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BV: The discourse tonight is going to be number one-three-eight in The Middle Length Sayings. It's the Uddesavibhanga Sutta, The Exposition of a Summary.

MN:

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

2. "Monks, I shall teach you a summary and an exposition. Listen and attend closely to what I shall say."—"Yes, venerable sir," the monks replied.

BV: Now this admonition to listen and attend closely is something that the Buddha said often to the monks, because he didn't want them thinking about other things. He didn't want their minds wandering. He wanted them to pay close attention. And there's a very good reason for this. The more closely you pay attention to the Buddha's words, it can clear up your thinking, and you can become enlightened just by listening to what the Buddha said, and many people did.

MN: The Blessed One said this:

3. "Monks, a monk should examine things in such a way that while he is examining them, his consciousness is not distracted and scattered externally nor stuck internally, and by not clinging he does not become agitated. {...} then for him there is no origination of suffering—of birth, ageing, and death in the future."

4. That is what the Blessed One said. Having said this, the Sublime One rose from his seat and went into his dwelling.

5. Then, soon after the Blessed One had gone, the monks considered: "Now, friends, the Blessed One has risen from his seat and gone into his dwelling after giving a summary in brief without expounding the detailed meaning. Now who will expound this in detail?" Then they considered: "The venerable Mahā Kaccāna is praised by the Teacher and esteemed by his wise companions in the holy life. He is capable of expounding the detailed meaning. Suppose we went to him and asked him the meaning of this."

6. Then the monks went to the venerable Mahā Kaccāna and exchanged greetings with him. When this courteous and amiable talk was finished, they sat down to one side and they told him what had taken place, adding: "Let the venerable Mahā Kaccāna expound it to us."

7. The venerable Mahā Kaccāna replied: "Friends, it is as though a man needing heartwood, seeking heartwood, wandering in search of heartwood, thought that heartwood should be sought for among the branches and leaves of a great tree standing possessed of heartwood, after he had passed over the root and the trunk. And so it is with you, venerable sirs, that you think that I should be asked about the meaning of this, after you passed the Blessed One by when you were face to face with the Teacher. For knowing, the Blessed One knows; seeing, he sees; he is vision, he is knowledge, he is the Dhamma, he is the holy one; he is the sayer, the proclaimer, the elucidator of meaning, the giver of the Deathless, the lord of the Dhamma, the Tathāgata. That was the time when you should have asked the Blessed One the meaning. As he told you, so you should have remembered it."

8. "Surely, friend Kaccāna, knowing, the Blessed One knows; seeing, he sees; he is vision...the Tathāgata. That was the time when we should have asked the Blessed One the meaning. As he told us, so we should have remembered it. Yet the venerable Mahā Kaccāna is praised by the Teacher and esteemed by his wise companions in the

holy life. The venerable Mahā Kaccāna is capable of expounding the detailed meaning of this summary given in brief by the Blessed One without expounding the detailed meaning. Let the venerable Mahā Kaccāna expound it without finding it troublesome.”

TT: 5:21

BV: So the monks blew it, basically. They had the Buddha in front of them, he gave them a discourse, and they didn't ask him: "What the heck are you talking about? What does this mean?" So they got thoroughly chastised by this other monk.

MN:

9. "Then listen, friends, and attend closely to what I shall say."

"Yes, friend," the monks replied. The venerable Mahā Kaccāna said this:

10. "How, friends, is consciousness called 'distracted and scattered externally'? Here, when a monk has seen a form with the eye, if his consciousness follows after the sign of form, is tied and shackled by gratification in {...}

BV: When your eye hits color and form, then perception arises and gives it a...and your mind begins to cling to that, and starts to think about that object that came up in front of the eye. Your mind tightens down around it, and then you go into your habitual habit of thinking. So, if you see a person that's very beautiful, what happens in your mind? Your mind starts thinking about how beautiful that person is and how you're that person and all of the story about that. Now you're taken further and further away from what's happening in the present moment. Now this is clinging. And this is what they described as being tied and shackled by gratification. "I really like to see somebody that's beautiful." And you're gratified when you see that, and you really appreciate it, and your mind grabs onto it, and holds it real tight. And this gratification is a form of lust; it's a form of greed in the mind. And the more you think how much you like that person that you saw, the more you want to be by that person. You

want to be close to that person; you want to become friendly with them at least. And your mind will start to ruminate on that. And that person can walk away, not even be around you any more, but what do you think about? How beautiful that person was, how gracefully they walked, the nice clothes that they had on, how you'd really like to know that person, and your mind, it becomes tighter and more and more tense, and it causes suffering in your mind. Why? Because, "I would like to know that person, but they're gone. I can't." We have a desire, and we would like things to be in a particular way, but they don't happen that way, and that's a form of suffering. There's some great dissatisfaction when that occurs, but every time that thought of that person comes up, there's that greedy mind that says: "Yeah, they're really beautiful. I really would like to get to know that person." And now you're caught in your imagination, and you're caught in a mind that's further and further away from what you're doing while you're doing it.

Now if you happen to be driving the car and the thought of that person comes up, are you driving the car any more? Not hardly. And this is when accidents occur, because you're thinking about something else instead of what you're doing in the present moment. You're not paying attention closely enough. You put your body on automatic so you can think, but you can't respond to crazy things that happen when you're driving the car, and then you get into an accident. Why did that whole thing occur? Because of the fetter, the hindrance of being caught by this desire, this want, this lust. So this is what the Buddha was talking about when he said being distracted and scattered externally. Your mind is very easily distracted and becomes very scattered. All of these thoughts just kind of go away, and they have a life of their own.

TT: 10:32

MN:

"When he has heard a sound with the ear...smelt an odor with the nose...tasted a flavor with the tongue...touched a tangible with the body...cognized a mind-object with the mind, if his consciousness follows after the sign of the mind-object, is tied and shackled by

gratification in the sign of the mind-object, is fettered by the fetter of gratification in the sign of the mind-object, then his consciousness is called 'distracted and scattered externally.'

BV: So it doesn't matter which one of the sense doors causes that to arise. You hear a beautiful sound, you want to hear it again. You want to pay close attention to it. You really like it. And if you're doing that way listening to a radio, in the car, what happens?

Now yesterday I was talking about I had a friend that he got an idea in his mind that he wanted some cheese cake, and he got in the car and his tongue pulled him twenty miles until he got that gratification. And then when he finally had that touch his tongue, it didn't taste that good. That's suffering, isn't it?

Now the mind objects are thoughts. And we get real carried away with all of our thoughts. And the biggest problem with thoughts is we think that they're ours. What are you thinking right now? "This is my thought. This is who I am right now." The truth is thoughts arise because conditions are right for that thought to arise. What you do with your thoughts in the present moment dictates what happens in the future. If you indulge in your thinking and your planning and your desires for something in the future to happen in a particular way, that's suffering. That's unsatisfactoriness. So with the meditation, what are we doing? When a thought arises, you notice that your mind has got caught by the thought. That's fine. Now what are you going to do with that, as soon as you notice that your mind is thinking? You let go of the thought, and then you notice that every thought that arises, every internal verbalization causes tension or tightness to arise somewhere in your body, in your mind. So you have to let go of the thought and then relax. Now sometimes the tension can be in your shoulders, and be very gross, or your back, or your legs or whatever, in your stomach. A lot of people come to me and they talk about stress and how unpleasant and how stressful it is to live today.

A man offered to give me a massage, so I had to go take this massage and he had me fill out this questionnaire. And one of the

things he said was: "How much stress do you have in your life?" And I put zero. And he was shocked. "Nobody has zero stress in their life." Well I didn't have anything to worry about. And I see tension and tightness arise, and I start relaxing, and I start letting them go. So the more we can become aware of the trickster, thinking, and start to let go of all the nonsense thoughts. You know when you're walking from here to there, what do you think about? Oh, some of this and some of that. You know that you're even walking? Do you know that you even have a body at that time? So when you notice that your mind is taking off and just kind of oh humming around, let go of those thoughts. They're not important at all. And notice the tension and tightness, especially the tension and tightness in your head. You know that you got a brain in here and the brain is nothing but a big muscle, and that muscle gets tight every time there's a thought, every internal verbalization, every time a feeling arises, every time there's any kind of distraction that pulls your mind to it, causes tension and tightness. Relax. Let go of that tightness. Feel your mind expand and become calm. Now what? Wish somebody well. Wish somebody happy mind, sincerely. Doesn't matter whether it's a stranger or not. Everybody wants the same thing. Everybody on this planet wants exactly the same thing, and nobody gets enough of it, and it's love. So give it to them.

TT: 15:19

You're standing in line at the grocery store. What are you doing with your mind? "Got to get out of here. I don't want to be here. I've got other things to do." All of those thoughts cause stress. All of those thoughts cause tension. All of those thoughts take you out of the present moment and make the present moment unsatisfactory, always with the hope that the next moment's going to be better. But it's not because of our habitual habit. We habitually get caught into thinking thoughts and not being satisfied with what's happening right here, right now. The meditation teaches you how to have an open heart and be in the present moment a lot. And when you start to do that you become naturally happy. It's a real simple formula. I had one teacher and he used to talk about rubbish thoughts. Should let go of the rubbish thoughts. They're all nonsense anyway. Direct your

mind in the way you want to go. Direct your mind so that your heart is open, so that you can become love, not just be loving, but to become love. It takes a lot of practice to be able to do that. It's not impossible.

The more you practice with your daily activities, you're walking from here to there, notice that that's what you're doing. See the first part of a retreat is very difficult for most people because everybody walks around thinking about this and that, all these rubbish thoughts, and then they come to a retreat, and now they're trying to direct their mind to a loving-kindness, and they get up after a while because you can't sit all the time, and you need to do your walking meditation and it means staying with your loving-kindness. But the first part of a retreat, I get lots of complaints about how hard that is to do the walking meditation, because you're not used to doing that, and you already have this old habit, old habits die hard, of just thinking this and that and letting your mind run all over the place, and not paying attention to what you're doing. So what we have to do is notice that we're thinking about those other things and let them go. Now, the sitting meditation is your quiet time. It's time for yourself. All the rest of the time is your active meditation. There's no breaks. See the more times you notice that your mind is thinking about this and that, and you can let it go and relax and come back to your meditation, and that is wishing somebody happiness whether it's yourself or somebody else around you, with your daily activities it doesn't matter whether you stay with your spiritual friend or not, this is not for the retreat. The retreat you stay with the spiritual friend all the time. But for everybody else, you see a little child fall down, what does that child want more than any thing in the world? Does he want sympathy? No, that makes him cry more. He wants to be loved. So love him. You see somebody that harried in line at the post office or the grocery store. What do they want more than anything? They want to be loved. So send them some loving thoughts. But the trick is you have to feel the wish. It's not just a mental: "I wish you happiness." Feel.

When somebody is really agitated, the best thing that you can do for them is to get a feeling of peace and calm, and then radiate that

feeling of peace and calm to that person. That's when you start to see miracles occur. The more times you can notice that your mind is distracted and let go of the distraction and relax and come to loving thought, and feeling that loving thought, the sharper your mindfulness becomes, the sharper your awareness becomes, and the less distractions that will occur in your mind, and this leads directly to happiness. What is happiness? Smiling? Laughing? Complete and total acceptance of the present moment, not wishing it was different than it is. This is opening up your heart and being in the present moment. Every time one of the six sense doors arises, we have a tendency to get caught by it. We have the tendency to: "Oh, I really like that sound. I really like or don't like..." and each one of those, is craving. How does craving manifest? Craving manifests as tightness and tension in your body and in your mind. You want to let go of craving? Relax. Let go of the tightness and tension. Let go of the thing that's pulling your mind away. It's not that important.

TT: 20:53

MN:

11. "And how, friends, is consciousness called 'not distracted and scattered externally'? Here, when a monk has seen a form with the eye, if his consciousness does not follow after the sign of form, is not tied and shackled by gratification in the sign of form, is not fettered by the fetter of gratification in the sign of form, then his consciousness is called 'not distracted and scattered externally.'

BV: So what do you do? What is sound? What are these things I hear? It's the vibration that hits the ear drum that sends a message to the brain. It's only vibration. What's to like or dislike about a sound? It's only vibration hitting the ear.

Now when he was talking about instructions in meditation, I said I don't want you to move. I want you to sit very still. Sit like a Buddha image, and that's impossible. Nobody can sit still. Why? Because we have this gross form that we call a solid body. This is solid. But what's it made up of? Look at it more and more closely. It's made up of molecules and it's made up of atoms, and it's made up of protons

and neutrons and electrons and quarks and all of these different little things, and they're all moving. There's nothing solid about the material world. Nothing. And this thing that we call a body, we call it ours. "This is mine."

Do you know or realize how much it changes? All the time? The pancreas is replaced... It replaces most of its cells every twenty-four hours. The lining in the stomach is different every three days. Is that yours? Do you have any control over it? Kind of happens by itself. Your entire body in four years is different from the one that you have right now. Is that you? Is that yours? See we identify with all of these things because we have: a physical body, we have feelings; we have perception; we have thoughts; we have consciousness. I changed it from sankharas. Now, when something happens with a physical body you stub your toe. What happens right after that? Feeling arises. And then perception. Perception is the thing that puts the name to it. Ok, you see this color and form, and your mind says: "That's a microphone." That's perception that put the name to it. You see a cup of coffee. It's just color and form until your mind puts the name to it. Now right after you stub your toe this feeling arises and there's three kinds of feeling. There's a pleasant feeling. There's an unpleasant feeling. There's a neutral feeling. Stubbing your toe is which one of these? (laughs) I've broken enough toes to know that it's painful. It's unpleasant. What happens right after that? Thoughts. And we try to think the feeling, and we try to control the feeling with our thoughts.

Now I gave you an example of stubbing your toe, but it doesn't matter whether it's an emotional feeling or a physical feeling, it's still just a feeling, and we still try to control the feeling with the thoughts. Now in the instructions that I gave you, I said when a sensation arises, a feeling, what do you do with that? First, you recognize that your mind is starting to think about the feeling, and it doesn't like that feeling, and it wants that feeling to be different than it is, and it wants that feeling to go away, and you have all of these thoughts trying to control that feeling, and if you're not very aware, that feeling gets bigger and more intense, and really starts to hurt and that makes your mind tighten down around it because it's

unpleasant: "I don't like it." There's craving in there. Craving is the: "I like it. I don't like it." mind. So, your mind tightens around it, and then you have more thoughts trying to control it and it gets tighter and tighter until: "Ah, I got to go to the hospital. I got to do something with this. I got to go to the doctor." You're causing yourself a lot of stress. Now this is a physical thought. The pineal gland puts out endorphins. Endorphins are the pain killer in the body. It's about ten times stronger than morphine. Now when you have this tension and tightness in your mind, it tightens around that pineal gland and it stops the endorphins from coming out and being a pain killer. So the pain really does become a lot more intense.

TT: 26:07

Now as soon as you stubbed your toe, right after that what happens? You kicked something. There's shock, and then there's pain, and then if you're like most people a lot of cursing and wishing that it didn't happen, not liking that situation. If your mindfulness is sharp you'll notice that your mind is doing this, and you'll start to relax the tightness, relax the thoughts, and then you'll start sending love into the very thing that hurts. When you were hobbling around cursing, what are you sending into that toe? More and more hatred. More and more dislike. More and more dissatisfaction. Now as soon as this occurs, you have your choice. You can get caught by the dislike of the situation, the dislike of the shock and the pain and you can hate it. That's your choice. Or you can see this for what it truly is. There's sensation that's there and it's unpleasant, and the truth is, it's there. Remember I told you when I was giving you the instructions, any time you try to control the truth, any time you fight with the truth, any time you try to make the truth the way you want it to be, it causes the pain to get bigger and more intense.

So you start letting go of these thoughts, and then you notice that tight mental fist around that sensation and you relax. It's ok for that to be there. It has to be because that's the truth of the moment. Then you relax all of the tension and tightness and you let that sensation be there by itself, and then you start sending loving and kind thoughts into the thing that hurts. What happens? All of that

tension that you had, all of that stress you caused yourself, now it's starting to go away. Now those endorphins can come through the body and to the toe and before long, you'll notice that it doesn't even hurt any more. It was your choice what you did in the present moment. It's always your choice what you do in the present moment. Somebody can say something or do something that you don't like and you can get angry and curse them or, you can let it go. It's not that important. Look at how the anger makes your body feel. Look at how the anger closes your heart.

Now for the people in the retreat, we've been passing around little mirrors, say smile on them. These are very valuable clues, very valuable tools. You get on the telephone and you start talking to somebody, you need to have a mirror right there to see whether you're smiling or not. And if you're not, why? "Well I don't like this person. I don't want to talk to them." There's attachment. When you smile into things, when you have a sense of laughter and play, it changes your perspective, changes your view. So you stubbed your toe and you start laughing, the pain goes away incredibly fast, and I'm not saying that it's going to go away forever, but if you're like me, I have all of fragile toes and you have a tendency to break them. So I get out of bed the next day and I start walking around and: "Oh, my!" So what do I do then? More of the same. Start putting love into that. After two or three days, I don't have any more problems. I don't have any more pain. No more suffering. Why? Because I was present and I put love into the situation. I didn't put my anger. I didn't put my stress. I didn't put my satisfaction. I didn't put criticism. I put love into that. Now the more you can do that, the more you focus on loving feeling, the more you start changing your old habits of dissatisfaction, and criticism, and frustrations and all of these different things that have a tendency to pull your mind down and make your mind tense and tight. So the more you practice having a sense of fun, having a sense of play, having a smile, and laughter, the more you practice that the less suffering you will have. Promise. It's really necessary to cultivate joy in your life.

TT: 30:57

Now when I was in Burma, they had teachers that any time I'd be sitting in meditation where I had some joy arise, they'd come around and I'd say: "Hey, this is great stuff, good meditation", and the first thing they told me was: "Don't be attached!" I didn't want to be attached, so I pushed it away. Joy is one of the enlightenment factors. You have to have joy in order to have that perfectly balanced mind. When you have joy in your mind, it changes your perspective. It changes your view of what's happening in the present moment. It's like I come along, and you're having a rough day, and you come along with a flower, and it makes you smile and it makes you happy, and you look at that flower and you say: "Ah, this is really great. The color is nice and it smells so good." But I can come along a little while later and give you that same flower again when you're grumpy, and all you see are the thorns. What's different? When your mind is serious, it's heavy. Your awareness is very slow. When you have joy, your mind is very alert, and your mindfulness is very quick. You can see things extremely easy. So it changes your perspective from: "I'm unhappy. I don't like this. I want it to be different than it is" to "Oh, it only this unhappiness. No big deal." It changes it from: "This is who I am", and it makes it impersonal: "Oh. It's only this feeling. It's not even mine. I didn't ask it to come up. I didn't sit there and say: 'I haven't been grumpy for a long time. It's time for me to be grumpy.'" When you have joy in your mind, your perspective changes. So even though you're still going to have your up times and your down times, when you have those tough times, if you have joy in your mind, it's only part of a process, and it's not your process. It's not you at all. It's just part of what's happening right now, and it's very easy to see it and let it go

Tape break

MN:  
{...}

{12. ...} is the mind called 'stuck internally'? Here, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, a monk enters upon and abides in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by applied {...}

BV: Er, there's another translation. They say: "applied and sustained thought", but the other translation is: "thinking and examining", which is closer to the Pali words: "vitakka and vicāra".

MN:

with joy and pleasure born of seclusion. If his consciousness follows after the joy and pleasure born of seclusion, is tied and shackled by gratification in the joy and pleasure born of seclusion, then his mind is called 'stuck internally.'

TT: 34:18

BV: Now jhāna means meditation level. So the first jhāna is the first level of the meditation, and joy is very pleasurable thing. Now you have one of the hindrances come up in one way or another. You have restlessness. Restlessness and dislike are probably the most common, and your mind is super active, and jittery, and you feel like jumping out of your skin and it's one of those feelings where you feel like you have to do twenty-five things and you only got five minutes to do them and you jump from one thing to another to another to another and it's really an unpleasant feeling. Now when you see that and you start relaxing and letting it go, coming back to your object of meditation, and you start becoming familiar with how it arises, your awareness becomes faster so you see it more and more clearly or quickly, and then one time you let it go and it doesn't come back any more. You've let go of that attachment. What happened? A real sense of relief. "And that was a tough one, now it's not there any more. Phew." And then you start feeling this joy and this happiness, this real comfortable feeling and the tranquility, but if you're like most people, as soon as you let go of something that really hurts, and you feel a lot of joy, it's like: "Oh, wow! That's nice! I want more of that! That's what I've been meditating for!" And you start focusing on the joy. That is called getting caught in the gratification. That's

called getting stuck internally. Now the truth is feeling is feeling. Sometimes it's pleasant. Sometimes it's not pleasant. You treat all feeling in the same way. So you have this pleasurable feeling. You have this real sense of relief and it's very wonderful. If you focus on that, you're going to lose your meditation.

So when feeling arises, what do you do? You allow the feeling to be there and you relax and you come back to your object of meditation. If it's an unpleasant feeling, you allow it to be there you relax and you come back to your object of meditation. If it's a pleasant feeling, you allow that feeling to be there and relax and come back to your object of meditation. Your object of meditation is your home base. What's your object of meditation? It's loving-kindness, feeling of being happy, making a wish that helps that feeling to grow. So there's joy, there's another feeling that kind of pulls your mind to it. It's only joy. It's only a passing fancy. It'll be there for a little while and disappear. Your object of meditation will be there a lot longer. So if you don't want to get stuck internally, then you have to recognize that your mind went to this pleasant feeling and allow that pleasant feeling to be there because unpleasant feeling and pleasant feeling same coin different sides. Treat it the same way, always, relaxing into it. Even though joy is very pleasurable, there's a certain little subtle tension that arises. You have to relax. Your mind gets pulled to it, that's a distraction. That's a distraction from your object of meditation, and you treat every distraction in the same way. You allow it to be there, you relax and you come back to your object of meditation. That's hard when it feels good. But it's not that hard.

MN:

13. "Again, with the stilling of thinking and examination, a monk enters upon and abides in the second jhāna, which has self-confidence and stillness of mind without thinking and examination, with joy and pleasure born of collectedness.

BV: In the sutta itself, it uses the word 'concentration', but I don't like to use the word 'concentration' because 'concentration' is too misunderstood. Any time you talk about 'concentration' everybody thinks that's one-pointed concentration, and this is not one-pointed

concentration, but it is a form of concentration, but I don't call it that. That's why it's... I use 'composure'. I use 'collectedness'. I use 'stillness'. All of those are saying the same thing basically, but I want you to be able to tell the difference between one-pointed concentration and the tranquility collectedness, the calmness, the steadiness of mind.

MN:

{...}

TT: 39:27

BV: If his consciousness follows that joy and the happiness, then he's going to get stuck internally. He grabs on to it and tries to hold on to it. He gets caught in the gratification of: "Ah, this is really nice." Now when you get into the second jhāna, the joy you experience is stronger, and you feel really light in your body and really light in your mind, and the happiness you experience is very strong comfort. Now these don't happen at the same time. They happen one by one as they occur, and that comfortable feeling is there and then you feel this very strong tranquility, peacefulness. Your mind just stays on your object of meditation. When you get to this stage, you're not able to make a wish anymore. You can't verbalize anymore. If you try, then you start getting headache, because you're trying too hard. So you have to let go of the verbalization. When you just stay with the feeling and having your friend in your heart, you're seeing them more.

MN:

14. "Again, with the fading away as well of joy, a monk abides in equanimity, and mindful and fully aware, still feeling comfort 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: Now what happens is the joy fades away. It's too coarse a feeling now, and you feel more comfortable than you've ever felt

before. You feel more comfortable in your mind and in your body, and you lose all kinds of tension in our mind from distracting thoughts and these kind of things, and as you lose the tension in your mind, you lose tension in your body. As you lose tension in your body, sometimes your body feels like it disappears. "Where's my hands? I don't have any hands now." It just means that you've let go of all the tension in your hands, because what you're feeling is tension, is tightness, and when there's no tightness in your mind, there's no tightness in your body.

I had one lady that she was practicing and she got into this state and after awhile she came to me and she just kind of shook her head. She said: "You know, it feels like my head's sitting on the ground. I don't have any body at all. I just have a head." And it can be like that.

Now this is where your blood starts to purify. Your blood starts to become much healthier. You start letting go of a lot of toxins. This is where your body can start healing itself very easily. There's a lot of instances where people have done this kind of thing and they'd been meditating along and they had this tumor in their stomach for years, and all of a sudden they have to get up, they run outside and they start throwing up, and then there's this big glob that comes out, and it's the tumor. Those kind of things happen. Doesn't happen often enough to my way of thinking, but it happens.

Ok.

MN:

If his consciousness follows after the equanimity...{...}

BV: And becomes stuck to it, or becomes stuck to the pleasant feeling, you start thinking about it, you start wanting it more and more, fastest way to get rid of the meditation is to get stuck internally.

Now one of the traps of this meditation is that it really does feel good. Now you have a happy mind, and you have all this joys or

happiness, whatever and then you have to get up and you do your walking meditation and you come back and your first thought is: "Well, let's do that again. That was nice." And that's the last thing that's going to happen, because you have a desire to make this jhāna occur again, and that desire makes you try a little bit too hard and then it doesn't come when you think it should come and then you try a little bit harder and then you're caught by restlessness, your good friend.

TT: 44:14

For the last twenty-five years or so, I've been taught that what we call these hindrances, but I'm starting to think that these are your best friends. They're not really hindrances, although they stop you from meditating. That's why they call them a hindrance. When you have restlessness your mind is running all over the place. You're thinking about this and thinking about that and it's an unpleasant feeling and you're tightening down around it and all of these different things. But it's your best friend because this is showing you where your attachment is, where you're grabbing on and trying to make the present moment be the way you want it to be. Any time one of these hindrances arise, it is your best friend and it's going to make you work. A lot of people come and they start complaining to me about the hindrances and start crying about how hard the meditation is and I smile and then say: "Good. Everything's going along quite nicely. You have to roll up your sleeves and go to work. That's great. That means your meditation is going to be better than it was before." Of course, nobody else seems to agree with me at that time. (laughs) And then when you come to me you finally let go of the meditation and you've gone deeper in your practice and you come and you're real tranquil and very balanced and: "Oh, this peaceful." And I say: "Well, how's your meditation going?"—"Well that's great. This stuff is really good."—"Oh, that's too bad. You're just eating some of the candy that you worked for a little while ago."

MN:  
{15. ...}

16. "And how, friends, is the mind called 'not stuck internally'? Here, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, a monk enters upon and abides in the first jhāna...If his consciousness does not follow after the joy and pleasure born of seclusion, is not tied and shackled by gratification in the joy and pleasure born of seclusion, is not fettered by the fetter of gratification in the joy and pleasure born of seclusion, then his mind is called 'not stuck internally.'

BV: So how do you describe that, how your mind is not stuck internally? By just seeing these things as an arising and passing away of phenomena, because that's all it is. It's impermanent. It's not going to stay here for ever. Nothing is for ever. Everything is in a state of change. It's always in a state of flux, just like your body is in a state of flux, and you don't have any control over it. If you did, then you'd be getting to this and you'd go up, you'd do your walking and come back and you could say: "Well, now I'm going to get into this again." and you would do it. But you can't. You're not in control. It's conditions that are in control. When the conditions are right for your mind to have joy, you will have joy. What you do with that in the present moment dictates what happens in the future. If you grab onto that joy and you really want it to stay for a long time, it will disappear quickly, guaranteed. When the joy comes up if you see it just as another feeling, and you allow it to be there and you relax and you come back to your object of meditation that joy will stay for a long time.

Now there's five different kinds of joy that you can experience. Three kinds of joy are experienced by anybody at any time when the conditions are right. The first kind of joy's like goose bumps. Get goose bumps. You get real happy for a minute and get goose bumps, and then it disappears real quickly. The next kind of joy's like a flash of lightening. It's real intense for a short period of time, and then it disappears. The next kind of joy is like you're standing in the ocean, and there's waves of joy that come over you. You just feel this: "Ahaa." And then it comes again. Now these three kinds of joy, it doesn't matter who you are or what you're doing, if the conditions

are right these kind of joys will arise by themselves. The last two kinds of joy only arise through mental development. The next kind of joy is called uplifting joy., and this is your mind feels light and your body feels light and it's a real happy feeling. Now this kind of joy can last for oh, a few minutes to fifteen or twenty minutes. The last kind of joy is the... It's called all pervading joy, and that's when joy just kind of bubbles out everywhere. This is the joy that is the enlightenment factor of joy. Now you see a lot of Buddha images, and you'll see him sitting in meditation very calmly and his eyes are about half open. This is the artist showing joy. And what happens with the all pervading joy is your eyes will pop open, and you think: "Wow, that was strange." And you close them and they pop open again, and you close them and they pop open again, and you say: "Ok, you want to be open, stay open." But you'll notice in all the Buddha images he's sitting and he has kind of a little smile on his face, and his face is very serene and very peaceful. This is the artist showing this kind of joy.

TT: 50:52

Now always after joy, it doesn't matter what kind of joy that arises, there is a period of very nice tranquility and calmness. Depending on how much you experience the joy, that's how long the tranquility lasts. When you have the uplifting joy and you stay with your object of meditation and you do that for a little while the joy can last for fifteen, twenty minutes. When the joy fades away, and it will, the tranquility can last for an hour, hour and a half. That's when you sit in your meditation and your mind just says: "We're going to stay right here." And it doesn't take any effort at all. Now, some people can call this one-pointed concentration. It's not one-pointed because you still have full awareness. You still hear things. You still feel things. Somebody comes up or an ant decides he's going to start a march on down your arm, you'll feel it. But you have this strong balance of mind, the equanimity. Equanimity starts before you get into the jhāna. It's not very strong, but as you go from one jhāna to the next the equanimity gets stronger and stronger. The equanimity is balance of mind. The equanimity is the mind that sees things they occur but it doesn't make it shake any more, doesn't run to it and

distract. So always after you experience one of these kinds of joy the tranquility is there and the equanimity is there, and this is when you'll be able to sit for a fairly long period of time, very comfortably, an hour, two hours, three hours. Now this is the kind of sitting that is not harmful to your body.

If you try to force sitting then you'll wind up with some problems, ok? (laughs) You'll see I have a real big ankle, because when I was in Burma, my meditation teacher, the first day I came to him he said: "Ok, start meditating." I came the next day, he said: "How long are you sitting?" I said: "I sit for an hour and I walk for an hour." That's just the standard thing in Burma. And then he says: "Good. Sit longer." I said: "Ok." So I come back the next day: "How long did you sit?"—"I sat for two hours. I walked for an hour."—"Good. Sit longer."—"Hum. Ok." So I come back the next day: "How long did you sit?"—"Three hours. It was a killer. Walked for an hour."—"Good. Sit longer."—"Ah, man. Ok." So I come back the next day. He said: "How long did you sit?" I said: "I sat four hours, but it was hard." He said: "Good. Did you move? And I said: "Yeah, I was moving all over the place. It hurt." He said: "Don't move."—"Ah, man." So I came back the next day. I had tears rolling down my face because the pain was so intense. I wasn't really crying. It's just like you bump your head real hard and the tears come. That's what was happening. And he said: "How long did you sit?" I said: "I sat four hours."—"Did you move?"—"No. It was such a killer. I can't believe it."—"Good. Why don't you sit longer?"—"No. Enough. I don't want to do that anymore." But eventually I got so that I was sitting six and a half, seven hours, seven and a half, eight hours sometimes, without moving. And because I was forcing the length of time that I was sitting, I wound up with a blood clot in my leg. So there you see what my payment was for doing that. So that I don't recommend that you force the sit. You don't need to push that hard. But when your sitting is good stay with it. And there's sometimes that your sitting can be exceptional, and you might sit for four hours. But the next time you get up and you walk and the next time you come to sit you might only be able to sit for forty-five minutes. That's fine. Just don't sit less than thirty minutes. That's the rule. So the more we can really relax and open up and let things unfold naturally without

causing undue stress to our mind or our body, that's the Buddha's path. That's what we want to be practicing.

TT: 56:12

Now, you're not going to see this unless you move closer, but I'll explain what it is, and this is something that occurred to me while I was sitting in meditation one day. I started thinking about the five aggregates. The five aggregates I've already talked about. Body, feeling, perception, thoughts, and consciousness. And then I started thinking about the four foundations of mindfulness and how similar they really are. You have body and feeling, that's exactly the same as the five aggregates, and then you have consciousness, and that's the same as the five aggregates, and you have dhammas, and the dhammas are the perceptions and the thoughts. So when you have the four foundations of mindfulness and you're practicing the four foundations of mindfulness you're actually being very much aware of the five aggregates at the same time. The five aggregates are also put in the dhammas.

Now, when any one of these things arise, and your mind is clinging to it, that means that your mind starts to think about the feeling or the perception or whatever it happens to be, your mindfulness of your object of meditation becomes very weak, and then you have the five hindrances which I'm calling the five friends. So you can be sitting in meditation and you can be in any one of these jhānas and when your mindfulness weakens a little bit, because it's not always going to stay strong – everything changes, right? – as soon as it weakens a little bit then one of these hindrances arises. Now you get to roll up your sleeves and go to work. Now the hindrances are probably the best teachers that you have. You have lust, "I want." You have hatred, "I don't want." You have sloth and torpor, sleepiness, dullness. You have restlessness, anxiety. You have doubt, perplexity. Now when any one of these things arise, the furthest thing away from your mind is your object of meditation because there's real strong attachment there. And what is attachment? Attachment is the identification with those thoughts and feelings. That's how you become attached.

Now one of the big things in Buddhism is ignorance. The root word of ignorance is the verb to ignore. What are you ignoring? You're ignoring that everything is part of a process and it's an impersonal process. It's impersonal. It's not yours. There's thoughts that arise, there's feelings that arise. They arise because of past actions and the conditions are right for them to come up right now. Now the only thing we really have is the present moment. Everything in the past is a dream. Everything is going to happen in the future is a fantasy. The only thing we have is right now. So what we do with what arises right now dictates what's going to happen in the future. If you resist the feeling of restlessness, if you don't like it, it drives you crazy, you get up and you walk away. You can't sit anymore. You can look forward to seeing that restlessness keep coming up. What you resist persists, and it's going to keep coming up over and over and over again until you finally start letting go of the identification with it and seeing it for what it really is. It's just an arising and passing away of phenomena.

TT: 1:00:27

Everything is impermanent, and it's suffering. It hurts. It's unsatisfactory. And everything that arises is impersonal. It's not yours. Did you sit in meditation and when that pain come up, that real strong pain in your knee or your back, did you say: "Well, I haven't had any pain for quite awhile. I might as well have some pain now." No, you didn't ask it to come up. It came up because the conditions are right for it to arise. What you do with that right now dictates what happens in the future. If you identify with it and you try to control it and you try to push it away, you can look forward to having more and more of this pain arise.

Now we go back to the instructions in the meditation. What do you do when a sensation arises? First you see that you're thinking about it. "I hate this feeling. Boy it really hurts. I wish it would go away." Sound familiar? I gave a retreat in a prison where there was fifty inmates that came, and it was a five day retreat, and about the second day they were really starting to feel the pains and sufferings

in their body, so I started talking about pain and what you ought to do with it. You have to allow it to be there. That's the truth. When it comes up, it's there. And so were talking about the kind of thoughts they had and they stopped me from talking and said: "You talk too kindly." (laughs) "We use curse words." But the more you try to control the feeling with the thoughts the more pain there is. So first we have to let go of the thoughts and relax, and then we see the feeling and we allow the feeling to be there because that's the truth, and then you relax all of that tension and tightness that's in your head, in your mind. What is that tension and tightness in your head in your mind? Craving. "I don't like." Causes a lot of tightness. And when you relax that you'll feel your mind open up and it takes a little step down, and then you'll notice that your mind is very clear there's no thoughts in it. Your mind is very alert. Your mind is pure because it's not colored with anything, and you bring that mind back to your object of meditation. Now you do this over and over again for awhile, smiling. And one of two things will happen. Either the pain will go away or it won't. But if it doesn't go away, your mind gets more and more a sense of balance and it's like the pain just kind of steps away a little bit, and a little bit further as your equanimity grows and then it doesn't even pull your attention to it.

Now I have to mention here that there is a definite difference between meditation pain and real pain. Meditation pain, you got this huge pain in your knee, in your back, where ever it happens to be, and you finally break your sitting and you get up and you start walking and thirty seconds later you don't even know that you had the pain. That's a meditation pain. A real pain is it sticks with you. It keeps being painful no matter how long you walk. So what's the remedy to that? Don't sit that way. You don't need to make pain arise. There's enough suffering and enough other stuff that has dissatisfaction in it. You see what the First Noble Truth is. You don't have to cause it to arise.

TT: 1:04:46

Now when I was in Burma, I got real deep in my meditation and I had huge pains. Women that give childbirth, their pain's nothing. I'm

talking about major pains. And then one day I went to sit and there wasn't any pain, and I thought: "This is no good. I'm supposed to have pain." This is the way we were practicing. Pain is a good object of meditation. Your mind doesn't wander from it. (laughter) So I started changing my posture and I started sitting in all kinds of funny ways to make pain come up, and it wouldn't. So I went to my teacher and I said: "Look it, I can't make pain come up." And he said: "You don't have to have pain."—"Oh, now you tell me." (laughs)

But actually I'm now of the impression that It's better not to force yourself to have pain. And what I tell people you see here are some of the people that are doing the retreat, their sitting in a chair. You can sit on the floor sometimes, sit on a chair sometimes, you need to get that circulation. You need to change that. You don't need to have pain come up because pain by nature is repulsive. You don't like it. You want it to stop. You want it to go away. So you don't have to make it come up.

Now I had a student in Malaysia. She was really a remarkable lady. She spent all of her time helping other people. She was really wonderful. She never done any meditation, and she came to do a weekend retreat, and after about the first four or five hours I went to her and I started talking with her a little bit to make sure she was doing ok. I said: "How long are you sitting?" And she said: "Oh, I'm only sitting for forty-five minutes." The key word is only. So I said: "Well, why don't you sit longer?" She said: "Oh, I'm sitting on the floor and the pain in my knees is so intense I can't sit any longer than that. So I said: "Ok, fine. Go sit in a chair. Just don't lean real heavily into the chair." Her next sitting was four hours. She couldn't sit forty-five minutes on the floor, so she sat in a posture that was comfortable, and that freed her mind so that she could go very deep, and actually she got into the jhāna in two days. Made me want to smack her. Nobody's supposed to do it that fast. (laughs)

So the lessons that we learn from our attachments and how we let go of these attachments is the freeing factor that leads directly to happiness. Directly to happiness. Don't pass go. Go right to it. The more we can open up and relax and have a sense of humor, and

smile into what ever is arising in the present moment, the easier your meditation becomes, and the less suffering you will experience not only while you're sitting in meditation, but in your daily meditation. That's why you do a retreat. You come for a short period of time, I wish it was longer but, you learn the basic fundamentals about how to have an uplifted mind, how we have the old habits of self criticizing, dissatisfaction, frustration, dislikes, all of those things and we start to see how it makes your mind tense and tight and how it makes our body tense and tight and it is really uncomfortable. But we're so used to living that way that when you first start opening up a little bit it seems really strange. It's really odd. "What do you mean, laugh? What do you mean, smile? This is supposed to be serious stuff. I'm at a meditation retreat." Ok, be seriously happy.

When you start changing some of your old habits at the retreat, when you get out into your daily life you'll start recognizing those old habits that have caused so much pain and suffering, and you'll be able to see how your attachment is the cause of the suffering and you'll see that it's much more fun and much better to have this open heart all the time, and it gives you a lot of encouragement to let go of the emotional nonsense that we get caught in. and I really mean non sense. There's no sense to it at all. So what's the lessons? Real simple: smile; be happy. You know, this is one thing a lot of Buddhists never really hear, and I've always wondered about that. The Buddha said: "We're the happy ones." And you never hear that. "Oh, you mean we're supposed to be enlightened and happy? Wow. I never thought of that." But it's the other way around. You're going to be happy, then enlightened. Because that leads directly to it. Ok, I've talked for a real long time...

TT: 1:10:25

Tape ends.

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 . . .

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Material enclosed by angle brackets in the sutta text is where Bhante  
Vimalaramsi has substituted his preferred translation.

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