

MN 149 The Great Sixfold Base - Mahāsaḷāyatanika Sutta
November 05 Series 21-Nov-05 Bhante Vimalaramsi

BV:

In case you're wondering why you have that paper for the Eightfold Path (See article: 'The 8-Fold Path in Practical Terms'), that's in here because at some point it starts talking about the tranquility and the insight being yoked together. Which was a major insight that people had just kind of brushed by and not paid much attention to.

Anyway...

MN:

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

2. "Monks, I shall teach you a discourse on the great sixfold base. Listen and attend closely to what I shall say."—"Yes, venerable sir," the monks replied. The Blessed One said this:

3. "Monks, when one does not know and see the eye as it actually is, when one does not know and see forms as they actually are, when one does not know and see eye-consciousness as it actually is, when one does not know and see eye-contact as it actually is, when one does not know and see as it actually is [the feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that arises with eye-contact as condition, then one is inflamed by lust for the eye, for forms, for eye-consciousness, for eye-contact, for [the feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that arises with eye-contact as condition.

“When one abides inflamed by lust, fettered, infatuated, contemplating gratification, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are built up for oneself in the future;

BV:

So this is talking a little bit about karmic effect too.

MN:

and one’s craving—which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this and that—increases. One’s bodily and mental troubles increase, one’s bodily and mental torments increase, one’s bodily and mental fevers increase, and one experiences bodily and mental suffering.

BV:

Why does all of that occur? Right after the feeling, the fire starts. Now, there’s another sutta, it’s in the Mahavagga - which is a book of discipline - it’s called the Fire Sermon. And the Buddha described the eye forms, eye consciousness, eye contact, eye feeling, as burning. And they’re burning with craving, burning with desire. They’re burning with “I like”, “I don’t like”.

Now, almost all of these suttas they talk mostly about craving being for pleasant things because it only makes sense. You crave pleasant things, but the other side of that coin is the craving to get away from unpleasant things, from painful things. And that’s not talked about too much. It’s just more craving for the pleasant.

And when you have these kind of cravings, it really starts to get more and more troublesome because “I like this. I want it to stay around, but it doesn’t stay around and I don’t like that”. And now you’re caught in the see-saw of battle of not being satisfied with what’s in the present moment. Not seeing the present moment clearly because of the cloudiness of the craving and the clinging, and the identification with those, paints your world.

TT: 4:59

This is why when you're doing the meditation and you relax you see that clear spot. You're not seeing anything that has any color in it. You're seeing it as a pure mind, and that's why this is such an important practice and why this practice leads to what the Buddha's talking about whereas other practices that don't have that relaxing in it don't.

MN:

4-8. "When one does not know and see the ear as it actually is...When one does not know and see the nose as it actually is...When one does not know and see the tongue as it actually is...When one does not know and see the body as it actually is...When one does not know and see the mind as it actually is...one experiences bodily and mental suffering.

9. "Monks, when one knows and sees the eye as it actually is, when one knows and sees forms as they actually are, when one knows and sees eye-consciousness as it actually is, when one knows and sees eye-contact as it actually is, when one knows and sees as it actually is [the feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that arises with eye-contact as condition, then one is not inflamed by lust for the eye, for forms, for eye-consciousness, for eye-contact, for [the feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that arises with eye-contact as condition.

"When one abides uninflamed by lust, unfettered, uninfatuated, contemplating danger, then the five aggregates

BV:

And here is where I would choose to change this a little bit because now they're talking about being affected by clinging and this is where they may or may not be affected by clinging depending on whether you've let go of the craving or not.

{Repeats: The five aggregates}

MN:

affected by clinging are diminished for oneself in the future; and one's craving—which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this or that—is abandoned. One's bodily and mental troubles are abandoned, one's bodily and mental torments are abandoned, one's bodily and mental fevers are abandoned, and one experiences bodily and mental pleasure.

BV:

Let go of craving, that's a big promise right here. (laughs) And it's the promise for doing it right now and for the results of doing it right now for the future.

MN:

10. "The view of a person such as this is right view. His intention is right intention, his effort is right effort, his mindfulness is right mindfulness, his concentration is right concentration. But his bodily action, his verbal action, and his livelihood have already been well purified earlier.

BV:

This I have problem with too because they break up the Eightfold Path and they say your speech, your action, and your lifestyle are not part of the Eightfold Path because you've already taken care of that from taking the precepts and keeping them. Now let's go a little bit further.

MN:

Thus this Noble Eightfold Path comes to fulfilment in him by development. When he develops this Noble Eightfold Path, the four foundations of mindfulness also come to fulfilment in him by development; the Four Right Kinds of Striving also come to fulfilment in him by development; the four bases for spiritual power also come to fulfilment in him by development; the five faculties also come to fulfilment in him by development; the five powers also come to fulfilment in him by development; the seven enlightenment factors also come to fulfilment in him by development. These two things—

serenity and insight—occur in him yoked evenly together.

TT: 10:21

BV:

(sings) Halleluiah! Now, what I just went through, this whole list of these different things, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, the Four Right Kinds of Striving, the Four Spiritual Bases, the Five Faculties, the Five Powers, the Seven Factors of Enlightenment, and the Eightfold Path: these are called the Thirty-Seven Requisites for Enlightenment. And there's been lots of books written on this.

Now, let's go along with the Eightfold Path for a little while just because I really don't like the way they present that: you're following, you're practicing meditation, you're actually following a fivefold path. Because in the first sutta that the Buddha gave, the Spinning of the Wheel of Dhamma (SN 56.11), he focused on the Eightfold Path and he was talking to people about meditation. How does this stuff translate directly into your meditation? That was the question that I asked.

And as I started going more and more I ran across a monk that gave me a key for this and that's kind of jockeyed the words around a little bit since then, but he presented it as 'harmonious' instead of 'right'. And instead of Right View or Right Understanding he used the words Harmonious Perspective. Now what's a harmonious perspective? A harmonious perspective is a perspective of seeing things impersonally. A pain arises in your body, your mind grabs onto it, and you notice this process, and you let it be, and you relax, and you allow the pain to be there without controlling it, just seeing it for what it is. Like your rock experience (gestures towards a student). What you did was you changed your perspective from "This is me. I don't like this feeling. I want it to be different." To "It's only this feeling." And that's a major change in perspective.

And again, one of the things that changes your perspective faster than anything else is being able to laugh with it. "Oh, I'm serious. I don't want to laugh." (laughs) But when you laugh with it, your

perspective immediately changes and you start to see "Oh, that's where I was attached before, and now I'm not attached. Now I'm seeing this clearly ." And you don't have a lot of clinging after that. It's just like "Oh, I'm ready for whatever else is coming up. Everything is doing good." So, this is one of the first changes in the words of the Eightfold Path that I think is necessary for this country.

The next one is, they call it Right Thought, but I call it Harmonious Imaging. Now the harmonious imaging, when you're doing loving-kindness meditation, you're making a wish for your spiritual friend's happiness, peace, calm, clear mind, whatever joy, whatever wish you're making for them. Now, you remember in the instructions I said, "I want you to feel that wish and then put that feeling in your heart and surround your friend with it." Every time you do that you're practicing harmonious imaging. Now, when you're sitting, and sometimes restlessness can come and you feel like jumping out of your skin like you can't hardly sit still it's so difficult, then you bring up the image of peace and calm. Feel that, put that in your heart. And don't move, absolutely, don't move. If you move, you give into the feeling, you give into the identification with the feeling, and then it turns into a real war.

TT: 15:05

Now, one of these that they say is "You're already doing it anyway", is they call it Right Speech, but I call this Harmonious Communication. And how do you have harmonious communication when you're sitting silently in meditation? It's the communication that you're giving yourself to let go and relax, allow things to be without getting involved with them. That kind of communication is very much necessary and it directly affects your meditation. When it's not in harmony is when you start thinking "I wish this would stop. I want it to go away." All of these, and it's the identification with that, that makes it Wrong Speech, or Wrong Communication, or not Harmonious Communication.

So, the next one is always an interesting one because they say Right Action. Well, you're sitting still; what kind of action can you be having

when you're doing your meditation? But it's watching the movement of mind's attention, watching that action, that pulling away, how the process works.

Now, the next of the Eightfold Path... this has always been comical to me, and it took me a long time to figure out what the Buddha was talking about when it was referring directly to your meditation. Because the definition of Right Livelihood is: no killing of beings, no selling weapons of destruction, no selling poisons, that 's Right Livelihood. What in the world does that have to do with meditation? That has to do with your worldly life, and I can certainly appreciate that for the worldly life, but with your meditation what is this? So, I changed this to Harmonious Lifestyle.

When you're doing your meditation the last precept that you take every morning is to be loving and kind to yourself and all beings. That means you are practicing a harmonious lifestyle. And it's real easy when you're meditating to be hard on yourself, to be judgmental on yourself. And this is where it takes the practice so that you let go of that critical mind because the critical mind is the unwholesome mind. It has, in Pali they call it dosa: aversion, dislike, hatred.

So, when you practice being loving and kind to yourself, this is a very necessary part of your practice. Being in harmony with yourself is essential if you want to be in harmony with everything else around you. And there's three different kinds of loving-kindness that you can practice during your daily activities:

- 1) Firstly, you have to love the people you're around
- 2) If you're not around anybody you have to love yourself
- 3) You have to love what you're doing, and you need to practice your loving-kindness and putting it into whatever you're doing.

If you're making a meal and you don't feel like making the meal, then when you eat that meal it just doesn't taste very good. (laughs) But when you let go of that and you start loving... I think I'll try a little bit

of this and see how it goes and experimenting, putting so much love into that meal that it's very good.

Now, to give you an example of today's lifestyle, what do you think eating a MacDonald's hamburger is going to do for the insides of you? They're there because they just want to make money. They get yelled at a lot, they get pressured to work faster and all of that energy goes into the food and really causes problems.

TT: 19:49

When I was a layman, I was building these million dollar houses, and because I wanted everybody to be loving what they're doing while they're doing it, I gave a five hundred dollar bonus to anyone that came up with the best joke of the job. So everybody really liked that idea, and I told them we would all vote at the end of the job to see which one was the best joke. And I gave them the money. It was worth it to me because that kept everybody light and it kept them liking what they were doing and the banter on a construction site is great fun anyway. But I was trying to keep it as light as I could because that's when they did their best work.

Ok, now we have Right Effort, and I call this Harmonious Practice. It is seeing when mind is not in harmony, when there's an unwholesome state that arises, and it doesn't have to be a big unwholesome state. It doesn't have to be anger or any of that, it can be just a minor frustration, a minor sadness, a little bit of anxiety. It doesn't have to be a major earth shattering kind of emotion that comes up. But it's the noticing of that, the letting go of that, and relaxing; then redirecting your attention to your object of meditation, and relaxing; and keeping your object of meditation in front of you, and relaxing. Oh yeah, you gotta smile. (laughs) Yeah, I missed that one didn't I? I should of said relax and smile... three times. (laughs)

And you can put that into practice while you're sitting in meditation. Love walking when you're doing your walking; love the sitting while you're doing your sitting; love eating while you're eating. The more times you can focus on this wholesome, uplifting, smiling thought,

the inclination of your mind is to have that coming up more often. And in sutta number nineteen I think it is (see MN 19.6), one of the major statements in that sutta is "What you think and ponder on, that's the inclination of your mind". You think and ponder on dissatisfaction, dislike, frustration, depression, whatever it happens to be, your mind is going to tend towards that. So, when there's nothing else to distract your mind, it'll go to that state. So, the more you can smile, the more you can focus with your loving-kindness, the more likely with your daily activities - waiting in line, getting in a traffic jamb - your mind will incline towards the loving-kindness to everybody around you much more easily than ever before because that's what you're practicing.

I'll tell you one of the things that happened while I was in Asia. Because I got known as a practitioner of loving-kindness meditation, women that were pregnant started coming in and asking for blessings and all of these kind of things, and what I started doing was holding a bottle of water and radiating loving-kindness and then I'd give it to them. And then I get them, I tell you "Ok, from now until you have your baby you have to hold this every day, you have to rub your stomach and wish your little baby well. Just do this for ten or fifteen minutes. You talk to the baby and wish him well; you're holding that water; you're putting more and more positive stuff in, and then when it gets time to have the baby, they'll start drinking it."

TT: 24:44

And the deliveries were very easy, and they were fast, and there was like all the anxiety that women normally have, it just wasn't there. And of course they let me know when they were going into the hospital so I would sit with loving-kindness for them then too. The babies were born with absolutely brilliant, glowing, smiling faces. And they would do weird things like sleep all night. (laughs) And anybody that would come around them they always had a smile for them, and everybody loved them a lot and that just helped the whole situation. So, in the three or four years that I was doing that there must have been thirty or thirty-five babies that I called "My babies". They're my metta babies. So that at least they got a good start, and that made

me very happy.

Ok, so the next one is one of the ones that's very misunderstood, Right Mindfulness. And I hear people tell me "I forgot something, I wasn't mindful". What is that? What's the definition of mindfulness? You can go to three-month retreats where they're teaching every day, and ask the students "What is the definition of mindfulness?" and they can't give it to you.

So, I changed this a little bit, and I started calling it Harmonious Attention. That's ok, but it's more than that. It's Harmonious Observation. Harmonious observation of the movement of mind's attention in the present moment. And the word 'harmonious' here takes away the hardness of it. That's why I like the word 'harmonious' because it just makes it soft and very nice. There is this balance there and this is what makes it such a personal path because you have to find that balance for yourself. You have to find out what your harmonious practice is for yourself. You have to find out all of these different things, how you have a harmonious perspective. But it has to be done in a harmonious way. You try too hard, you can make yourself restless, you're going to cause yourself a lot of suffering. It's gotta be done with nice balance. That means not too fast and not too slow.

It's like the Buddha talked about the right amount of energy that you need to put into your observation. And he said that suppose you had a lute and the string didn't make the right sound, so you try to loosen it and it made even a worse sound then you tried tightening it and you went too far, and you need to learn what that balance is so that the sound is it's just right.

And he told that lesson to a monk, and before he was a monk he was so delicate that he had very fine hair growing on the bottom of his feet. He never put pressure on his feet. He was carried everywhere. So, he became a monk and they were walking around with bare feet. And he started doing his walking meditation and he wasn't used to it, and his walking path was like a slaughter yard. There was blood all over it and the Buddha came by and said "What is this?" - "Oh, that's

this monk, he's got very fine feet and he's just doing the walking meditation. So, the Buddha came along and said "You're trying too hard. You have to pay attention to your body and your mind, and I make it allowable for monks to have sandals." So, we're beholding to him for his tender feet, and of course like all of these stories, he started putting in the right amount of effort, became an arahat.

TT: 29:19

Now we go to Right Concentration. This word has caused me endless amounts of grief because everybody in this country and just about everybody in Asia, they use the word 'concentration' to mean absorption kind of concentration. So, I had to change it to something. And I read a book by Kantipalo where he wasn't satisfied with the word concentration either and he started calling it collectedness. I went to... oh half a dozen dictionaries looking up the word collectedness just to make sure. And I also went to a lot of thesaurus to make sure that this word was suitable. Another word that could be suitable is 'composure', but it's not quite it. When you have a composed mind, you have a calm mind, but it's not necessarily a still mind. So, sometimes I use 'composure', but I also use it as with a collected composure. Collected also infers stillness, and that's... it is concentration, but it's not the same kind; it's a calm, no grasping kind of concentration.

So, that's the Eightfold Path that I like to practice. And this view that... where was he talking, the "(Repeats: ... bodily action, the verbal action and the livelihood have already been well purified earlier"; that is very much a Theravada view that's been added into the suttas from Abhidhamma. And of course he's a Theravadan, so he's showing he's... it's going out to the Theravadan world and everybody agrees that this is, is right. But I had some real problems with it when I started looking at the first discourse and they hadn't practiced before the bodily action, the verbal action and the livelihood. So, the Theravadans kind of made something up, but to me he was talking only about the meditation.

But these Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment: you know what the

Four Foundations of Mindfulness are; you know what the Four Right Kinds of Striving are because that's the Harmonious Practice. Ok, the Four Bases of Spiritual Power, they are:

(BV adopts the Four Bases from MN 16.26)
{...} consisting in concentration

... due to energy and determined striving;

... due to [purity of] mind and determined striving;

... due to investigation and determined striving;

... due to enthusiasm and determined striving.

BV:

The Five Faculties, there's quite a few discourses just on the Five Faculties. It's just another way of looking at this process. And they are: Faith, Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom. And they go along pretty much in order. You start doing the practice and you have an experience that's described in the sutta, and then you start going "Yeah, this is right!" So you got a lot of confidence and you start putting in a little bit more energy into doing more practice and that sort of thing, and as you do that your mindfulness builds. As your mindfulness builds, your collectedness gets better. As your collectedness gets better, seeing Dependent Origination starts to occur. That's the Five Faculties. And these same Five Faculties turn into Powers because it gets unshakeable. Each one of these things gets very unshakeable as you experience them, as you know them more and more and it turns into real power for you.

Then you have the Seven Enlightenment Factors, and that is Mindfulness, Investigation [of your experience], Energy, Joy, Tranquility, Collectedness and Equanimity. So, all of those along with the Eightfold Path turns out to be thirty-seven which turns out to be the number of Requisites for Enlightenment. Ok? It's just another way of talking about getting into the jhānas and experiencing your

insight at the same time. Ok?

TT: 35:09

So,

{Repeats: "These two things—serenity and insight—occur in him yoked evenly together.}

MN:

He fully understands by direct knowledge those things that should be fully understood by direct knowledge. He abandons by direct knowledge those things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge. He develops by direct knowledge those things that should be developed by direct knowledge. He realizes by direct knowledge those things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

BV: Pretty much self-explanatory there, isn't it? (laughs)

MN:

11. "And what things should be fully understood by direct knowledge? The answer to that is: the five aggregates { ...}

BV: Again, "which may or may not be affected by clinging."

MN:

that is, the material form aggregate {...},

the feeling aggregate {...},

the perception aggregate {...},

the formations aggregate {...},

BV:

That's what I call 'thoughts' quite often in that because that's just the way it works.

MN:

the consciousness aggregate {...}

“And what things should be abandoned by direct knowledge?
Ignorance and craving for being. These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

BV:

Now, I would have just stopped at ignorance and craving because the Second, Third and Fourth Noble Truths are all directly talking about craving. The First Noble Truth is talking about the suffering you have when you have craving with a craving mind. The Second Noble Truth says the cause of suffering is craving. The Third Noble Truth is the cessation of suffering as letting go of craving. And the Fourth Noble Truth is the path leading to the cessation of suffering caused by craving. And of course always, ignorance is ignorance of the Four Noble Truths. So, if you're ignorant of the Four Noble Truths, you're pretty much ignorant of the craving. And again, craving always manifests as tension and tightness in the mind and body. Sometimes it's subtle, sometimes it's bigger than all outdoors.

MN:

“And what things should be developed by direct knowledge?

BV:

I Love this.

MN:

Serenity and insight. { ...}

BV:

That means jhāna, and awareness of how Dependent Origination works. You don't get to see Dependent Origination unless you have a very calm, still mind. Then you get to see this amazing process.

MN:

“And what things should be realized by direct knowledge? True knowledge and deliverance. These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

BV:

True knowledge is again seeing Dependent Origination, and deliverance is seeing it as an impersonal process.

MN:

12-14. "When one knows and sees the ear as it actually is...These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

15-17. "When one knows and sees the nose as it actually is...These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

18-20. "When one knows and sees the tongue as it actually is...These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

21-23. "When one knows and sees the body as it actually is...These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

24-26. "When one knows and sees the mind as it actually is...These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge."

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

TT: 40:02

BV:

And when I came across this sutta, there was very, very strong happiness for me because right there it says that there's no division between your serenity and your insight; they are yoked together and they pull equally. Now, what happened over the years is the Visuddhimagga has divided concentration practice / insight practice, and the two shall never meet. And this says right here "No, that's not right." It says that the Visuddhimagga has made a major mistake because of trying to divide the concentration meditations and the

insight meditations. And when you go to Burma, when you go to Thailand, they do this kind of practice.

I spent three months at a retreat with a bunch of monks that had just gotten out of monk college, and for their diploma they had to come and meditate until they got enlightened. (laughter) Anyway, I started talking to one of them that could speak English and I started saying "You know there's something wrong here; it doesn't match what the suttas say". And he said "What do you mean?" Now, he's just got out of college. He's got out of monk college. He should know all of this stuff. So, I went and got my book and I sat down and I started saying "Well, the practice is this and it doesn't talk like that." At this meditation center we're talking about there being different practices. And this monk was completely shocked. He said "Where did you get that book?" "I got this in Malaysia and it's the Middle Length Sayings. You know the Middle Length Sayings don't you?" He said "We didn't study that. All we did was study the Commentaries in monk school." They didn't even bring out the actual teaching of the Buddha. Doesn't make any sense.

And for twenty years I was told over and over again "Don't ever practice jhāna meditation. It only leads to psychic powers. If you want to get enlightened, just do the mindfulness practice, vipassana." So, after I did my two-year silent retreat in Burma, I came back to Thailand and I was kind of depressed because I had gone through all of the experiences they said was Nibbana, and I was not convinced. So, I decided I had to do something. So, I started picking up the suttas and trying to read them, but because I'd spent so many years studying the Visuddhimagga - I knew what that said and it made sense in my mind - I'd go over to the suttas and it doesn't match what the Visuddhimagga said. The suttas didn't make any sense, and it was driving me crazy.

I went back to Malaysia, I started teaching loving-kindness meditation. I was at this big monastery where I was giving a talk to many people at one time every other week, and a Sri Lankan monk came through and he said "I understand you teach meditation. How do you teach it?" So, I started telling him how I teach it, and after

awhile he said "You know, you're teaching the meditation right, but you're using the language of the Visuddhimagga. Let go of that book. Don't even use it as a reference. Just go to the suttas."

When I was told that, all of a sudden I came to the suttas and it was like light bulbs going off in my head. All of a sudden, everything I read made sense. And it was just this slight change of perception, of going from this one-pointed concentration because I'd gotten good at it, and then adding that one extra step that it says in the Mindfulness of Breathing (see MN118) that you tranquilize your body formation. So, when I first started doing that I started practicing on my own, and I thought "You know, this is really something". And I hadn't realized all of the aspects of any tightness in my head; I was just relaxing my body and I felt so much better.

I was noticing that when a pain arose by the Vipassana, the way I was being taught, is you put your attention in the middle of the pain, and you watch the characteristics of that sensation; the hardness, the sharpness, all of the different aspects of the four elements. And it got stronger, and I was noticing that my mind was getting tighter and tighter, and my body was getting tighter, but I just kind of shined that on because "I'm focusing here." So, when I started relaxing, all of a sudden I started realizing it's not a choiceless awareness that you practice. It is your object of meditation, and any time it gets pulled away you need to let it go, and relax, and come back. And it got so interesting to me that after a couple of weeks I told the head monk "I've got to go off and meditate for a little while. I gotta see this stuff. I'll be back in a week or ten days." I came back three months later. (laughter)

My mind kept going deeper and deeper into things I'd never experienced with this other kind of meditation. And I started noticing that that tightness, every time a thought arose. It didn't matter whether it was a wholesome thought or an unwholesome thought, there was some tension there. And it was like all of a sudden I started noticing, every time you relax "Oh, this is kind of an expansion", and your mind is really clear.

So, I come running back to the suttas - and at that time this book had just come out, it was in 1995 I think - and there were some people that bought a whole lot of these books , like a hundred of them, and they started giving them out to the monks for their practice of generosity. So, somebody gave me one and I just started devouring this. The copy that I had, when you look at the edges, it was all brown and frayed (laughs), but I've since given that book up and gotten another one. So, this one will turn like that after a while because I do use it so much.

But it was a major insight to realize that you can have insight into the movement of mind's attention while you're in jhāna. And then I came back and I was real enthusiastic about this and that I sat down and I wrote the Ānāpānasati book. And I spent about - it was about eight months, about ten hours a day - on it because I wanted to be pretty precise and accurate. I had a huge library at my disposal. So I got all kinds of books and I'm reading this and reading that and then I go to what I'd written and I see one word is not quite right and I fiddle with that word for sometimes a whole day before I come up with a word that seemed right.

Anyway, let's share some merit...

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

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

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

May they long protect the Buddha's dispensation.

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

Transcript by
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