start to wobble, and go away. And as soon as you see your mind start to wobble, you can relax it right then, and come back to the breath very easily. But, you keep on opening up your mind, letting go of tension in your head. It gets more subtle at this point. You keep doing it anyway – you keep on relaxing.

MN: on that occasion a bhikkhu abides contemplating feelings as feelings, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief for the world. I say that this is a certain feeling among the feelings, namely, giving close attention to in-breathing and out-breathing." That is why on that occasion a bhikkhu abides contemplating feelings as feelings, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief for the world.

26. "Bhikkhus, on whatever occasion a bhikkhu trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the mind'; trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the mind'; trains thus: 'I shall breathe in gladdening the mind'; trains thus: 'I shall breathe out gladdening the mind';

BV: Now, when you keep on calming your mind and opening your mind more and more, you start to recognize, how you hold on to mental concepts about things. You hold on to a mental concept about being solid. You hold on to a mental concept about things not moving at all, not changing at all. You also begin to experience, in a stronger way, the enlighten.....

Tape Break at 1:31:44 -----

.....(v)ery strong interest in your meditation. And by your taking very strong interest in your meditation, you're seeing how everything works. Now that is what leads to, the investigation of your experience. And that's the second factor.

Talk Time 1:32:11

MN: 31. "Abiding thus mindful, he investigates and examines that state with wisdom and embarks upon a full inquiry into it. On whatever occasion, abiding thus mindful, a bhikkhu investigates and examines that state with wisdom {...}

BV: Now examining something with wisdom means, seeing the three characteristics of all existence. That means seeing everything, as changing. It's impermanent. Nothing stays the same. It's always moving. It's always changing. And because it's changing, there's a kind of, dissatisfaction with that. You can be sitting in meditation, and all of a sudden, a pain arises. What happens with that? Dissatisfaction arises because of there's pain. Dislike arises in your mind because of that pain. But, as you open up and allow it, it doesn't mater so much anymore. Now this opening up and allowing, is what we call "non-self". That's "anatta". Not identifying with that pain. Seeing that dissatisfaction. Opening up the mind, relaxing.

Allowing that pain to be there by itself, without thinking about it, without getting involved with it. And, when you see things as impermanent, you see things as unsatisfactory, and you see them as non-self, you are seeing with wisdom, what your experience is, and that means that you are investigating it, with a mind that's clear.

MN: on that occasion the investigation-of-states enlightenment factor is aroused in him, and he develops it, and by development it comes to fulfillment in him.

32. "In one who investigates and examines that state with wisdom and embarks upon a full inquiry into it, tireless energy is aroused. On whatever occasion tireless energy is aroused in a bhikkhu who investigates and examines that state with wisdom and embarks upon a full inquiry into it—on that occasion the energy enlightenment factor is aroused in him, and he develops it, and by development it comes to fulfillment in him.

BV: I'll talk about this in just a minute, we have one more.

MN: 33. "In one who has aroused energy, unworldly [joy] arises.

BV: The unworldly joy that arises is the joy that you get only by the practice of meditation. You remember, I told you before, there's five different kinds of joy. There's goose flesh or goose bumps; it lasts for a moment, and goes away. There's like a flash of lightning: it's very intense; it lasts for a little while; it goes away. There's like standing in the ocean and having waves of joy coming over you, a wave after wave. Ok. These three kinds of joy are experienced by anyone at any time; these are called worldly. But the unworldly joy is the joy that you experience only through meditation. And that means that uplifting joy, and it lasts for a long period of time. Or that, all pervading joy, the more subtle joy. Now, when you have, dullness of mind, when your mind just, dulls out, you want to be able to pick up your effort and pick up your energy, and the way you do that is by focusing on one of these, first, enlightenment factors. Investigation, you need to investigate what the feeling of dullness is. Energy, you need to pick up your energy. And joy. These three enlightenment

factors will directly overcome dullness of mind. So you need to be very familiar with these different enlightenment factors.

Ok-

MN: On whatever occasion unworldly [joy] arises in a bhikkhu who has aroused energy— on that occasion the [joy] enlightenment factor is aroused in him, and he develops it, and by development it comes to fulfillment in him.

BV: Now people that get into the, higher jhānas, will continually come and explain that they feel very, very, good. And that is the enlightenment factor of joy. They feel peaceful; they feel calm, but they also feel very nice.

MN: 34. "In one who [has joy], the body and the mind become tranquil. On whatever occasion the body and the mind become tranquil in a bhikkhu [has joy]—on that occasion the tranquility enlightenment factor is aroused in him, and he develops it, and by development it comes to fulfillment in him.

BV: So you have, right after the joy, you start to feel tranquil, very calm, very much at ease, serene, very nice. So you're very much, alert, to that kind of feeling.

MN: 35. "In one whose body is tranquil and who feels pleasure, the mind becomes [still]. On whatever occasion the mind becomes [still] in a bhikkhu whose body is tranquil and who feels pleasure—on that occasion the [stillness] enlightenment factor is aroused in him, {and he develops it, and by development it comes to fulfillment in him.}

BV: When you get in to the higher jhānas, your mind becomes very, very much at ease, and stays on your object of meditation for long periods of time. But the feeling of joy, the feeling of comfortableness will last for long time. The stillness, you will, your mindfulness will be sharper during your daily activities, and you will naturally start to make your mind more calm and more at ease and have less tension in tension in it, but it still will be somewhat active.

MN: 36. "He closely looks on with equanimity at the mind thus [stilled and composed]. On whatever occasion a bhikkhu closely looks on with equanimity at the mind thus [stilled]—on that occasion the equanimity enlightenment factor is aroused in him, and he develops it, and by development it comes to fulfillment in him.

BV: So, there is, this state of balance. You have a mind and body that's very tranquil and very calm, but also this state of balance. Now, when you have tranquility, you have stillness and you have equanimity. You don't have a mind that has any restlessness in it. But when your mind has restlessness in it, the way you overcome the restlessness, and when you get in to the higher jhānas, it's not this gross feeling, it gets more subtle, but it has excitement in it. And the way that you overcome that, is by focusing more on stillness, on tranquility, with, equanimity. There can be a very subtle dislike of, the restlessness. And that's where the equanimity, comes in. You let go of that very easily.

Now you go through all of these different enlightenment factors with, contemplating feelings, and, contemplating mind, and, contemplating mind objects.

{skips to §40}

MN: 40. "Bhikkhus, that is how the four foundations of mindfulness, developed and cultivated, fulfil the seven enlightenment factors.

(FULFILMENT OF TRUE KNOWLEDGE AND DELIVERANCE)

41. "And how, bhikkhus, do the seven enlightenment factors, developed and cultivated, fulfill true knowledge and deliverance?

42. "Here, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu develops the mindfulness enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

BV: This is talking about the different, higher jhānas, again.

MN: He develops the investigation-of-states enlightenment factor...the energy enlightenment factor...the [joy] enlightenment factor...the tranquility enlightenment factor...the [stillness] enlightenment factor...the equanimity enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

BV: That, the relinquishment, remember again, is going to niroda-samāpatti, turning off of consciousness, then seeing Dependent Origination. You'll hear me say that a lot of times. The way that you see Dependent Origination – you can sit here and memorize all twelve links. But that is only intellectual knowledge. When it arises, it's not like it's from memory. It's different. It's more realization: "This is how it works: bing, bing, bing, bing" like that.

MN: 43. "Bhikkhus, that is how the seven enlightenment factors, developed and cultivated, fulfil true knowledge and deliverance. "That is what the Blessed One said. The bhikkhus were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

BV: Now, let's go back and take a look at the fulfillment of the four foundations of mindfulness, only this time we're going to go back to the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta.

He says:

MN # 10: (CONCLUSION)

46. "Bhikkhus, if anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in such a way for seven years, 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.

BV: Now, what this is actually talking about is, if you practice the Ānāpānasati, and you have the experience of nibbana, you will, in this lifetime, become either an arahat or an anāgāmi. That's what it means by: "you can expect one of two fruits, either final knowledge, here and now, or, if a trace of clinging is left, you become a non-

returner.

MN: "Let alone seven years, bhikkhus. If anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in such a way for six years...for five years...for four years...for three years...for two years.. .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, bhikkhus. If anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in such a way for seven months...for six months...for five months...for four months.. .for three months...for two months...for one month...for 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, bhikkhus. If anyone should develop these four foundations of 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 left, non-return.

47. "So it was with reference to this that it was said: 'Bhikkhus, this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the attainment of the true way, for the realisation of Nibbāna—namely, the four foundations of mindfulness.'"

BV: So when someone fulfils the four foundations of mindfulness through the practice of ānāpānasati, one of two fruits can be expected, by that person: either final liberation, here and now, or, if there is a trace of clinging left, non-return. This is a pretty big claim. This is something that is not made up by this bhikkhu, this is just reading straight from the sutta, himself. As we practice ānāpānasati, through, the practice of opening up and tranquilizing the mind, as we continually relax and open up and let go, mind will eventually become very still. All of these different jhānas will start to occur. If you experience the first jhāna, and you continue on with your practice, you will eventually, in this lifetime be able to experience,

and realize Dependent Origination, remembering that you can not attain nibbana, not the super-mundane nibbana, without the experience of, Dependent Origination. Seeing how all of the different factors arise, they're there for a little while, and they disappear. Anyone that claims that they have the experience of nibbana, without talking about Dependent Origination, and seeing Dependent Origination, it means that they have not experienced, the super-mundane nibbana, yet. Seeing Dependent Origination, is, the doctrine, that the Buddha continually talked about in all of his forty five years of practice, He talked about, the realization of, the cause of suffering, the second noble truth, and the cessation of suffering, the third noble truth. And this is exactly what seeing Dependent Origination actually is. It is, without any question, the most important part, that must be realized by everyone, if they are to attain nibbana. There is no way to attain the super-mundane nibbana, without, the seeing of, Dependent Origination. Now the venerable Sāriputta, when he first became enlightened, when he became a sotāpanna, it was because, he heard, one statement, about Dependent Origination. He heard: "Of things that proceed from a cause, their cause the Tathāgata has told." Just hearing that there is cause and effect relationship, was enough for him to become a sotāpanna. When he went and told venerable Moggallāna, he used the whole statement that was given by Assaji: "Of things that proceed from a cause," – this is the second noble truth – "their cause the Tathāgata has told. And also their cessation. Thus teaches the great ascetic." Talking about their cessation is the third noble truth, and that is seeing Dependent Origination, and its cessation. This is taken from the suttas. It doesn't have anything to do with the commentaries.

May everyone be well and happy, and attain final liberation.

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