

METTA (FINAL DRAFT, FEB 2004)

METTA

***The Practice of Loving-Kindness
As the Foundation for Insight Meditation Practice***

SAYADAW U INDAKA

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Foreword

On the occasion of Sayadaw U Indaka's fiftieth birthday, his book titled '*Metta*' was first published in Burmese. At that time, many foreign meditators were residing at Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre, Hmawbi where Sayadaw U Indaka is the resident abbot and meditation teacher. Many foreign meditators expressed an interest in reading about the practice of metta meditation; however, the book was inaccessible because it was unfortunately only available in Burmese. In order to make this book available to a larger audience, I was asked to translate it into English. I began to work on the translation with great enthusiasm but little experience translating books. However, I soon became aware of some of the problems that arise in translating a text into another language and cultural context. Throughout this work, I have tried to be faithful to the meaning and spirit of the original Burmese text, but some changes were necessary. First of all, it is important to state that the Burmese book is the transcription of two dhamma talks about metta that Sayadaw U Indaka gave to a group of Burmese meditators. Typically, a Burmese dhamma talk takes the form of questions and answers; this method ensures that the audience has clearly understood the main points. These short passages have been omitted, as they were unnecessary in the written form. In addition, Sayadaw U Indaka has enlarged the practical instructions for vipassana meditation in the English version. In a few places, some words of explanation have been included as the original meaning might not have been clear to western readers. Other terms which might be unfamiliar are listed in the glossary, so that the reader can look them up. The stories of Uttara, Samavati, and Maga have been included in the appendix since they are well known to Burmese practitioners but not to western readers.

I am greatly indebted to many of my dhamma friends. Without their help, this book would not have come into existence. The lions's share of the work goes to Judy Witheford (Daw Khemasiri), a Canadian meditator and English teacher, who did the editing. Ven. U Khemissara helped me clarify some passages and translate the Pali passages into English. Valuable advice and suggestions that improved the clarity of the text came from U Sitaramsi, U Vamsarakkhita, Sr. Jutima, U Soe Myint, Marjo, Lisa, and Patricia. I am also very grateful to my Burmese friend Mimmi (May Myint Oo) who was incredibly patient and answered all my questions when I was working on the rough translation.

It is my sincere wish that this book will contribute to a much deeper understanding of metta, the genuine wish for the well-being of all sentient beings. When the fires of anger and aversion are blazing in so many places in the world, it becomes especially important to sprinkle beings with the cool refreshing water of metta. It is my hope that all beings will be inspired to cultivate this quality of the heart and suffuse the world with the agreeable quality of loving-kindness. In addition to cultivating loving-kindness, may the practice of metta serve as a suitable foundation for the practice of vipassana meditation and lead meditators to the highest goal of the Buddhist teaching nibbana, the cessation of all suffering.

Ven. Ariya Ñani

Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre
Hmawbi, Myanmar
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METTA PART I

A Special Day

Today is Monday, September 3, 2001. According to the Burmese calendar, it is the full moon day (the 15th day of the waxing moon) of Wakaung in the year 1363. For Burmese Buddhists, it is a special day, but perhaps you don't know why this day is so important. This was the day when the Buddha first taught the Metta Sutta, and the earth was first showered with the sweet rain of metta. Before that, the earth had been thirsty and had suffered from eons of drought because it was devoid of metta. During this drought, the whole world was consumed by acrid smoke and the smothering flames and fires of anger and hatred. Beings living at that time were incapable of compassion and kindness. Showing no remorse, they waged war ceaselessly, attacking and killing each other in their hostilities. In their dealings with each other, they were not gracious or patient; instead, they bullied and manipulated each other to achieve their ends. It was at such a time that the Buddha showered the dry earth with the soothing refreshing rain of metta, so that the whole world became cool and peaceful. Beings awoke from their hatred and enmity and began to love and show kindness to each other. Later we will talk more about the Metta Sutta and how it came into existence, but now we will start with the basic teaching of metta.

Navanga Sila

At the time we took the precepts, I gave you nine precepts (navanga sila) instead of the eight precepts that yogis normally take. After taking the eight precepts, I added "Mettasahagatena cetasa sabbapanabhutesu pharitva viharanam samadiyami". In English this means, "I will live with a heart full of metta towards all living beings." The Navanguposatha Sutta of the Anguttara Nikaya says that suffusing the mind with metta and practising it as much as we can amounts to nine precepts (navanga sila). However, metta is not the same kind of precept as the other precepts which start with 'Panatipata', the precepts to refrain from killing, stealing and so forth. When we enrich the usual eight precepts (uposatha precepts) with the practice of metta, then this practice becomes more beneficial than just observing the usual eight precepts.

At the time of the Buddha, some virtuous people also kept nine precepts including metta. The Buddha taught these nine precepts especially for beings with an affinity for metta. Now you may wonder if only people who take the uposatha precepts by adding 'Mettasahagatena' can practise metta meditation. This is not the case; if we only take the eight precepts, we can still practise metta meditation because anyone can practise metta meditation. The more people practise metta meditation, the more likely it is that this earth will become a cool, peaceful and pleasant place. As we develop metta with phrases like 'May all beings be well; may all beings be happy and peaceful', we radiate metta. This is 'giving happiness and peace'. All human beings, all devas and all other living beings take delight in happiness and peace because all living beings live with this desire for happiness and peace. Don't you feel pleased when you can give other beings the happiness and peace that they are looking for? In the same way that children like people who give them some sweets, all living beings enjoy the company of people who give them metta, that is to say who bring them happiness and peace.

Metta Candy

In the town of Myeik (State of Tanintharyi, Myanmar), you can find Kantha Monastery where Kantha Sayadaw is the abbot. Sayadaw has a very good heart. He also has the titles of 'abhivamsa' and 'aggamahapandita', and he has a very generous nature. The minute he is given something in one place, he immediately offers it in another place. Whenever he has to

go somewhere, he fills his shoulder bag with candies. When he arrives at his destination, he hands out candies to everybody. All the people who meet him and all the children who see him gather around him because he is loved and respected by everybody. There is nobody who does not know him. Sayadaw is very happy when he can give and offer things. Yogis, if you want to be loved and respected like Sayadaw then you should give and make offerings. You should hand out metta candies. Please make sure that you hand out as many as possible. Wouldn't it be wonderful if all living beings practised metta meditation, wishing for the happiness and peace of every sentient being?

Practising Metta Meditation

For those of you who want to practise metta meditation, you should first understand the following points:

1. The spirit of metta
2. The meaning of metta bhavana (metta meditation)
3. The enemies of metta
4. Methods of practising metta
5. The benefits of metta meditation

First, you need to understand these points. By understanding these points clearly, your practice of metta meditation will progress well.

The Spirit of Metta

- The spirit of metta is the wish for the welfare and happiness of all living beings. There is never a wish for anything that is not beneficial.
- In the spirit of metta, we always work for the benefit of other living beings. We never work to create unwholesome results or to inflict suffering.
- The spirit of metta is always and forever peaceful and cool; it never burns.
- The spirit of metta is always loving-kindness; it never turns to hatred.
- The spirit of metta is always soft, gentle and subtle; it is never rough and harsh.
- The spirit of metta is always clear and fresh; it never withers.
- The spirit of metta only sees and looks at the good side; it never sees and looks for faults.
- The spirit of metta is always forgiving; it is not oppressive or controlling.
- The spirit of metta is only concerned with helping; it is completely free from any destructive impulses.
- The spirit of metta works only for the benefit of others; it doesn't work for our own benefit.
- The spirit of metta is free from entanglement; it is always accompanied by a spirit of independence.

The Meaning of Metta Bhavana (Metta Meditation)

Bhavana means development or cultivation. Therefore, metta bhavana refers to the repeated cultivation of metta in our own hearts and minds to make it firm and strong. With the practice

of metta meditation, we have to develop a genuine wish for our own happiness and the happiness of others. When we develop metta for all beings by wishing them good health and happiness, then our hearts and minds will feel happy and peaceful. Because we are practising metta meditation, we experience this happiness and peace ourselves.

As we develop and strengthen the quality of metta in our hearts and minds by wishing all living beings good health and happiness, there is no more desire to hurt or create suffering for other living beings. This is *mano-kamma metta* or metta in mental actions. We also do not use any words that cause suffering or harm other living beings. This is *vaci-kamma metta* or metta in verbal actions. And we do not do anything that hurts or causes suffering to other living beings. This is *kaya-kamma metta*, metta in bodily actions. In this way, other living beings do not suffer because of us, and if they do not suffer, they are happy.

When we practise metta meditation and live in the tranquil shade of metta, this subtle happiness and peace is at first not very distinct or obvious. The serene and peaceful quality of metta is not always evident, so we may not understand the true value of metta. Only when we have to spend time with an angry person, do we come to appreciate and savour the serene taste of metta. Living in the shade of a person with metta, we feel serene and peaceful. When we have to live with an ill-tempered angry person, the heart burns with fear, and we may become anxious and begin to worry. Our thoughts run wild, and we start to wonder, “When will he start shouting at me? When will he beat or kill me? Will he beat me with a stick, hurt me with a knife, or pierce me with a weapon?” In the end, we may become so lost in fearful thoughts that we are terrified day and night. If we have to live with such an ill-tempered person, we might even find ourselves saying, “May he die quickly; may I also die quickly.”

At such a time, we come to know and clearly understand the serene and peaceful quality of metta, which is radiated by the person who is developing metta. Then we fully understand the true value of metta. This is the benefit that can be experienced by a being to whom metta is radiated.

The Enemies of Metta

In the world, when a person opposes us, puts obstacles in our way and destroys our possessions resulting in unhappiness and misery, we usually think of such a person as an enemy. It is the same with metta; any obstruction that comes into the field of metta and prevent its arising in our hearts and minds should also be viewed as the enemy of metta when it blocks or destroys metta. These are the two enemies of metta; love, lust or *tanha* is called the **near enemy**, and hate or *dosa* is called the **far enemy** of metta.

The Near Enemy

Why do you think that love, lust or *tanha* is the near enemy and hate or *dosa* is the far enemy of metta? Love, lust or *tanha* is the near enemy because these mind states can very easily creep into the heart of metta. And once any of these have entered the heart, it may suddenly become filled with lust without our knowledge. Lust is also a very good actor, so we might think it is metta. Hatred or *dosa*, however, has a much more difficult time entering the heart because we are immediately aware of its presence. This is why it is said in the scriptures that lust is the near enemy, and *dosa* is the far enemy. To state it even more precisely, metta is beneficial, and a mind full of metta sees the good side of things; whereas, *tanha* or lust has the illusion of being beneficial and pretends to see the positive aspect of things. In reality, a mind suffused with metta and a mind filled with lust are completely different in their

characteristics. Metta is serene and peaceful; forgiveness comes easily, and clinging is not present. There is a natural desire to help and to be of service. On the other hand, lust burns with desire; it is oppressive and clinging. It is a destructive tendency.

I would like to illustrate the deceptive similarity of genuine metta and entangled love by referring to an incident that clearly demonstrates their difference. In a particular company, the manager was an extremely attractive woman. As her appearance was very beautiful, and she held a position of considerable influence and power, everybody in the company attached great importance to her. This was especially true in the case of the company president who was an elderly single man and the treasurer who was a younger man. Both of them tried in many different ways to help this manager become successful in her position. This was a difficult situation for everyone in the company because both the president's and treasurer's motivations and intentions were obvious although neither of them was really aware of his own situation. This state of affairs continued for some time until the beginning of the preparations for the manager's wedding to a very wealthy doctor. After hearing the news, the president continued to smile. He continued to take care of all business matters and even offered to help with the preparations for the wedding. He easily forgave her choice and accepted the situation. However, the treasurer could not eat or sleep anymore. His chest burned, and he drank alcohol excessively. When the wedding took place, he and some friends even attempted to ruin the ceremony, and they acted obnoxiously at the reception. This was an expression of the treasurer's inability to forgive the manager for her choice of a marriage partner.

When we look at this incident, which person had metta-love and which person's love was tainted by lust or tanha? Obviously, the president's love was real metta, but the treasurer's love was tainted by lust or tanha. However, wasn't it true that both of them had worked in order to help this manager? At first, they had both helped her, but later their motives were different. The president's mind was serene and peaceful as it was filled with pure metta. As the fair-minded company president, he treated his fellow-workers with respect and consideration. He always carried out all of his duties for this manager in a straightforward and fair way. As a result, he easily forgave the manager's choice. In contrast, the treasurer's metta was a pretense. Although he carried out his tasks and responsibilities happily at the beginning, later he no longer worked for her benefit. His mind was not peaceful anymore, and he lost his smile. He could not forgive her choice.

In this example, it's easy to see how love, lust or tanha can seem to be real metta to such a degree that it becomes difficult to understand that in fact they are not genuine metta. It is confusing and difficult to differentiate the two states because it has become common for ordinary people in Myanmar to use the word metta to mean love. Even well educated people need to be very careful, so that they can clearly and precisely understand these two different mental states. This is why love, lust or tanha is called the **near enemy** of metta.

The Far Enemy

The nature of metta is serene, peaceful, gentle, and forgiving, and there is a genuine willingness to help. On the other hand, the nature of dosa or anger and ill will is burning, harsh, confrontational, and unforgiving, and there is a desire to destroy. Thus, the natures of these two mental states are completely opposite. This is why the Buddha said that dosa is the **far enemy** of metta. Of the two enemies, the near enemy is much more dangerous in this world. You need to be much more afraid of the near enemy because it is so pervasive and can readily become an obstacle that leads to violence. The far enemy cannot so easily become an obstacle and lead to destruction because it is much more obvious. That is why we do not have to be as afraid of the far enemy as the near enemy. A person who is practising metta

meditation should not allow the near enemy of love or lust to enter the heart, nor should she/he allow the far enemy of dosa to enter the heart. It is important that we develop genuine and pure metta. We must be absolutely resolute and careful about this.

Methods of Practising Metta Meditation

There are two ways to practise metta meditation:

1. Developing metta without jhana
2. Developing metta for the attainment of jhana

Developing Metta without Jhana

First, I will talk about the way to develop metta without jhana. When we practise metta meditation, we have to be careful that the meaning of the words we use is clear. We should use as few words as possible, and the phrases or sentences should be short. The reason for this is that short clear concise sentences will help to make metta powerful and strong. When we practise metta meditation, we need to have a real and genuine wish for the other person to be well, happy, and peaceful, so that our metta becomes vigorous and powerful. Developing this potent kind of metta is the essential aim; however, only when we really understand the words that we are using will our metta become powerful, and this is the essential purpose of this practice. If we do not understand the meaning of the words that we are using, then it will not be possible to develop such powerful metta. There is another thing to be aware of. If we use too many words or sentences, it will not be easy to develop strong potent metta because we will have to put a lot of effort into remembering and reciting these words. For yogis whose metta is not yet well developed, metta may sometimes become weak or even disappear altogether. And if the words are too seductive to fantasy, we might become entranced by the words themselves. This is why we should use only a few words and keep the sentences short.

For example, start with: May all beings be well, happy and peaceful.

When you want to add something else, gradually include the following phrases:

May all beings be free from physical suffering.
May all beings be free from mental suffering.
May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.

When we are developing metta and concentration gets deeper, reciting the first phrase may seem to take quite long. As a result, our practice won't develop smoothly. Then we should reduce the phrase to 'May all beings be happy' and repeat this over and over again. In this way, the practice will proceed effortlessly again. This is the reason we should only use a few words.

A person who is practising metta should regard all beings in the same way a mother cares for her only child. When we mentally or verbally say 'all beings' then we should incline our mind towards all beings. It is not essential that a picture of all beings arises in our mind; it only matters that we incline our mind towards all beings. Also, it's not important to get a mental picture of the shape or form of the beings for whom we are developing metta. If we try to get a mental picture, then it may be very difficult to develop the quality of metta. At the beginning when concentration is still very weak, we may even find that metta completely

disappears. When we are reciting ‘May all beings be well, happy and peaceful’, we need to make sure that our wish for their good health, happiness and peace is genuine and strong. ‘May they be well’ means that we wish all beings be free from physical danger and any kind of sickness. ‘May they be happy and peaceful’ means that we wish all living beings be free from mental suffering such as worry, grief, anger, depression, anxiety, longing, conceit, and jealousy. We wish them to be happy and peaceful. With this method of practising metta meditation, we have to repeat the phrases over and over again. It is especially useful to repeat these phrases aloud at the beginning of a sitting when concentration is not yet very strong, or when we feel very sleepy or have a mind filled with anger, worry, anxiety, or many thoughts. If we just repeat the phrases in our mind at such a time, the practice of metta meditation will not be effective. When we increase our effort by repeating the phrases aloud, then metta will be able to overpower mental states like anger, and our practice will proceed much better. This is why we should repeat the metta phrases aloud during the times the mind is troubled by anger and other difficult mental states.

The Way to Practise Non-specific Metta (Anodisa Metta)

In the Metta Sutta, the Buddha said that practitioners should practise metta meditation during every waking hour using one of the four different postures: walking, standing, sitting or lying down. Whenever we are practising metta and walking from one place to another, we should repeat the phrase, ‘May all beings be well, happy and peaceful’. Also, when we are travelling on a train, on a plane or by car, we should develop metta. We should wish all the people on the plane happiness and peace. Developing metta in this way is very good. Whenever we meet, see or hear any living beings, we should develop metta. When we meet human beings, then we should develop metta towards them. When we meet animals, we should develop metta towards them. This is why we say: ‘Seeing a concept, practise metta meditation. Seeing an absolute reality, practise vipassana meditation.’

We can also develop metta while we are standing, sitting, or lying. For whatever reason we may be standing, while standing we should practise metta meditation by repeating, ‘May all beings be well, happy and peaceful.’ For whatever reason we may be sitting, while sitting we can also practise metta meditation. When we are lying down, we should practise metta meditation. Also, when we are lying down to sleep, before actually falling asleep, we should practise metta meditation by silently repeating, ‘May all beings be well, happy and peaceful’ in our minds. In fact, it is much more pleasant falling asleep while practising metta meditation. Only when we fall asleep should we stop our metta meditation. Sleep is the time to rest for the metta practitioner. During our waking hours, we should always practise metta meditation.

We should practise metta meditation during all of our activities, such as eating our lunch or having a snack, drinking water or a cup of tea, taking a shower, washing our face, completing work in the house or office, and even buying or selling things at the market. We should do all these activities while developing metta. When we are sweeping, we can develop metta in our minds, ‘May all beings be well, happy and peaceful’, and let our arms do the sweeping. Whenever we have to do some work that does not involve the conceptual mind, we should do this work while developing metta. In the beginning of the practice, this might be somewhat difficult. However, when we have more experience with the practice, then it becomes easier to do this. This method of practising metta meditation towards all living beings without dividing them into different groups is called non-specific metta meditation (anodisa metta). Practising metta meditation like this is very meritorious. In the Okkha Sutta of the Nidana Vagga, Samyutta Nikaya, the Buddha said that the merit gained from practising metta meditation three times a day for three or four seconds (one time in the morning, one time at midday and

one time in the evening) is far greater than the merit gained from offering one hundred pots of rice three times a day.

The Way to Practise Specific Metta (Odisha Metta)

If the person who is practising metta meditation is able to spend more time on metta, he/she can practise it in the ten directions. This is not difficult; just repeat the following phrases:

1. All living beings in the east
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
May they be free from physical suffering.
May they be free from mental suffering.
May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
2. All living being in the south-east
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
May they be free from physical suffering.
May they be free from mental suffering.
May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
3. All living beings in the south
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
May they be free from physical suffering.
May they be free from mental suffering.
May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
4. All living beings in the south-west
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
May they be free from physical suffering.
May they be free from mental suffering.
May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
5. All living beings in the west
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
May they be free from physical suffering.
May they be free from mental suffering.
May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
6. All living beings in the north-west
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
May they be free from physical suffering.
May they be free from mental suffering.
May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
7. All living beings in the north
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
May they be free from physical suffering.
May they be free from mental suffering.
May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
8. All living beings in the north-east
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
May they be free from physical suffering.
May they be free from mental suffering.
May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
9. All living beings in the upper direction
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
May they be free from physical suffering.

- May they be free from mental suffering.
- May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
- 10. All living beings in the direction below
 - May they be well, happy and peaceful.
 - May they be free from physical suffering.
 - May they be free from mental suffering.
 - May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.

After we finish practising in the ten directions, we can continue the practice of metta meditation with the previous phrases, 'May all beings be well, happy and peaceful'. This method of practising metta comes from our benefactor Chanmyay Sayadaw (Sayadaw Ashin Janakabhivamsa).

A Cautionary Note on the Practice of Metta

When there is sufficient time, meditators should ideally develop metta in all the compass directions by beginning with the east and ending with above and below and then reversing the sequence beginning with above and below and ending with the eastern direction. When we develop metta towards all beings that live in the east, then we should be careful that we focus our minds on all beings living in the east. If we develop metta towards all beings that live in the southeast, then we should be careful that we focus and incline our minds towards all beings living in the southeast. We should be careful to focus our minds in the direction in which we are developing metta. This method divides the beings according to the direction in which they are living, and it is called specific metta meditation (odisa metta). Another way to practise metta is to categorize beings according to place or location.

- ❑ All living beings in this house
 - May they be well, happy and peaceful.
 - May they be free from physical suffering.
 - May they be free from mental suffering.
 - May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
- ❑ All living beings in this monastery
 - May they be well, happy and peaceful.
 - May they be free from physical suffering.
 - May they be free from mental suffering.
 - May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
- ❑ All living beings in this village
 - May they be well, happy and peaceful.
 - May they be free from physical suffering.
 - May they be free from mental suffering.
 - May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
- ❑ All living beings in this town
 - May they be well, happy and peaceful.
 - May they be free from physical suffering.
 - May they be free from mental suffering.
 - May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.
- ❑ All living beings in this country
 - May they be well, happy and peaceful.
 - May they be free from physical suffering.
 - May they be free from mental suffering.
 - May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.

- All living beings in this world
 May they be well, happy and peaceful.
 May they be free from physical suffering.
 May they be free from mental suffering.
 May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.

Whenever beings are divided using directions or places like this house, this monastery, this village, or this town, it is called specific metta meditation (odisa metta). Similarly, when beings are not divided into specific groups and metta is developed towards all living beings, it is called non-specific or general metta meditation (anodisa metta).

Developing Metta for the Attainment of the Jhanas

For those of you who want to practise metta meditation to reach the jhanas you should:

1. Do the preliminary preparations before starting with metta meditation
2. Reflect on the dangers of dosa
3. Reflect on the qualities of patience (khanti)
4. Know precisely
 - whom you should not develop metta towards at the beginning of your practice
 - whom you should never develop metta towards
5. Know which person you should first develop metta towards
6. Know how to progress with your metta meditation

Preliminary Preparations

First of all, let's talk about the preliminary preparations.

Before starting your metta meditation, you should take a shower and wear clean comfortable clothing, so that your body and mind feel clean, pure and fresh. Then find a quiet place in the forest, on a hilltop, under the shade of a tree, or in a peaceful place. After sitting down, pay your respects to the Triple Gem, your parents and your teachers, and entrust your body to the Buddha. Then commit yourselves to either five or eight precepts, so that your moral conduct is pure. When you sit, your clothes should not be too tight. Loosen them if necessary, so that you are comfortable. Your body should also not be too stiff; try to relax and sit comfortably in the cross-legged position. Whenever you practise metta meditation, you should reduce anxiety as much as possible.

Your body should neither lean forwards nor backwards; it should be straight without straining too much. Your head should also be straight and not lean forwards or backwards. It is better to have your legs parallel to each other on the floor than in the half or full lotus posture. In this way, you will be able to sit for longer periods of time. You should place the right leg closer to the body and the left leg further away from the body. Since your legs are not on top of each other, there will not be any extra pressure, so the blood can circulate freely, and numbness will not become an obstacle. You should be able to sit comfortably in this posture for longer and longer periods of time. Your hands should rest in your lap with the left hand below and the right hand on top with the palms facing up. It is also possible to put your hands on your knees with the palms facing up.

After adjusting your posture, you should reflect on the dangers of dosa and the qualities and benefits of patience. The reason for this is that you have to remove anger and hatred and acquire patience with metta. It is definitely not an easy task to remove a mental state if you do

not recognize that it is dangerous or to acquire a mental state if you do not see that it is beneficial. This is also true in worldly matters. If we need to throw something away or break a bad habit, we will not be able to do so until we see that the habit is harmful or that the object has defects and imperfections. Only when we can see the dangers in a certain habit or behaviour will we abandon it. And if we do not see the benefits of a certain thing, we will not be interested in acquiring it. This is why we have to reflect on the dangers of dosa, so that we can remove anger or ill will with metta. And we also have to reflect on the positive aspects of patience, so that we can acquire it with metta. These reflections should be done before we start practising metta meditation. However, we can also use these reflections during our metta meditation practice when dosa arises. How long should we spend on these reflections? We should do these reflections until dosa has completely disappeared. Only when dosa has disappeared should we go back to the practice of metta.

The Dangers of Dosa

There are many places in the scriptures where the dangers of dosa are explained. So, I want to talk a little bit about some of these dangers. When dosa exists in the mind, we are not able to distinguish between cause and effect or between good and bad actions. If there is dosa, we do not know anymore what is lawful or what is against the law. Because of dosa, many people may hate us, and we will have many enemies. We are liable to make many mistakes, and at the time of death, our minds will be confused and tormented. Dying in such a state, we will be reborn in hell. In the world, there is no greater danger than dosa, and in the mind, there is no other mental state that can bewitch the mind in the way dosa can. Dosa is able to destroy our dignity and other people's dignity.

If a person gets angry in response to another person's anger, then he/she becomes even more contemptible than the first person. An angry person ages faster and may die sooner. He/she will easily lose his/her beauty or attractiveness. If he/she has a lot of dosa, then he/she will have an ugly appearance in his/her future existences. These are a few of the dangers that are explained in the scriptures.

Furthermore, in our daily life we may not be able to eat and sleep because of dosa. Because of dosa, we may fall into utter disgrace. Because of dosa, we may have many enemies and suffer greatly. Because of dosa, we are separated from our wife or husband or relatives. Because of dosa, our friendships are ruined and friendly ties are broken. Because of dosa, our wealth is lost. Because of dosa, we may have to pay fines or undergo punishment, so that we may be held in custody or thrown into prison. Because of dosa, we can develop high blood pressure, heart disease, or have a stroke. There is no end to the dangers of dosa because they are so numerous. We should reflect on the dangers of dosa in this way. If we often reflect on the dangers of dosa, then the dosa in our hearts and minds will subside and gradually disappear.

The Qualities of Patience or Khanti

Following these reflections on the dangers of dosa, we should reflect on the qualities and benefits of patience. Patience or khanti means that we are tolerant and do not retaliate with strong anger when we are abused, scolded, shouted at, tortured, or ill-treated. If we are endowed with patience then:

1. We will be loved by many people
2. We will be free from dangers
3. We will be free from faults
4. We will not die with a confused mind
5. After death, we will be reborn in the deva realm

These five benefits are mentioned in the Akkosa Sutta which is contained in the Pañcaka Nipata of the Anguttara Nikaya.

There is no benefit that excels patience or tolerance. Patience is the weapon of the virtuous person. Patience is one of the blessings and also one of the perfections or paramis. Patience leads to the noblest conduct. Patience leads to nibbana, and only with patience can we have peace of mind. When we are endowed with patience, the world will always appear pleasant and have a healthy glow. The power of patience is like the power of an army that can resist the enemy. There are so many positive aspects of patience. If we reflect in this way on the qualities of patience, then the power of patience will become very strong. When metta starts to flow like the water from a spring, then the heart will also become very soft and smooth. Now that I've finished explaining how to reflect on the dangers of dosa and on the benefits of patience, I'll explain whom we should not practise metta to when we are beginning our practice.

Persons for Whom We Should Not Practise Metta

There are four categories of people who should not be the object of metta meditation when we are beginning this practice. They are:

1. Persons whom we dislike
2. Very dear persons
3. Neutral persons, acquaintances, or people we neither love nor hate
4. Enemies or persons for whom we feel hatred

The reason for this is that it is very difficult to develop metta towards these people.

1. If we start practising metta meditation towards a person we dislike, we will be overcome with dosa because the experiences that made us angry with that person will likely come to mind. Then it will be very difficult to develop metta.
2. If we start practising metta meditation towards a very dear person, we may feel unhappy if we happen to remember some minor suffering of that person. This may even cause tears to arise, and it will be very difficult to develop metta.
3. Also, if we start practising metta meditation towards a neutral person, a person whom we have just met, and try to put her/him in the place of the dear person, we will find it difficult and tiring to develop metta. Again, the development of metta will be impeded.
4. Finally, if we start practising metta meditation towards an enemy, we will just get angry because our minds will be filled with thoughts about the negative unfair things that this person has done to us. As a result, we will encounter many difficulties and will not be able to develop metta.

For these reasons, the commentary to the Visuddhimagga says that the practice of metta meditation should not begin with these four categories of people.

Let's now talk about another category of persons who should not be the object of metta meditation. When we start practising metta meditation, we should not develop metta for a person we feel attracted to. The commentary to the Visuddhimagga says that this arouses lust or tanha. This passage, in fact, refers to metta practice which has not yet become well established. However, Chanmyay Sayadaw has said that it is possible to practise metta for a

person we have an attraction to without any difficulties when our practice is well developed. Then it is possible to develop pure and genuine metta.

Now let's briefly talk about persons whom you should not develop metta for when you are practising metta solely to develop jhana. First of all, you should never practise metta meditation towards a dead person. This is because it is not possible to reach upacara samadhi (access concentration) or appana samadhi (absorption concentration) practising in this way. The commentary to the Visuddhimagga says that this kind of practice will not allow any concentration to develop. This explanation, however, is only intended for meditators who are practising metta meditation in order to attain jhana. Chanmyay Sayadaw has said that for those who are practising metta without the intention of attaining jhana, it is possible and even beneficial to develop metta towards a person in his/her new existence after he/she has died.

Persons for Whom We Should First Develop Metta

When we want to practise metta meditation to attain the jhanas and have completed all the preliminary preparations, we should begin by developing metta towards ourselves for about five or ten minutes. Like a witness, we start with ourselves: 'May I be well, happy and peaceful.' Developing metta first towards oneself gives rise to the understanding that other sentient beings have the same wish for well-being and happiness that we have. This arouses a feeling of compassion for other sentient beings and helps to make the feeling of metta powerful and strong. This practice is done in order to become more considerate. Metta is born in the lap of consideration or empathy for others.

After this, we can develop metta towards:

1. A respected and venerated person
2. A very dear person
3. A neutral person
4. An enemy

This is the order that has been handed down in the commentary to the Visuddhimagga. So first of all, we should develop metta towards a very respected and venerated person. This can be a teacher or a virtuous person. Before starting to develop metta, we should first reflect on the good qualities of this teacher. For example, we could consider his generosity (dana), his pure moral conduct, his honesty and uprightness, his foresight, his kindness, his sweet speech, his helpfulness, his teaching, and his advice in times of difficulty. Then focussing on the teacher, we repeatedly say the words: 'May Sayadaw be well, happy and peaceful.' Or if this person is a layperson, we can use his/her name. We have to repeat this phrase over and over again, ten times, one hundred times, one thousand times, ten thousand times, one hundred thousand times, or even a million times. When we have done this and have become settled in the practice, then it's possible to drop the name and just continue with the words, 'May he be well, happy and peaceful' while still focussing our mind on this person. If during the practice of metta meditation our mind wanders to another object, we should bring the mind back to the teacher who is the object of our metta meditation. This practice is not like vipassana meditation where we observe whatever object arises. We need to be careful and always bring the mind back to the object of the metta meditation.

When practising metta meditation towards the teacher, it does not matter if a mental picture of the teacher arises or doesn't arise in our mind. What matters and what is most important is the development of a genuine and strong wish for the teacher to be healthy and peaceful. This is more important than having a mental picture of the teacher in our mind. To make our metta strong and powerful, it needs to be generated from the heart. By following the words, this

sincere desire should arise in the mind. Be especially careful about this. If we try to get a mental image at the beginning of the practice, the strength of metta may weaken. Sometimes our metta may even disappear altogether. When we have become accustomed to practising in this way, after some time the face of the person who is the object of metta can clearly appear to be cheerful and smiling. At this point, our metta has merged with the person who is the object of our meditation. Our metta and the person who is the object of our metta meditation have become one. In this experience of oneness, we experience the mind as our mind and the body as the body of the person we are radiating metta towards.

At one time, the Australian monk U Vimalaramsi told me that he wanted to do some metta meditation. He had been practising vipassana meditation for over five months. So, I instructed him in the metta meditation practice as it is explained in the commentary to the Visuddhimagga. I also asked him to report daily on the progress of his metta meditation. After he had practised for about twenty-five days, he smiled whenever he was developing metta. Sometimes he even uttered some sounds whenever he smiled. Knowing this, I asked him in the next interview why he was smiling. He replied, "I am developing metta towards a friend who has helped me a lot. After practising metta for him for quite some time, his face started to smile. At that time, I also happened to smile. When I saw him smile again, a smile also appeared on my face. This was quite spontaneous; the smile seemed to appear by itself. Whenever he smiled, I also happened to be smiling. At that time, I could not feel my body anymore; I could only feel the metta in my mind. The metta was not in my body; it seemed to be in the body of my friend. Is this correct Sayadaw?" I told him that this was correct and that this phenomenon was caused by the concentration gained from practising metta meditation. When concentration becomes very good, the practitioner will experience metta in this way. When we develop metta in this way, the experience can be extremely beneficial.

When you develop metta towards the teacher in this way, you may wonder how long you should practise. You should practise until you have successfully mastered metta or attained jhana. When you have mastered metta or attained jhana, your mind will become very calm and steady, soft and supple. You will feel rapture, and your whole body and mind will become suffused with delight and happiness. To achieve this, you have to practise continuously without any breaks while sitting, standing, walking, eating, drinking, sweeping, working at home, working in the office, or being engaged in the business of ordinary life.

The Development of Metta in Stages

After attaining upacara samadhi (access concentration) and appana samadhi (absorption concentration) by developing metta towards the teacher, choose another person of the first category whom you respect and venerate as much as your teacher and then develop metta towards him/her. Now after you have chosen the new person and are ready to develop metta towards him/her, you should first begin by developing metta towards the teacher. After the metta gains strength and momentum with the teacher, then change to the new person. When you have changed to the second person, continue to develop metta until the mind becomes calm, soft, and elated and the whole body is permeated with a delightful feeling of coolness. As the mind becomes elated and happy with continued practice, do not stop the practice of metta and do not allow it to disappear. You should always continue with the practice. What may happen when elation and happiness arise is that the yogi stops the practice of metta meditation. Carried away by this elation and happiness, there is the temptation to stop and take delight in this pleasant feeling; however, at that moment concentration will be broken. Therefore, do not take delight in this elation and happiness, but continue to practise metta meditation continuously. If the feeling of metta towards the second person is weak or does not arise at all, go back to the teacher. When the feeling of metta towards the teacher becomes

very strong, change to the second person and see if you can develop strong metta for this person. If the feeling of metta arises and gains in strength, continue to practise only with this second person. You should practise metta meditation by switching back and forth in this way. Following the instructions I've just given you, try to develop metta for up to five persons in this first category. Again when you practise, do it until you master the practice and attain upacara samadhi and appana samadhi; that is, until you attain jhana. After that, develop metta towards a person of the second category, a very dear and beloved person. Then extend metta to a person of the third category, a neutral person. And finally radiate metta to a person of the fourth category, a hostile person or an enemy. If you have no enemies, then you do not have to develop metta towards an enemy.

When we have a person whom we consider to be an enemy, then the expression 'to develop metta towards the enemy' can be clearly illustrated by the experience of the Australian monk U Vimalaramsi whom I've already mentioned. After U Vimalaramsi had practised metta meditation for over a month, I asked him to develop metta towards an enemy. When I asked him if he had any enemies, his answer was, "Yes, I have an enemy." So I told him, "If you have an enemy, try to develop metta towards this enemy." The next day when he came for his interview, he reported that he had been unable to develop metta towards this enemy. He said that this woman had caused him a lot of suffering. For this reason, he could not develop metta towards her because he had no feelings of goodwill for her. And he also added that he was concerned that she might become well, happy and peaceful or that she might live with great abundance and ease.

I told him, "If this is the case, then go back to the teacher for whom you first developed metta. As soon as the feeling of metta becomes strong and powerful, you should change back to this woman and try to develop metta for her. If at that time the feeling of metta does not arise, go back again to the teacher and develop metta towards him. When the feeling of metta becomes very strong, change to this woman and try again to develop metta for her. Continue to do this repeatedly." After two days U Vimalaramsi reported, "Now my metta meditation practice is going well. I can develop metta towards this woman in the same way that I can for the teacher and other people. As a result, I do not think of this woman as an enemy anymore but as a friend." After about one and a half months of practising metta meditation, his face was clear and smiling, and his body also radiated with a healthy glow. His face, complexion and body were definitely not the same as the day he first arrived at the monastery.

So, yogis when you develop strong metta for an enemy, you will also be able to report such an experience. There is one more thing to be careful about. If we practise metta meditation towards an enemy and only think about the unskillful or unjust things that this person has done to us, then we will end up having difficulties with aversion or dosa. At that time, we should enter the jhana that was attained when we developed metta towards the previous persons, and then emerging from this jhana, we should continuously try to develop metta towards our enemy. We should try to follow the example of the Australian monk. If the feeling of metta doesn't arise, then we can use the method that I am going to elaborate on now.

Reflections to Overcome Dosa

1. The Buddha himself gave the following guidance to his disciples, "Oh monks, even if robbers torture you and cut off your limbs with a two-handed saw, you should not get angry with those who torture you. If you get angry, then you are not following my instructions."

2. If you retaliate with anger towards an angry person, then it is actually you who are more despicable. When you can be patient with an angry person without getting angry yourself, this is winning the battle.
3. When you realize that you are getting angry with someone, you should try to control your anger with mindfulness and not get angry, so you can continue to live peacefully. This will be beneficial for both parties, for yourself as well as the other person.

In the commentary to the Visuddhimagga, there are many different ways of overcoming dosa. But as there is not enough time during this talk to elaborate on all of them, I will only talk about a few in greater detail. When dosa disappears after reflecting in this way, continue to develop metta. If dosa has still not disappeared after reflecting like this, then it will disappear after you have reflected on the Bodhisatta's patience in his previous lives.

Listen carefully sons and daughters of the Buddha. The Buddha who is our teacher was patient in his many previous lives and did not get angry with those who tortured and mistreated him in many different ways. How did he master patience in some of his lives?

Practising Patience as the Hermit Khantivadi

Long ago King Kalabu was the ruler of Benares. At that time, the Bodhisatta was the son of a very rich Brahmin whose fortune was eighty crores of money. When his parents died, he looked at the material possessions that his parents had left behind and realized that they had not been able to take these things with them. Reflecting in this manner, he also realized that he would not be able to take these possessions with him, so he gave them all away. After offering these things, he left for the forest and became a hermit. He stayed in a forest near the Himalayas and ate the fruit and nuts from the trees in the forest. However, there was no oil or salt, so one day he went down to the villages to get some oil, salt, and vinegar, so that he might have a more nutritious diet. In his search for these foods, the Bodhisatta finally arrived in the town of Benares. During his alms round in the town, the commander-in-chief saw the Bodhisatta and with great reverence and respect invited him to stay for a meal. After the commander had offered him the meal, he invited the hermit to stay in the royal garden. In this way, the Bodhisatta came to live in the royal garden.

One day King Kalabu came to the royal garden with his queen and many attendants for some entertainment. The dances and songs were performed on an auspicious stone slab. Lying down and resting his head on the thigh of his favourite mistress, the king watched the performances of the singers, musicians and dancers. While watching this entertainment, the king soon fell asleep. When the troupe of female performers who were entertaining the king realized that the king had fallen asleep, they stopped their performance as it was no longer necessary. Then they went for a little walk around the garden. As they strolled around the garden, they came across the hermit, the Bodhisatta. On seeing him they approached, paid their respects, and asked him to give them a suitable dhamma talk. After listening to their request, the hermit delivered a dhamma talk.

Around this time, the mistress who held the king's head on her thigh wanted the king to wake up, so she moved a bit to wake him up. Not seeing any of his attendants, the king asked where they had gone, and his mistress told him that they had gone to listen to the hermit. On hearing this news, the king was filled with jealousy and envy and became extremely angry. Grasping his dagger and loudly exclaiming that he was going to teach him a lesson, he ran to find the deceitful hermit. Sensing the king's rage, one of the female attendants who was very close to the king tried to take his dagger and calm his anger, but his anger would not subside. Facing the hermit, the king asked him what his teaching was, and the hermit replied that he was

teaching patience. Then the king asked him about the meaning of patience. The hermit replied that patience means that a person does not get angry even if he is abused, scolded, slandered, or tortured. The king told the hermit that he wanted to see if he truly possessed patience, and he immediately summoned his executioner. When the executioner arrived, the king told him to seize the hermit and push him to the ground. He commanded him to beat the hermit with a cane of thorns two thousand times on all four sides of his body.

The executioner followed the king's orders and gave the hermit Khantivadi two thousand blows. After receiving two thousand blows, the hermit's skin was torn all over his body. His flesh was cut and bruised, and blood flowed from many parts of his body. Can you imagine how much he must have suffered? Without having committed any wrongdoing, he had been severely punished. Despite his suffering, however, the hermit did not get angry or find fault with either the king or the executioner. Although he had good reason to feel anger and resentment, the hermit was patient. Persons who practise metta meditation should emulate this hermit's fine example.

Although he had been severely mistreated, the hermit did not die. So, the king again asked him what his teaching was. Once more the hermit replied that he was teaching patience. "Do you think patience lies in my skin? It is not in my skin, but deep in my heart," said the hermit calmly. Feeling the sting of this answer, King Kalabu became even more furious. Overcome by anger, the king told the executioner to cut off the hermit's two hands, then his two legs, and finally his ears and nose. The executioner followed orders and cruelly cut off each body part with his axe. After each part had been amputated, the king repeatedly asked the hermit what his teaching was. And each time, the hermit replied that he was teaching patience and that this patience lay deep in his heart. Exasperated the king finally cried, "You deceitful hermit, keep your patience and see if it does you any good now!" Then after kicking Khantivadi's chest with his feet, he walked away scornfully. When he reached the gate of his garden, the earth swallowed King Kalabu. In the scriptures, it says that he fell into Avici-hell. After that, the commander-in-chief came and begged the hermit not to be angry with the king. The hermit responded with the following words:

*"Long live the king whose cruelty
has inflicted injury on my body.
Pure saints like me
Never regard such deeds with enmity."*

Now each of you may have enemies, but they surely do not make you suffer the way that King Kalabu made the hermit suffer. Throughout his ordeal, the hermit Khantivadi was patient and did not get angry with King Kalabu although his actions were truly despicable. So, as disciples of the Buddha you should also be patient without getting angry, shouldn't you? You should reflect in this way, and after having discarded the dosa you have for your enemy, you should continue to practise metta meditation. However, if after doing this reflection the anger has still not disappeared, you should reflect on the patience of the Bodhisatta's life as Dhammapala.

The Story of Dhammapala

Long ago King Mahapatapa was the ruler of Benares. At that time, the Bodhisatta entered the womb of Queen Canda-Devi. After he was born, he was named Dhammapala. One day when the prince Dhammapala was seven months old, the queen bathed him and carefully dressed him. Putting on his clothes, she tenderly cuddled and held her son. While the queen was cuddling her young son, King Mahapatapa happened to enter her chamber. The queen was

very fond of her little son, and although she saw the king she did not immediately get up to greet him with reverence and respect. King Mahapatapa thought to himself, "Even now she is very proud of her son. What will it be like when he has grown up? It's obvious that she will not take notice of me anymore, so I must get rid of this child at once." He immediately spun around in rage and went back to his throne. Then he summoned the executioner and told him to go the chamber of the queen and bring him the little prince Dhammapala. Realizing that the king was angry with her, the queen cried as she held the little baby in her lap. Her tears, however, did not prevent the executioner from obeying orders and snatching the baby Dhammapala from her lap. In anxious pursuit, Queen Canda-Devi followed him back to the throne room. The executioner placed the child on the chopping board in front of the king who immediately gave him the order to chop off the little child's hands. Falling to her knees, Queen Canda-Devi begged the king to cut off her hands instead. She pleaded with the king and told him that the little child was innocent and that the fault was entirely hers. Although she begged and pleaded without pausing for breath, the king again ordered the child's hands be cut off. The executioner obeyed and cruelly cut off the hands of seven-month-old Dhammapala with his axe. As the axe was very sharp, the two little hands fell like tender bamboo shoots onto the floor. Once again this small child, the Bodhisattva, did not get angry or cry, but with a heart full of khanti and metta, he patiently bore the pain.

His mother quickly knelt down, gently picked up the little hands, and held them in her lap while she wept aloud bitterly. Then the king ordered the two legs be cut off. Again Canda-Devi pleaded for the child's innocence in vain. The two legs were then cut off. And after the legs had been chopped off, he ordered the head be cut off. In desperation, the mother again pleaded with the king, but the king ignored all her pleas. Threatened with severe punishment, the executioner carried out the king's order and cut off the child's head. Even after the head had been chopped off and the child was dead, the king's anger had still not disappeared, so he ordered the executioner to throw the little child into the air and encircle the body with the edge of the dagger as if to make a garland. So far did the cruelty of the mean father extend. Witnessing these cruel events, the mother Canda-Devi beat her chest and moaned, and finally fell dead on the spot. As soon as the queen died, King Mahapatapa fell from his throne onto the floor as the earth opened up and swallowed him into the bowels of Avici-hell.

During all these spiteful despicable acts, the little child Dhammapala did not get angry. Even at the time of his death, he passed away patiently without any hatred in his mind. Yogis, as disciples of the Buddha, you surely do not have enemies who would torment you the way the king tormented Dhammapala. The Bodhisatta did not get angry even in the face of such horrible despicable acts; he bore all this mistreatment patiently. Therefore, shouldn't you also try to be patient without getting angry? By reflecting in this way, you should be able to abandon any anger that you might have for your enemy and continue to develop metta.

Calming Dosa with Reflection and Analysis

If reflecting on the merits of patience does not calm the fires of anger, then you should do an analytical reflection. This is done in the following way. When you are practising metta meditation and feel angry with someone, you should ask yourself what or whom you are angry with. Are you angry at the hair on his head or at the hair on his body? Are you angry at his fingers and toenails or at his teeth? Are you angry at his skin? Are you angry at his flesh or sinews?

Alternatively, you could ask yourself if you are angry at the earth element that can be found in the hair on his/her head? Are you angry at the water element, or at the fire element, or at the air element? Another approach is to ask these questions based on the five aggregates

(khandhas), the twelve sense bases, or the eighteen elements as mentioned in the Abhidhamma. Based on the aggregates, for example, you could ask if you feel anger at materiality, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, or consciousness? You could ask whether you are angry at the eye base (cakkhayatana), that is the eye, or whether you are angry at the visual form base (rupayatana), that is colour? Are you angry at the mind base (manayatana)? Are you angry at the mental object base (dhammayatana)? Or are you angry at the eye element (cakkhudhatu) or at the visible form element (rupadhatu)? Are you angry at the eye-consciousness element (cakkhuvīññānadhatu) or at the mind element (manodhatu)? Or are you angry at the mental-object element (dhammadhatu), or at the mind-consciousness element (manovīññānadhatu)?

When you analyse like this, you come to see that there is nothing solid that you can use to maintain this dosa, just as there is no solid surface on which to hang a picture in the sky or just as there is no resting place for a mustard seed on the point of a needle. Analysing in this way, you should be able to abandon your anger, so that you can continue with your metta practice.

If you still haven't been able to abandon dosa using this method, then you should reflect and analyse the characteristics of nama and rupa or mental and physical phenomena. All mental and physical phenomena exist for only a short moment and then disappear. The wrong that we think we experienced was in fact only a moment of mental or physical phenomena that existed for a brief instant and which has now completely ceased to exist and has totally disappeared. So, at this very moment the particular thought or mind state or unpleasant physical sensation that caused the suffering no longer exists. At this precise moment, which mental or physical phenomena belonging to our 'enemy' are we in fact angry at when the mental and physical phenomena that produced the suffering no longer exist? In the ongoing process of mental and physical phenomena that we refer to as our 'enemy', there are now altogether new mental and physical processes that have not hurt us in any way. Therefore, which mental and physical phenomena are we angry with? There are no permanent mental and physical phenomena that could form the basis for our anger. We should reflect in this way, and when we are able to abandon our dosa, we can continue to develop metta. Reflecting in this way, dosa can be calmed down and abandoned, and then we should be able to develop metta towards our enemies. Do this again and again until you reach jhana.

We should practise metta for:

1. Ourselves
2. A respected person
3. A very dear and close person
4. A neutral person or acquaintance
5. An enemy or hostile person

We need to develop metta for ourselves, a respected person, a very dear person, a neutral person and a hostile person without discrimination, in the same way that milk mixes with water, so that neither the milk nor the water can be distinguished or separated from the other. In this way, there are no more distinctions or differences between us and another person, between the beloved person and the enemy. Until now, we have practised metta meditation towards one person at a time. When the feeling of metta has become strong and genuine, we can also develop metta towards any person in any of the five categories by mixing the categories freely. How can we do this? We can develop this practice in the following way: "May I be well, happy and peaceful. May my beloved person also be well, happy and peaceful. May I be well, happy and peaceful. May my respected person also be well, happy

and peaceful. May I be well, happy and peaceful. May my enemy also be well, happy and peaceful. May I be well, happy and peaceful. May my neutral person also be well, happy and peaceful. May I be well, happy and peaceful. May my beloved person, my respected person, my enemy, and my neutral person all be well, happy and peaceful.”

Developing Metta without Discrimination

Let’s imagine that the following four persons are sitting together: the metta practitioner (oneself), the beloved person, the neutral person and the enemy. Suddenly some bandits appear and say that they want to make an offering of blood for the nats, ‘spirits’ of Myanmar folklore, from the neck of one of these four people. So, they ask for one person from this group. Now, if we think that we should go with them and leave the other three persons behind, or if we think they should take the beloved person and leave the enemy, or if we think they should take the enemy and leave the beloved person here, all these scenarios show that metta without discrimination has not yet been achieved. This is still not the way that milk mixes with water. The commentary to the Visuddhimagga says that if we do not want to give any of these four people to the bandits and have the same wish that all four people be well, happy and peaceful, we have completely mastered the practice of metta. This is the genuine practice of metta without any discrimination; as a result, we have become truly competent in our metta practice.

From Odisa Metta to Anodisa Metta

After practising in this way, we gradually enlarge the area where we radiate our metta by directing it to a family living in their house, then to the suburb, the village, the town, the state and the country where we live. Then we focus on all living beings in the world and develop metta towards them. When we practise in this way, metta changes from specific metta (odisa metta) with its division into different groups to non-specific metta (anodisa metta) where there are no longer any divisions at all. Or we can also practise using the directional radiation of metta, starting from the eastern direction and then developing metta in each of the ten directions (disaparana metta) and finally developing metta towards all living beings in the world. Practising in this way, we also change from odisa metta to anodisa metta. This second method is even better.

The Benefits of Metta

When we practise metta meditation according to these instructions, the feeling of metta becomes strong, and the mind of the person who is practising metta becomes cool through and through. Then the mind is filled with rapture, and it becomes serene, peaceful and quiet. When the mind becomes peaceful, the physical organ of the heart is embraced by metta, and it also becomes serene and peaceful. Gradually, the whole body becomes suffused with coolness as a result of metta. In essence, the whole body becomes a very peaceful little dwelling place.

Because of the practice of metta, we will fall asleep and wake up peacefully; we will have pleasant dreams. On seeing our face or hearing our voice, others will love us and feel at one with us. We will be loved by devas and brahmas and be protected by devas. There will be no danger from weapons, fires, or poisons, which could cause death. Our minds will be calm and steadfast, and our faces will be clear and cheerful. We will die with a clear, happy and peaceful mind and will be reborn in the Brahma realm. Because of metta, we will be free from desire and craving, and our anger and frustration will also disappear. We will be free from jealousy and miserliness. Anxiety, longing, worry, grief and the desire to cry will cease to arise. As a result of the practice of metta, we will be free from danger and will experience

peace. Anyone who hates us will start to love or show us affection. People who speak ill of us will start to praise us, and those who swear at us will speak kindly to us. Hostile persons or enemies will become our friends.

As a result of the practice of metta, we will become successful in our undertakings and overcome difficulties. We will be able to achieve whatever we want to accomplish, and things will happen according to our wishes. Because of metta, we will experience other people's love, adoration and devotion. We will have other's faith and respect. With the practice of metta, hot fires, hot water, the hot sun and hot oil will become cool like fresh spring water. Poisons will become ambrosia, the food of devas, and sticks, knives, guns and other lethal weapons will turn into jasmine flower buds.

Here is a summary of the eleven benefits of metta meditation:

1. A person falls asleep happily
2. A person wakes up happily
3. A person has no bad dreams
4. A person is loved by humans
5. A person is loved by non-humas
6. A person is protected by devas
7. A person is protected from dangers caused by fire, weapons and poisons
8. A person is able to concentrate easily
9. A person's facial expression is clear and serene
10. At the time of death, a person's mind is not confused
11. If a person is not already an Arahant, he/she will be born as a Brahma

We should always remember to drink and cleanse ourselves with the cool water of metta, whether we are at home, in our family's house, or in other places like the village, suburb, town, district, state, country or even the world. Only then will family life become peaceful, and only then will there be peace in the village, suburb, town, district, state, country and the world.

In some families, family members do not sprinkle themselves with metta or drink the cool refreshing water of metta. Although they may be wealthy, they experience a lot of mental suffering caused by the fights and quarrels in their households. When there are fights and quarrels in suburbs, villages, or towns, and wars between countries, can we really say that there is peace? Can we call this progress? Is there still any meaning to human life when we are frightened day and night? A life full of worry, grief and depression has no value at all. For this reason, all the families and peoples of the world as well as any living beings who want to live with peace of mind and a healthy body need to quench their thirst with the cool soothing water of metta.

Entering the Shade of Metta to Find Freedom from Suffering

The refuge experienced by a metta meditator is similar to the delightful rest experienced in the cool pleasant shade of a large tree. Imagine such a tree by the side of the road with a grassy shady spot underneath it where no sunlight pierces the coolness. Wouldn't it be refreshingly cool and tranquil? Wouldn't all the travellers who happened to rest there feel cool, contented, happy and peaceful? Feeling such contentment, they could not keep their pleasant thoughts to

themselves, but might find themselves exclaiming,” How peaceful this is! How pleasant this is!” Similarly, we can feel this same peace and contentment when we enter the shade of metta.

The Story of Visakha Thera

At the time of the Buddha, there lived one Thera called Visakha. This Thera was always developing metta. He spent four months at one place, then four months at another place, so that he moved to three different locations in one year. After he had moved to a new dwelling place, he first developed metta towards the beings living nearby and then towards all living beings. One day, he said to himself, “I will live in this place for four months, and during these four months, I will practise metta meditation.” Then he started to develop metta while sitting, standing, walking, and lying. During all his waking hours, he always lived with metta. When Visakha Thera practised metta meditation in this way, the power of his metta radiated over the whole mountain and all the beings that lived there felt peaceful and serene. There were no fights and quarrels, and everyone lived in harmony. In this way, he passed the four months of his retreat.

While doing walking meditation, the Thera reflected that his four months on the mountain had passed very peacefully, so he decided that he would move to another place the following day. At exactly this moment, he heard the sound of soft crying nearby.

He asked, “Who is crying?”

“It is me,” said a Tree Deva living in the manila tree growing at the end of the walking path.

Then he asked, “Why are you crying like this?”

The Tree Deva replied, “Because tomorrow you will be moving to another place.”

“Yes, that’s true. But why does the fact that I’m leaving bother you?”

“In fact, it does concern me, Bhante. Venerable Sir, since you have been developing metta on this mountain, all the devas and other beings living in the shade of your metta have been healthy, happy, and peaceful. We have lived in harmony and have not suffered because of fights or quarrels. No danger could diminish our happiness or destroy our peace. However, if you leave, we will suffer again. This is why my mind is not at peace and why I am crying,” replied the Tree Deva King.

Hearing this the Thera replied, “If all these beings are living peacefully, happily and harmoniously because I am here, then I will gladly stay another four months.”

On hearing this, the Tree Deva was very pleased, and the Thera stayed there for another four months devoting himself to his metta meditation.

After the next four months had passed, one evening the Thera thought, “Now that these four months have passed, I’ll move to another place tomorrow.” That very night, the Tree Deva King appeared and again asked him to stay. After hearing this sincere request, once again he stayed for another four months. In this way, after each request the Thera stayed for another four months, and then another four months until he finally entered parinibbana on this very mountain.

When a practitioner’s metta is strong and powerful, this powerful metta produces mental and physical well being relative to the strength and power of the metta as well as freedom from danger and harm for the practitioner and for all beings living nearby. This is the virtuous power of metta. Therefore, it is obvious that the shade of metta can be even more peaceful than the shade of a tree in the forest or on the mountain. This example is taken from the scriptures to illustrate how a metta meditator was beloved by the devas.

The Story of Roja Malla

Metta can also be compared to very clear cool water. A person sprinkled by drops of clear cool water feels very peaceful and refreshed because all the heat has disappeared. In the same way, all living beings that are in contact with a meditator whose metta is diffused around him/her will experience peace and happiness of body and mind in relation to the power and strength of the meditator's metta because all the heat of burning emotions has been extinguished.

At one time, the Buddha was travelling from Apana to Kusinara with a group of two hundred and fifty monks. The news of his journey spread quickly to the ministers and high government officials of Malla. After hearing the news, they had a meeting. As the Buddha and his entourage were coming to Kusinara, they wanted to welcome them, but didn't know how they should do this. They felt that everybody should come and welcome them, so at the meeting they decided that a fine of five hundred pieces of money would be imposed on any person who did not come to welcome them. For this reason, all the ministers and high government officials of Malla clamoured to welcome the Buddha and his monks.

Among the welcoming throng, there was a minister called Roja Malla. He was wealthy; he came from a good family and had authority and power. He had also been a friend of Venerable Ananda in his younger years. As soon as he caught sight of Venerable Ananda, he approached him and bowed down. While he was bowing down, Venerable Ananda greeted him heartily, "Roja, I am so very happy that you have come to welcome the Buddha and his disciples. This will also bring you a lot of merit." Roja who was burning with the fire of dosa and pride answered, "Venerable Sir, I have not come to welcome the Buddha because I respect the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, but because I am afraid of being fined." Hearing this, Venerable Ananda wondered why he had uttered such offensive words, and he felt sad. A bit later, he went to the Buddha and related this event to him, "Venerable Sir, Minister Roja is a wealthy man of much influence. He is wealthy and has many relatives; he is also a man of authority and influence. If such a person came to respect the sasana (the teaching of the Buddha), it would be very beneficial for the teaching. Therefore, Venerable Sir, please do something to make Roja Malla respect the teaching."

On hearing this request, the Buddha replied, "Ananda, it is not difficult to make Roja respect my sasana (teaching)." Then the Buddha withdrew the cool water of metta that he had been sprinkling on innumerable beings and sprinkled it solely on Roja. As Roja became drenched by this metta water, he felt refreshed and all the fires of dosa and pride that had burned inside his mind were completely extinguished, so that his mind became calm and peaceful, and his heart became soft and gentle.

As a result, Roja was no longer able to stay there without paying his respects to the Buddha, so he asked everybody he met, "Where is the Buddha? Which building is he staying in?" Determined to search until the Buddha could be found, he hunted for the Buddha like a mother cow that is looking for her lost calf. Finally, some monks pointed to the place where the Buddha was staying, so he could pay his respects to the Buddha and listen to the dhamma talk. As a result, he came to respect the Buddha very much, and he also became a great supporter of the Buddha's teaching. After all, wasn't it due to this powerful metta that Roja who had once burned in the fires of dosa and pride and had no respect for the teachings became a happy peaceful person as well as a supporter of the sasana? Because of the virtue of metta, this cool peaceful feeling is much stronger and more enduring than that which results from the cool fresh water that we drink.

Mahagandhayon Sayadaw's Teaching of Metta

While I was studying at the Mahagandhayon Monastery in Amarapura, male and female supporters came from all areas of the country to visit. Some of them came because their son was either a novice or a monk; some came because they wanted to offer things, and some came because of the monastery's excellent reputation, its pleasant atmosphere, its superior discipline, and the integrity of its monks. As the saying goes, 'The wind carries the scent of the flowers while people carry the news of other people.' Very often, I heard the voices of the supporters who came for these different reasons. For instance, they would say, "Since I entered this monastery, my heart has become so peaceful. It seems that the Sayadaw and monks are spreading metta all over this monastery."

As a matter of fact, Sayadaw himself practised metta meditation, and every morning the monks were encouraged to take every opportunity to practise metta after being told about the benefits of metta meditation. As a result, the monks practised metta meditation whenever they found some time because it was Sayadaw's wish that they do so. They used to practise metta meditation at least twice a day, one time in the morning and one time in the evening during chanting. They practised in the following way:

1. May all people and all sentient beings living in the east
be free from danger and harm.
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
2. May all people and all sentient beings living in the southeast
be free from danger and harm.
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
3. May all people and all sentient beings living in the south
be free from danger and harm.
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
4. May all people and all sentient beings living in the southwest
be free from danger and harm
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
5. May all people and all sentient beings living in the west
be free from danger and harm.
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
6. May all people and all sentient beings living in the northwest
be free from danger and harm.
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
7. May all people and all sentient beings living in the north
be free from danger and harm.
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
8. May all people and all sentient beings living in the northeast
be free from danger and harm.
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
9. May all people and all sentient beings living in the east
be free from danger and harm.
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
10. May all people and all sentient beings living in the direction above me
be free from danger and harm.
May they be well, happy and peaceful.
11. May all people and all sentient beings living in the direction below me
be free from danger and harm.
May they be well, happy and peaceful.

In this way, the coolness of metta was diffused over the entire monastery, to the eastern, western, southern and northern directions as well as above and below. It was probably because of the coolness of metta that the hearts of the supporters who came to the monastery became so peaceful.

The Sayadaw at the Mahagandhayon Monastery who was a well-known author of the subcommentaries always seemed to be engaged in the practice of Buddhānussati (contemplation of the Buddha's attributes) and in the practice of metta meditation. This seemed to be true because almost every time he admonished his monks or lay supporters, he also encouraged them to practise Buddhānussati and metta meditation.

In the year 1332 (1970 AD), a group of one hundred monks from the Mahagandhayon Monastery in Amarapura was invited to attend a ceremony at the western side of the moat in Mandalay, so food and requisites could be offered. One day before going to the ceremony, Sayadaw cautioned his monks during the regular morning gathering, "Tomorrow one hundred monks are invited to attend an offering of provisions at the western side of the moat in Mandalay. Therefore, the older monks should choose the monks and novices who will be attending the ceremony. These monks and older novices should be well behaved, so that they are worthy of respect. Before the ceremony, you should practise metta meditation. When you receive these offerings while practising metta meditation, the gifts will be more beneficial to the donors. For the monks and novices using these gifts, the donations will also be more beneficial because their use will be faultless.

For me, this kind of practice has also become a habit. It has been a habit since my life as a novice. If I am invited to go to a certain place, then I practise metta meditation for about one or two days before I have to leave. I generate metta for the beings who live in places on the way and for those who live at my journey's destination, as well as those who may attend my dhamma talks. Also, while I am travelling, I practise metta meditation. This is the habit of travelling with metta in my heart. I am used to speaking and acting with metta foremost in my heart. Novices and monks should also practise this habit. When you develop metta, it should be done honestly, so that the metta is genuine. If your intentions are not sincere, you should not try to develop metta. Therefore, you should be certain your intentions are honourable, so that your metta is genuine.

When I went on my daily almsround in Pakkokku, I had the habit of practising metta meditation towards the people on the streets and in the houses of the neighbourhood. On the very first day of my almsround after I had practised metta meditation, the family who lived in the first house offered me rice and curry. When they put the food into my almsbowl, I was very pleased. Did this happen because my metta was so powerful? In any case, I felt astonished by the power of this metta. As a result, the next day I continued to practise metta meditation. However, during the following days, they did not offer any more rice or curry at this house. As a result, I wondered why they hadn't offered any more rice or curry although I was still practising metta meditation. Then I realized that my metta was not pure and genuine. Instead of wishing my donors good health and happiness, the desire to get some delicious rice and curry had been foremost in my mind. Metta means wishing for the genuine welfare of others. It is for the other person, not for oneself. This is the characteristic of pure and genuine metta; then the metta is honest. When the metta is not honest, it only involves caring for oneself. It's like the saying, 'Let other people suffer, as long as I am well.' For this reason, when you practise metta meditation, you should practise for other sentient beings with a pure,

genuine and honest wish that they be well, happy and peaceful. This kind of metta is a very effective instrument that leads to success in all aspects of life.

All families, teachers, students, city dwellers, villagers, and people living on this earth who have metta in their hearts will never suffer mentally; their bodies will not feel tired, and they will not encounter any difficulties in their undertakings. They will not be separated from each other but will live together in harmony just as milk mixes with water. By living together harmoniously, they will feel peaceful. By carrying out their tasks harmoniously, all their undertakings will be successful. Each of us yearns and hopes to meet such a 'metta-person'. A mind that is filled with metta is peaceful, clear, happy, serene, soft and subtle. When you have to speak or admonish someone, you should speak with a heart full of metta. You should deal with other people with a heart full of metta, so that everyone who hears your voice will hear sweet sounds and feel happy and peaceful. Then everyone will follow your directions or advice willingly and respectfully, and everything will be completed according to your instructions. This is called metta vaci-kamma. If you happen to come across a certain matter that needs to be attended to, you should do the task with metta, carry out the task with metta, and help with metta.

By acting in such a way, you will be successful in everything you do. This is called metta kaya-kamma. Everyone loves, respects, reveres, and trusts such a metta person. A person with such metta in his/her heart will always be remembered. There is no end to the feeling of gratitude towards such a person, and you can never say enough about the admirable qualities of this person." With this teaching, Mahagandhayon Sayadaw concluded the morning talk about the practice of metta meditation.

Chanmyay Sayadaw's Teaching of Metta

In January 1995, Chanmyay Sayadaw (Sayadaw Ashin Janakabhivamsa) conducted a short seven-day metta retreat in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This metta retreat took place on the two-acre holiday property of a wealthy man. The land was situated on a rather high hill about two miles north of Chiang Mai. There was a big hall for about one hundred yogis and two houses, each of which accommodated twenty female yogis, as well as another house which accommodated about fifteen male yogis. There was also a high wooden house for the Sayadaws with two bedrooms, a lounge, a toilet, and a shower. And over the little creek that ran down the hill was a dining hall complete with toilets and showers. In Thai, this resort is called 'Bann Por', and the owner's name was Khun Nongnad Penchad.

Looking across the land, yogis could see small nearby hills and higher mountain ranges in the distance. Trees and flowers covered the mountains, and little creeks flowed down from the mountains across splendidly green pastures filled with the subtle and delicate sounds of birds and animals. It was an extremely pleasant environment and a very appropriate place for the fifty yogis who came to do the metta retreat. For the first six days, Sayadaw told the yogis how to practise metta meditation according to the instructions given in the commentary to the Visuddhimagga.

As I had the opportunity, I also practised metta meditation there. On the seventh day, he made the yogis change from metta meditation to vipassana meditation as their concentration had become strong and powerful through the practice of metta meditation. To encourage the yogis in their practice, Sayadaw elaborated on the meaning of metta and talked about the eleven benefits of metta meditation illustrating them with many stories from the Pali commentaries. He also talked about his own experiences with metta meditation as well as the experiences of yogis who were practising metta meditation.

One day Chanmyay Sayadaw said, “I have a natural affinity for metta meditation, and I enjoy it very much. When I practise metta meditation, my mind becomes happier and more peaceful with anodisa metta (non-specific metta) than with odisa metta (specific metta). However with anodisa metta, concentration does not become very powerful and strong. I always encourage the monks and volunteers at the monastery to practise metta meditation, and I also tell the yogis who come to practise meditation at Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre to develop metta. When I tell them to practise metta meditation, I ask them to do metta at the beginning of their vipassana meditation as part of the preliminary preparations. Or else, I advise them to develop metta during vipassana meditation when the mind becomes filled with anger or when the mind is very restless. Occasionally, I also tell them to practise Buddhānussati. Sometimes, I instruct yogis who are experienced in the practice of vipassana meditation to develop metta continuously for about one to one and a half months. Some yogis who have practised in this way have had a direct personal experience of the ‘taste’ of metta.

Some time ago, I was in Vancouver, Canada, in a bookshop called ‘Banyan Books’. After looking at several books, I chose the ones that I wanted. At that time, a forty-year old woman with a fair complexion walked over to me and stood quietly beside me. After a short moment, she said to me, ‘Please allow me to stand here. My health is not good, and I feel very weak both mentally and physically. It is a long time since I have been well. However, standing next to you both my mental and physical strength have come back, and I feel peaceful in body and mind.’ So, I gave her permission and said, ‘Please stand here’. While I was looking at books, she waited quietly beside me for quite a long time. After about an hour, I think she felt a bit embarrassed. With her hands folded across her chest, she said, ‘Thank you so much for the peace that you have given to me. I am so happy. I have never experienced such peace in my whole life.’ Then with these words, she left. I think this incident happened because I practise metta meditation every day. As a result, she experienced peace in her body and mind and regained her full mental and physical strength. In response to the strength and power of a person’s metta, beings coming into contact with that person will feel peaceful, happy, serene and strong. This is completely natural.

One time, some visitors came to Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre in Yangon. They sat there for a long time and stared at me without blinking their eyes. For quite a long time, they did not bow or pay their respects. Finally, they bowed down. After bowing, one woman said, ‘Sayadaw, when I entered your meditation centre, my mind became very peaceful. I think that you have filled this whole centre with the feeling of metta.’ There are quite a number of male and female lay supporters who have told me this. I always tell them that this experience is the result of the power of metta.”

On the third day of the metta retreat in Thailand, Chanmyay Sayadaw talked about a yogi who had been practising metta meditation for about one and a half months. He related her experience in the following manner, “Last year, there was a woman at Chanmyay Yeiktha in Yangon who practised metta meditation after she had done some vipassana meditation. I think she was an officer in a Yangon bank. She successfully practised metta meditation according to my instructions for herself, a beloved and respected person, a neutral person, and an enemy. After she had practised for about twenty days, she tried to develop metta towards a senior colleague at work. This person always provoked her and tried to find fault with her even when there was no fault to be found. As with the persons belonging to the other categories, she experienced the gradual arising of the feeling of metta. During that entire day, she only developed metta for her colleague. When she had practised metta meditation for about one and a half months, she returned to her home. When she returned, her brother told her that this

colleague had come to the house two or three times while she had been practising meditation. Her colleague had asked about her health and wanted to know if everything was going well with her meditation practice. When the meditator went back to work, she realized that her colleague had changed completely. She was cordial and no longer looked for faults. Eventually, their relationship became friendly and close, and they worked together in a very cooperative way.”

On the fourth day of the retreat, Sayadaw related the experience of another yogi who had been practising metta meditation with him. He told this story. “During a retreat in Mandalay, there was a yogi who was practising metta meditation. After about ten days, he developed metta for a woman who had spent most of her time spreading slander and gossip about him. When he developed metta towards her, he found that the feeling of metta became as powerful and strong as it had been with the other persons. As a result, he repeatedly developed metta towards this woman. When he went home, he discovered, to his surprise, that this woman had changed her attitude and behaviour and often came to the house. This yogi reported that their relationship became very friendly, and that she even stopped spreading false rumours about him.”

On the fifth day, Sayadaw related metta stories about Uttara, Samavati, and Maga. Because of the strong feeling of metta, Uttara felt as if cool water had run down her body when Sirima poured hot oil over her. He also told the story of King Udena who had shot an arrow at Samavati. Again because of Samavati’s strong metta, the arrow did not hit her, but rebounded and fell down at King Udena’s feet. Finally, he told the story of a young man called Maga who was almost trampled to death by a wild elephant. Because of his powerful metta, the elephant stopped in front of him without trampling him. (Appendix p. 61)

On the sixth day, Sayadaw mentioned the story of the hunter who had aimed a lance at a mother cow. He described how the mother cow was filled with such tender feelings for her calf that the lance became soft like a curled leaf. The yogis at that short retreat were very pleased and happy on the final day of the retreat. One yogi from Phuket asked Sayadaw to please come to Phuket next year to conduct another metta retreat. And a Kammatthana Teacher from Bangkok said, “From now on, every time I conduct a meditation retreat, I will first teach my students metta meditation in the way we have practised it here. After that, I will teach them vipassana meditation. Metta is a very good practice, but I have never practised it so systematically before.”

Three Kinds of Love

We have to translate ‘metta’ as ‘love’. When we love somebody, we want that person to be comfortable. We want that person to be happy and peaceful, and we want all aspects of his/her life to unfold with ease. There are three kinds of love: metta love, tanha love, and gehasitapema love.

1. **Metta love** is free from entanglement. It is peaceful. It is the kind of love that wishes for the welfare and happiness of other sentient beings.
2. **Tanha love** is love full of entanglement. Tanha love is burning. It is the love between a couple.
3. **Gehassita pema love** is the kind of love between the members of a household. It is love which contains a little bit of entanglement, such as the love that parents have for their sons and daughters, or the love of children for their parents, or the love of older brothers and sisters for their younger brothers and sisters, or the love between friends. In this kind of love, there is entanglement, but it is not very strong. The genuine metta

that wishes for the other person's welfare and happiness is stronger. How is it obvious that tanha is part of gehassita pema love? Tanha or entanglement becomes apparent when the mother, the father, the son, or the daughter has died. How does it manifest? When a family member dies, people worry and cry. They feel miserable in mind and body; as a result, they suffer. It is because of this entanglement that suffering arises. If there was no entanglement, why would a person worry or cry? Would suffering be present? Only at such a time do we know whether our metta is pure and genuine.

When we love with pure and genuine metta, we do not worry even if we encounter circumstances that could cause worry to arise. Also, we do not cry even if we encounter circumstances that could cause us to cry. Finally, we do not suffer mentally even if we meet circumstances that could cause mental suffering. There is always the wish for the other person's welfare and peace. This is pure metta.

The Wonderful Benefits of Metta Meditation

What we need to develop is pure and genuine metta. Even if we only practise metta meditation as long as it takes to snap our fingers, it is still very valuable.

“Accharasanghatamattampi ce bhikkhave bhikkhu mettacittam asevati. Ayam vuccati bhikkhave bhikkhu arittajjhano viharati sattusasanakaro ovađapatikaro amogham rathapintam bhunjati.”

In English, this Pali passage means:

“By developing metta even for the short time it takes to snap their fingers, those monks and novices are said to be following the Buddha's instructions. They are spreading the sasana (the teachings of the Buddha), and they do not consume people's offerings in vain. It is beneficial when they eat this food.”

Normally when the monks have finished a meal that has been offered by some donors, they receive different kinds of offerings. After this, the monks recite the Metta Sutta and develop metta meditation. The recitation of the Metta Sutta is done in order to make sure that the use of the requisites is without fault and is not in vain. In this way, the offering also becomes very beneficial to the donors. When something is so valuable, we should develop it, shouldn't we? By developing metta, we first of all benefit ourselves. And secondly, our environment benefits from metta. When we practise metta meditation, we will acquire the benefits of serenity, comfort and happiness.

In the audience, there is a yogi who is working as a volunteer at this meditation centre. He previously practised metta meditation for more than a month during Kason (May/June) when it is extremely hot. After practising for about one month, his mind became tranquil and peaceful. Since he felt happy and comfortable, he experienced rapture and a faint smile appeared on his face. He was aware of this smile, and the other yogis also noticed it. When his mind became very peaceful, he also began to feel quite cool physically, so he grabbed a shawl and put it over his body. It's important to remember that this happened during the month of Kason when it was very, very hot. This clearly demonstrates the power of metta.

Reaching Jhana with the Practice of Metta

Through the practice of metta meditation, the feeling of metta becomes so potent and strong that the mind rests firmly on the object of metta meditation. At that time, the mind is filled

with the genuine wish that the other person be happy, peaceful, comfortable, and free from anxiety. The mind becomes very calm and doesn't stray or wander from the object of meditation. There are two kinds of calm. One kind of calm results when the mind goes out to the person who is the object of metta meditation by repeatedly wishing him/her happiness, peace and well-being. The other kind of calm, however, results from resting the mind on the mental picture of the person who is the object of metta meditation by repeatedly wishing him/her happiness and peace. In this way, we can say that there are two kinds of calm. Attaining either kind of calm is called reaching metta-jhana.

A metta meditator can reach the first, the second, and the third jhana, or the first three levels of jhana. This is when we use the fourfold classification of the jhanas (Suttanta method). However, when we use the fivefold classification of the jhanas (Abhidhamma method), the practitioner can reach the fourth jhana

Jhana (Absorption)

“Jhayati upanijjhayati jhanam.” Jhana means that the mind stays firmly on the object of meditation; the mind is completely concentrated and sticks to the object of meditation. When the mind is firmly concentrated on the object of metta meditation without wandering to other objects, then we call this state jhana or absorption. We can also call it samadhi or concentration.

The second jhana is distinguished from the first jhana by a much greater degree of calm. In the third jhana, there is more tranquility than in the second jhana, and in the fourth jhana, there is even more tranquility or calm than in the third jhana. Depending on the depth of tranquility, the meditator progresses to each higher level of jhana.

The first absorption or jhana has five factors:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1) Directing the mind to the object | (initial application/vitakka) |
| 2) Sustaining the mind on the object | (sustained application/vicara) |
| 3) Pleasurable interest in the object | (zest, rapture/piti) |
| 4) Being happy with the object | (happiness/sukha) |
| 5) One-pointed attention to the object | (one-pointedness/ekaggata) |

I have explained the order of these jhana factors (jhananga) as they are described in the scriptures. Actually, it is because of the presence of this calm mind state that the meditator feels rapture. Since there is calm, he/she is happy. This is the 'taste' that we can experience for ourselves when we practise.

As calm increases, the meditator reaches a higher stage of jhana where vitakka, the factor which aims the mind at the object and vicara, the factor which keeps the mind with the object, are both absent. As a result, the meditator feels very calm. If thinking is present, then the mind is still a little unstable. However, now the factors of directing attention and sustaining the mind on the object are not present anymore. There are only three factors present: one-pointed attention to the object, pleasurable interest in the object and happiness. When the meditator reaches the next stage of jhana, even pleasurable interest in the object (rapture) is no longer present. Only the two factors of happiness and one-pointedness exist in the mind. When rapture exists, the mind still trembles. When rapture becomes very intense, the whole body can tremble, so that even the object of meditation as well as the feeling of metta can disappear. If metta has disappeared, the practitioner needs to apply herself/himself diligently to the task, so it can arise again. This means that the mind is not yet calm enough.

In summary, the three stages of jhana differ in the following ways. The first jhana contains the factors of initial application, sustained application, rapture, happiness, and one-pointedness. The second jhana contains the factors of rapture, happiness, and one-pointedness. The third jhana contains the factors of happiness and one-pointedness. In reaching the fourth jhana, the mind becomes even calmer, so that the factor of happiness no longer exists. There is only calm or tranquility. The meditator is neither aware of happiness nor is he/she aware of suffering. The mind is completely balanced. This is called *uppekha* or equanimity. At the fourth stage of jhana, only the factors of equanimity (*uppekha*) and one-pointedness (*ekaggata*) are present.

Since we are practising metta, we should repeatedly cultivate the wish for the welfare and happiness of other beings in our minds. This means that meditators who are developing metta should not feel equanimity towards other beings since equanimity means neither wishing for another being's happiness, nor wishing for another being's suffering. Equanimity puts aside the concern about another being's happiness or suffering. Because metta and equanimity are different from each other, the meditator who is developing metta is not able to reach the fourth jhana which has equanimity and one-pointedness as its two factors. He/she can only reach the third stage of jhana.

The Jhanas Attained by Practising Metta

If the jhanas are divided into four stages according to the Suttanta method, the metta meditator can only attain the third jhana.

1. The first jhana has the five factors of initial application (*vitakka*), sustained application (*vicara*), rapture (*piti*), happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggata*).
2. The second jhana has the three factors of rapture (*piti*), happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggata*).
3. The third jhana has the two factors of happiness (*sukha*) and one-pointedness (*ekaggata*).

If the jhanas are divided into five stages according to the Abhidhamma method, the metta meditator is able to attain the fourth jhana.

1. The first jhana has the five factors of initial application (*vitakka*), sustained application (*vicara*), rapture (*piti*), happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggata*).
2. The second jhana has the four factors of sustained application (*vicara*), rapture (*piti*), happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggata*).
3. The third jhana has the three factors of rapture (*piti*), happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggata*).
4. The fourth jhana has the two factors of happiness (*sukha*) and one-pointedness (*ekaggata*).

As previously explained, the fifth jhana with the two factors of equanimity and one-pointedness cannot be reached by a person who is practising metta meditation.

Upacara Samadhi and Appana Samadhi

By focussing the mind on the person who is the object of metta meditation, we learn to repeatedly and continuously develop the wish for his/her peace and happiness. This has to be practised one hundred, one thousand, ten thousand, and even one hundred thousand times. When we practise like this, our minds will probably wander to other objects. This drifting of the mind frequently results in unwholesome states of mind called *nivarana* (hindrances). As

soon as we become aware of these thoughts, we should gently bring the mind back to our metta practice without indulging in them. As concentration becomes stronger, this wandering mind will arise less frequently. And when the concentration becomes strong and powerful, the mind will stay focussed on the person who is the object of our metta meditation without wandering. This is called upacara samadhi (access concentration), and it is free from any hindrances (nivarana).

When access concentration (upacara samadhi) has become powerful and firm, the mind will be focussed on the person who is the object of metta practice as if it were flowing or being carried along in a dream. At first, this absorption concentration (appana samadhi) lasts for only one moment. However, after continuous practice the mind will remain in jhana longer, at first for one or two minutes, then for three or four minutes, then for ten minutes, and eventually for thirty minutes or an hour. With absorption concentration, the mind will remain steadfastly and exclusively focussed on the person who is the object of metta meditation without wandering to other objects even when ordinary sights or sounds are present in the environment.

Rapture or pleasurable interest (piti) as well as happiness (sukha) will become especially distinct. In addition vitakka, the initial application which directs the mind to the object of our metta meditation, will become keen and well-defined. The whole body feels light, and there is an extremely pronounced feeling of well-being. The mind is completely one-pointed, and it does not wander.

These extremely distinct factors, the initial application, sustained application, rapture, happiness, and one-pointedness, are part of the first jhana. When all these factors are present, we have reached the first jhana. The Visuddhimagga says, “Evarupe ca puggale kamam appana sampajjati”. This means that the metta meditator is able to reach appana samadhi (absorption concentration).

Since the factors of initial application and sustained application are contained in the first jhana, concentration is still not sufficiently developed. Even though we are absorbed in jhana, we come out of jhana when we hear harsh noises because the mind may still wander to the source of the noise. For this reason, we should focus repeatedly on the person who is the object of our metta meditation, so that the next stage of jhana which doesn't include the factors of vitakka and vicara arises. When concentration becomes powerful, the mind will be calm and unperturbed, and the factors of rapture and happiness will be present while the factors of initial application and sustained application will be absent. This is the second jhana. In this jhana, feelings of elation and joy are foremost. If the meditator does not want this elation and rapture, he/she should continue to develop metta towards the person who is the object of metta meditation. As concentration becomes more powerful, it will become obvious how the mind can be filled with such exquisite happiness and calmness without any rapture. This is the third jhana, and it is the highest stage that the meditator can reach with the practice of metta meditation according to the book 'Brahmavihara Dhamma' by Mahasi Sayadaw.

When we have attained jhana in this way, then the mind is calm, tranquil, peaceful, clear, happy, and bright. Because we have developed the mind so that the feeling of metta arises, we experience this mental happiness. In effect, when the feeling of metta for all beings is well developed, then other beings will also feel calm, peaceful, and happy because they experience this as a reflection of our metta.

This manifestation is a natural phenomenon. By staying close to a fire we feel hot, and conversely, by staying near cool water we feel refreshed and cool. A fire makes the environment hot, while water makes the environment tranquil and soothing. In the same way, the feeling of metta in the heart of a being makes the surrounding environment cool, peaceful and tranquil. Because of the meditator's metta practice, other beings can experience this benefit.

The Power of Metta

To make this point clearer, I will elaborate on this further. In the Jataka story of Vessantara, King Vessantara left the palace one day and went to live on Vebara Mountain. During his stay there, he practised a lot of metta meditation. As a result of his practice, the feeling of metta was radiated over an area of three yojanas, and all living beings treated each other with metta. Living with metta in their hearts, they did not harm each other. Their minds were completely filled with feelings of affection and friendliness and the sincere wish for other beings' welfare. Even the hearts of very ferocious wild beasts such as lions and tigers were filled with loving-kindness for other wild animals. One yojana is approximately eight miles; according to other sources, it is thirteen miles. Let's call it eight miles. Therefore, all beings living within a radius of twenty-four miles were peaceful and happy because of King Vessantara's feelings of kindness and friendliness and his sincere desire for their good health and well-being. Every being was on good terms with every other being. Since they were respectful and friendly to each other, they lived happily together. When a lion met a deer, there was no longer any desire to eat it, only the wish for it to be happy. Even when a tiger met other animals such as wild oxen, goats, or rabbits, there was only affection and the sincere wish for their happiness; there was no desire to kill or eat them. These are the benefits that all creatures living in close proximity can acquire from a metta practitioner. As a result, all the beings within an area of three yojanas lived happily sharing a mind that was always filled with tranquillity and peace.

If everyone embraced metta and practised it sincerely, then the power of metta would increase in strength and become very strong because of the numbers of people practising this meditation. And as the power of metta becomes increasingly more powerful, the area into which this power is radiated will also expand. As a result, the whole world would certainly become a much happier place. It would be delightful to see the whole world covered with a refreshingly cool layer of metta, so that all sentient beings might be happy and peaceful.

The Story of Suvannasama

This can also be illustrated with the Jataka story of Suvannasama. When Suvannasama's parents went to the forest and became hermits, their son took care of them by searching for fruit and carrying water. By serving his parents in this way, Suvannasama developed metta most of the time. Because of Suvannasama's metta, wild animals felt metta for each other, and they wished each other well. Consequently, they all lived together peacefully. For this reason, Suvannasama and the animals had 'two separate bodies, but shared one mind', and whenever he had to do some task, the animals would help him. When he had to carry water, he placed the two full pots of water on the back of a deer. This help and support were the reflection of Suvannasama's powerful metta, and in return the animals also felt metta for him.

Two of the eleven benefits of metta are 'Manussanam piyo hoti amanussanam piyo hoti'. 'Manussanam piyo hoti' means that a person who practises metta meditation and has a heart filled with metta will be loved by all human beings. 'Amanussanam piyo hoti' means that he/she will also be loved by non-humans. This includes beings like devas, brahmas, ogres, wild beasts, snakes, and scorpions; they all love the person who practises metta.

However, here is a question we should consider. If all beings loved each other because of Suvannasama's metta, how could the arrow of King Pitiyakkha hit Suvannasama? As I mentioned previously, the Buddha said weapons cannot harm a person who develops metta, nor can poison or fire produce any harm. Therefore, how did an arrow hit Suvannasama? In the Milinda Panha, the erudite King Milinda asked this question of Venerable Nagasena. Now King Milinda was very learned, and whenever he asked a question, his questions were always based on quotations from an authoritative work. For this reason, monks who lived in his kingdom did not stay there if they could not answer his detailed intricate questions. They quickly departed and went elsewhere. So when King Milinda met Venerable Nagasena, he had to surrender to the king's authority. The king asked him this question, "Venerable Nagasena, as a result of Suvannasama's powerful metta all the beings in the forest were filled with metta and lived together happily. This is true, is it not? Furthermore, according to the scriptures one of the eleven benefits of metta is that weapons, poison, or fire cannot harm a person. If this is the case, why did an arrow strike Suvannasama? If his metta was so powerful, then there should have been no reason for this arrow to strike him. If this is true, then why was he hit?" Venerable Nagasena replied, "King, it is true that the power of metta prevents arrows, weapons, poisons and fire from doing any harm; however, remember that this power comes from metta and not from the power of the individual. After Suvannasama had filled his pot with water, he lifted it and then put it on his shoulders. At that time, his mind was almost certainly focussed on the pot of water. Consequently, there was a break in his metta meditation. Because of this interruption of his metta, that moment was also devoid of the power of metta; therefore, the arrow was able to pierce his skin." This is the obvious explanation, isn't it?

Venerable U Sila's Metta

Before the war, the renowned monk U Sila stayed in different forest monasteries in the district of Bago. Reading his biography, I discovered that this Sayadaw also gave great consideration and placed special emphasis on the practice of metta meditation. While this renowned Sayadaw was staying in one of these forest monasteries, a large tiger came every evening and slept under his hut, but it never attacked Sayadaw. Sayadaw also had an attendant who lived with him. One day during the cold season, this attendant was warming himself by the heat of a fire when the tiger decided to curl up and stay there, too. As it was daylight, the attendant was not afraid. When the tiger became sleepy, he yawned. As soon as the attendant saw its enormous open mouth, he instantly imagined what would happen if he threw a large piece of burning wood into the gigantic mouth of the tiger. As soon as this unwholesome thought arose in his mind, the large tiger roared. It's important to remember that the burning wood was never thrown into the tiger's mouth; it was only a mental misdeed. When Sayadaw heard the roar of the tiger in his hut, he said, "Pay attention attendant because it seems that you have wronged the tiger." After this reprimand, the attendant realized what he had done, and he also started to develop metta for the tiger. As a result, the tiger went back to sleep and slept peacefully in his customary way.

On another occasion, there was a large wild elephant that roamed freely, destroying everything in its path, and its path happened to be the very same road that Sayadaw took on his almsround. The village people were obviously very worried that this large wild elephant would harm Sayadaw. Shortly after he had set off on his almsround, Sayadaw came across this huge wild beast. However, when they met each other, the elephant did not do anything; it just stood there gently waiting for Sayadaw to pass. Sayadaw also continued quietly and peacefully about his business. There are many Sayadaws who live like this in the forest and place special emphasis on the practice of metta meditation. When they practise metta sincerely, they experience the benefits of the practice. If we really practise metta diligently,

these benefits will really manifest themselves. Remember that the Buddha conquered the wild elephant Nalagiri with metta and nothing else.

Feeling Refreshed with Metta

When you are near a river or lake or you are taking a shower, you feel cool and refreshed. On the other hand, if you stand too close to a hot fire or burn yourself, you might feel extremely uncomfortable or distraught. Similarly, when you are in the presence of someone who is very angry, then that person's anger is also reflected or radiated to you, so that his/her anger feels like the searing flames of a fire. As a result, you will also feel miserable and suffer. This is also true when you are with a proud person who wears a stern expression on his/her face. Such a person is severe and rarely shows the softer gentler aspect of his/her personality. His/her mind is never soothing and sensitive, and when you look at that person, you feel tired and unhappy. In effect, the manifestation of such an unwholesome mind state makes you feel miserable. On the other hand, when you feel the radiation of metta, you feel happy and peaceful. For this reason Chanmyay Sayadaw says, "The noble mind of metta is cool; may it envelop and extend over the whole world." Therefore, try to develop metta very often. Metta is as cool and refreshing as spring water, and this is the reason we speak of 'metta-water'.

Overcoming Fear with Metta

What is a competent metta meditator like? What can such a metta meditator be compared to? He/she is like a safe well-protected house. Such a house is difficult to break into, and it is not easy for robbers to attack. However, the moment this house is not guarded, then it becomes very simple for thieves to burgle it.

Similarly, ogres, ghosts and other fantastical beings cannot disturb the minds of meditators who practise metta. Persons who do not practise, however, can easily be troubled. How do ogres, ghosts, and demon-like petas behave when they are trying to scare someone who is practising metta?

When trying to disturb a metta meditator, this kind of malevolent being is like a person holding onto a knife with sharp teeth on each side of the blade. By holding the blade tightly with both hands, this being only injures him/herself and does not disturb the metta meditator. If powerful invisible beings like Kammasiddhi cannot disturb a metta meditator's mind, then human beings and animals that we can actually see will also not be able to cause any trouble.

In fact, meditators who practise metta properly cannot be troubled, but if a meditator only practises metta sporadically, the power of metta becomes weak, and then the practice can easily be disrupted. Consequently, it is best to develop metta continuously and always suffuse one's mind and body with the feeling of metta.

Let's now develop metta with the metta chant by Chanmyay Sayadaw:

May all beings be well, happy and peaceful.
May they be free from physical and mental suffering.
May all aspects of their lives be well accomplished.

May all beings be free from danger and harm.
May they be free from worry and grief.
May they be bright, cheerful and peaceful.

May all beings be free from anger and pride.
May they be free from the desire to attack.

May they be free from the desire to torture and kill.
May they be free from harbouring grudges; may they be free from jealousy.
May they have a pure heart full of metta; may they be loving and kind.

May all beings abstain from telling lies and being deceitful.
May they abstain from being dishonest and cunning.
May they abstain from slandering another; may they abstain from harsh speech.
May they abstain from scolding others; may they abstain from being quarrelsome.
May they abstain from meaningless speech; may they abstain from destructive speech.
May they use speech that is true, beneficial, meaningful, sweet to the ear and spoken with a heart full of metta.

May all beings be free from the desire to take another person's property.
May they be free from the desire to destroy another person's profits.
May they be free from the desire to hold onto false views.
May they be free from false views; may they restrain their greed and contain their anger.
May they be peaceful.

May all beings be endowed with material things; may they be able to give offerings.
May they be able to keep their personal precepts; may they be able to keep the uposatha precepts.
May they be able to practise samatha and vipassana meditation.
May their hearts be peaceful; may their bodies and minds be filled with happiness.
May all their wishes be fulfilled.

That's enough for today; let's stop here and continue on the next uposatha day.
May all of you be able to practise metta meditation according to my instructions.
May all of you have mental and physical happiness and be free from the dangers of old age, sickness and death. May you all soon reach magga, phala and nibbana.

METTA PART II

How the Metta Sutta Came into Existence

Today, we will continue with the second part of the talk about metta. We began talking about this on the last full moon day, so today we will first talk about the Buddha's teaching of the Metta Sutta, and after that about the way to change from metta meditation to the practice of vipassana meditation (insight meditation).

The Buddha first taught the metta sutta to a group of five hundred monks each of whom went into the forest with one almsbowl and a set of three robes. After they had walked for about one hundred yojanas, they came to a large village. The people of this village asked them to stay in the adjacent forest for vassa, the three-month retreat that takes place during the rainy season. This large forest was very calm and quiet, entirely free from the noise that can normally be heard in many villages and small towns. There were many tall trees and clusters of bamboo, and the forest was extremely dense, so that the thick foliage prevented too much sunlight from hitting the ground. There was also a little creek which made it very pleasant and peaceful, and not very far away from this bamboo grove was a village where they could walk

on their almsround. The monks decided to stay in this forest as it seemed to be a very congenial place for them to practise meditation. After the decision had been made, the villagers built five hundred huts and offered them to the monks, so they could spend vassa there. After all the huts were finished, each of the monks moved into a hut and started to practise vipassana meditation.

With the arrival of monks who were endowed with sila, samadhi and pañña (morality, concentration and wisdom), the forest devas who lived in the trees were afraid to stay there any longer. Holding onto their children, they wandered aimlessly about the forest paths. The devas initially thought that the monks were only temporary visitors who would not stay very long, perhaps only one or two days, and then leave. However, the monks did not leave after a few days but stayed first for ten days and then another five days. Soon the devas began to suffer from the way they had to live, and they hoped that the monks would soon leave, so that they could live there happily. To make the monks leave, they created frightening sounds and noises and emitted bad smells. All the monks became terrified, and as a result, their fear broke their concentration. Some of the monks suffered from fever and pain while others felt dizzy. They felt that it was impossible for them to continue their meditation practice. Finally, they went back to Jetavana Monastery where the Buddha was residing during vassa. When the Buddha saw them, he asked them why they had come back, and they told him exactly what had happened.

After the monks had related their tale, they asked the Buddha to suggest a suitable place for them to meditate. The Buddha answered, "My beloved monks, go back to exactly the same forest, and practise your meditation there." Hearing this, the monks replied, "Please, do not send us back to that forest; it is impossible to practise meditation there." Understanding their anxiety, the Buddha said, "Dear monks, because you went there to practise meditation without a weapon, you have encountered many distractions and difficulties. This time, however, I will give you a weapon." Then the Buddha gave them a powerful weapon, the Metta Sutta. The monks did not dare to contradict the wishes of the Buddha, and armed with the Metta Sutta, they went back to that large forest. However, the monks still did not feel very brave. They lived with feelings of fear and anxiety because they never knew when or where they might come across a frightening vision or a maddening sound.

Nevertheless, because of the virtuous quality of their metta practice, the monks did not see or hear any more frightening objects. Whereas the devas had previously been hostile, now their anger and resentment disappeared when they felt the monks' metta. Feeling this metta, the devas' minds were filled with respect and reverence, and they welcomed the monks and paid their respects. They went up to the monks, took their almsbowls and spare robes, and carried these things to their respective huts. They welcomed them as they might have welcomed their own parents, brothers or sisters after a journey to a distant country. They no longer attacked or taunted them. The devas even provided safety from other dangers and supported the monks, so that they could practise meditation peacefully. Metta is without doubt a very powerful and wholesome force that can always be depended upon for protection.

In fact, all five hundred monks practised vipassana meditation with metta meditation as their foundation. Since they were able to practise meditation peacefully, they were all able to abandon all defilements and become Arahants during that vassa. The Buddha had foreseen this, and for this reason, he had sent them back to the forest. When the monks reflected on this incident, they realized that they had encountered many difficulties and hindrances because they had tried to practise vipassana meditation without the beneficial protection of metta meditation. After consulting the Buddha, they had heeded his advice and first practised metta

meditation and then vipassana meditation. Only then were they free from all danger, so they could practise meditation undisturbed mentally or physically and eventually become Arahants.

Whenever we practise vipassana meditation, we are bound to meet with hindrances even though it is a wholesome and meritorious endeavour. We should remember that the practice of metta meditation makes all of these disturbances and dangers vanish. For this reason, we should not be indifferent to the practice of metta meditation or ignore it. We need to acknowledge how important it is to practise metta.

Sabbatthaka Kammatthana

In the scriptures, ‘metta kammatthana’ is explained as ‘sabbatthaka kammatthana’. ‘Kammatthana’ refers to the object of meditation and ‘sabbatthaka’ means that it is relevant or appropriate to practise this object with all other objects of meditation. Therefore, it is appropriate to practise metta meditation with all other objects of meditation. In fact, metta is a meditation object that every yogi should practise.

In the same way that every person wishes to be materially wealthy, every living being also desires to live a happy life. To achieve this end, it can be very helpful to practise metta meditation. I once read the following story.

Only Metta

When a woman stepped outside her house to hang up some clothes one morning, she saw three old men with full-grown beards sitting in her garden. Although the woman did not know any of the three men, she approached them respectfully because they were elderly and said, “It seems as if I have seen you before. Have you come here to rest? Would you like to come inside and have some tea and pickled tea leaves (a Burmese snack)?” To her surprise, one old man immediately asked her if her husband had gone out. She answered that he had gone to work. When they heard this, they said, “If that is the case, it is not appropriate for us to come inside your house.” As their objection seemed entirely natural, she did not argue but continued with her work. When her husband returned with the setting sun, she told her husband what had happened. Feeling pity for them, her husband asked her to go and invite the three elderly men into the house. So, the woman invited the three men who were still sitting outside to come inside. However, after they had listened to her invitation, the old men told her that they couldn’t all come inside at the same time. This seemed to be a very strange thing to say, so she asked them why this wasn’t possible.

In response to her question, the first old man pointed his finger at the second man and said, “His name is ‘Bho Dhana’.” Then he pointed his finger at the third man and said, “His name is ‘Bho Aungnaing’, and my name is ‘Bho Metta’. Please tell your husband our names, and decide which one of us you want to invite into the house.” Once again, he explained that it was not possible for all three of them to enter together. After hearing this, the woman went back and told her husband everything the old man had said without omitting a single detail.

As soon as her husband heard these words, he jumped up happily and said, “Good! If we can invite only one person inside, my dear, then let’s ask ‘Bho Dhana’ because ‘dhana’ means wealth or riches. Then our house will be filled with riches.” However, his wife did not agree

with him. “Darling, in my opinion we should invite ‘Bho Aungnaing’ to come inside. (In Burmese, ‘Aungnaing’ means to conquer, overcome, be successful, thrive, or have an abundance of something. ‘Bho’ is the Burmese word for grandfather; it is also a respectful way to address an elderly man.) Then we will always be successful and prosperous. We will be successful in everything we undertake, and when we are successful, we will also become affluent.” However, as soon as the woman had finished speaking, her daughter-in-law who had overheard the conversation from the corner of the room where she was sitting also ventured her own opinion. She said, “My dear father, I think we should only invite ‘Bho Metta’ because then the whole house will be permeated with the perfume of metta, and we will all live in peace and abundance.” After his daughter-in-law had spoken, the woman’s husband said, “My dear wife, what our daughter-in-law has said is also quite helpful, so I think it’s best to invite ‘Bho Metta’ inside. Please go and call him.”

At her husband’s request, the woman went outside and told the three old men that they had decided to invite ‘Bho Metta’ inside. Instantly, ‘Bho Metta’ stood up and started to walk towards the entrance of the house. Then the other two men immediately stood up and began to walk behind ‘Bho Metta’. Quite surprised, the woman politely told ‘Bho Dhana’ and ‘Bho Aungnaing’ that she had only invited ‘Bho Metta’ into her house. She was completely bewildered because the three of them had already told her that it was impossible for them all to enter. She asked, “How is it now possible for all three of you to come inside?” In response to her question, the three old men simultaneously answered, “If you had invited either ‘Bho Dhana’ or ‘Bho Aungnaing’, then the other two would have waited outside. However, your daughter-in-law invited ‘Bho Metta’. Now listen and remember this well! Whenever the virtuous quality of metta is present, wealth and success are also close at hand, and all aspects of life will unfold accordingly. Remember this for the rest of your life!”

For this reason I encourage families, teachers and students, village folk and townspeople to practise metta meditation. Whenever we have a heart full of metta, then every aspect of our lives will unfold smoothly, and we will be successful. This seems natural, doesn’t it?

Sayadaw U Uttamassara

Sayadaw U Uttamassara lived in the hills near the Bangladeshi border and spread the sasana there. He was well-known by many people for his metta. This Sayadaw said that metta was like the favourite medicine of the physician Maung Thoo who had lived during the Inwa period. During this period, a man named Maung Thoo received a recipe from a famous physician which had the ability to cure all diseases. Whenever a person became ill, he simply had to mix sand soap, salt, and ripe tamarind together, and then add some water and drink the medicine. After that, his disease would soon disappear. After Maung Thoo got the recipe for this medicine, he offered this traditional medicine to anyone who asked for his help. It didn’t matter what kind of disease the person had and what had caused the disease to appear. This medicine cured stomach aches and sore eyes as well as dizziness; indigestion, asthma, colds, and fevers all disappeared.

In desperation, a farmer who had tried to find his lost cows without any success went to Maung Thoo and asked for his help. Maung Thoo also gave him some of this medicine and told him to take it. Searching for his animals, he came to the edge of a forest near his village when he began to experience stomach pains. After he had looked in all directions and found he was alone, he went into the bushes by the side of the road to relieve himself. To his astonishment, he discovered his two stolen cows tied with ropes to the tree branches. Maung

Thoo's medicine had even helped him to find his lost cows. As a result, Maung Thoo became a famous physician at the king's palace, and his life changed completely.

Whenever someone asked Sayadaw U Uttamasara for his help, Sayadaw always offered 'metta-water' or water suffused with metta. The book 'How to Live One's Life Peacefully' describes how people can become happy and successful, so that their lives unfold with ease. He emphasizes the importance of embracing metta and practising it constantly because metta yields many benefits and is the foundation for success in both worldly and spiritual matters. What is the best way to practise metta? At the beginning of the day before the early morning vipassana meditation, you should practise metta as part of your preliminary preparations. It's not necessary to practise it for a long time, just five minutes. You should also practise metta when you encounter objects in your vipassana meditation which give rise to anger, disappointment or frustration or which cause worry, anxiety or fear. However, you should first try to overcome these difficult mental states in vipassana meditation by observing and noting the anger or fear. Only after you have tried this without experiencing any success should you stop vipassana meditation and change to metta meditation. You should continue developing metta until such defilements as anger or disappointment have completely disappeared. When the mind has become completely clear and peaceful, you should go back to the practice of vipassana meditation.

A Personal Experience of the Power of Metta

In this context, I want to tell you about a personal experience of the power of metta. This happened in the year 1338 (1976 AD) at the beginning of the hot season. Before I left Mandalay for the Mahasi Meditation Centre in Yangon to practise meditation, I went to my native village. After I got there, I went to the Sayadaw of Nemindarama Forest Monastery to ask for permission to practise there. As its name suggests, Nemindarama Forest Monastery is located in a very dense forest in the middle of big trees and clusters of bamboo about two miles away from the village. As I was alone without any companions, I hardly dared to venture into a forest that was inhabited by many kinds of deer and other wild animals.

When I asked Sayadaw for permission to practise at the Mahasi Meditation Centre, he said that my purpose was commendable and that I should study meditation there. Then he invited me to stay at his monastery for one or two days. He said, "At the end of the property, there is a little meditation hut. An old hermit used to live there, but he died a short while ago, so no one lives there now. Go and stay in this meditation hut!" After giving me these instructions, he gave me two of his candles and a lighter. As it was already past six o'clock, the sun had set, and it was dark outside.

I followed Sayadaw's instructions and went to the little meditation hut by walking along a path through the big trees and clusters of bamboo. The little track was covered with leaves and was overgrown with creepers. The meditation hut was ten feet long and eight feet wide, and it was made of bamboo with a thatched roof. Once inside, I lit the candle and started to clean. There was a lot of cleaning to do, and I got quite tired. After I had finished cleaning, I placed the almsbowl by the top end of my sleeping place, and I folded my double robe. Then I rested a short time in order to cool down. The environment was very quiet. Sometimes I could hear the sounds of nightbirds, or the barking of dogs in distant villages, or the noises from bullock-carts passing nearby. The outside world was completely covered in darkness. After a short while, I started to practise meditation. I had not been sitting for very long when the candle went out, and all the light in the hut disappeared.

After the candle went out, the whole meditation hut was filled with a deafening racket. The roof sounded as if squirrels were running boisterously across it, and the floor seemed to echo with the sounds of large snakes sliding over it. The walls were also filled with the sounds of someone knocking and banging on them. In an instant, all the happiness of seclusion (viveka-sukha) disappeared. First, I wondered if the noises belonged to rats or squirrels, but then I decided to ignore the commotion and practise metta meditation. So, I stopped doing vipassana meditation and started to develop metta. After practising metta meditation for about fifteen minutes, all the noises suddenly stopped and completely vanished. I was surprised by the power of this metta; in fact, I was so surprised that I had goose bumps. At that moment, I returned to the practice of vipassana meditation. No further dangers arose during that evening or the two days I stayed there. Free from any further disturbances, the meditation practice went well.

As we still have some time, I would like to tell you about another incident. As a young monk, I performed many duties in relation to my Sayadaw. When I performed these duties, I did them with the respectful attitude of a student who is taking care of his teacher. However, it seemed that many people did not see it this way. Sayadaw also did not seem to see things in the right way, and for this reason, he shouted and barked and only told me how dull-witted and lazy I was. Whenever I performed these duties and did something incorrectly, he used to reprimand me excessively. He did not accept any accidental mistakes, even when I served him rice and curry. If I served him a little food, the portion was too small; if I served him a lot of food, the portion was too large. Whenever he saw me, he shouted at me; whenever I did something wrong, he scolded me. As a result, I tried to be very careful. Whenever I was scolded about something, I was careful not to do it that way the next time, so that I wouldn't be criticized again. For a whole year, not a single day passed without my being criticized and shouted at; not a single day passed without my being blamed or reproached. Every day, I had to bear this scolding and shouting.

However, despite these difficulties, I never stopped persevering. No matter how much Sayadaw shouted and scolded me, I decided to bear it. With this attitude, I endured this situation and continued to perform my duties. I was not discouraged, and I performed my duties taking care not to make any mistakes. I never failed to carry out any of my tasks. Every day, I also developed odisa metta or specific metta. If I had one hour or two hours of free time, I developed metta for as long as I could. In fact, the more time I spent developing metta, the easier it became to feel metta for Sayadaw. Whenever Sayadaw's face appeared in my mind, his face was cheerful with a friendly smile. Sometimes I experienced Sayadaw's body and mind as my own body and mind. During this time, the practice of metta meditation was very rich and full of flavour.

Practising metta meditation in this way, I began to notice a complete change in Sayadaw's behaviour. He no longer shouted or scolded. He neither blamed nor reproached me any longer. As a result, I began to wonder how effective my metta truly was. One morning at breakfast, Sayadaw wanted more plain tea to drink. When I poured him some more tea, only a small amount of tea came out of the spout because the hole was blocked with tealeaves. Therefore, I poured more vigorously, but this time the tealeaves that had blocked the hole suddenly came pouring out and the hot tea spilled out of the teacup and flowed over Sayadaw's hand. Although he shook his hand violently as the tea was very hot, he did not get angry. He neither shouted nor scolded me. He smiled at me and did not say a word. When I asked him if his hand was very painful, he said, "Only a little". He told me to fetch the ink-box from a nearby table and put some ink on his hand. After I carefully applied the ink to the

burn on his hand, no blisters appeared. After this incident, I became Sayadaw's personal attendant. I attributed these changes in his behaviour to the benefits of metta. I have still other personal experiences of metta to tell you; however, we don't have any more time now. It's important that we talk about how to change from metta meditation to vipassana meditation.

From Metta to Nibbana

What are the reasons for changing to vipassana meditation after practising metta meditation? We practise vipassana because the ultimate goal of a Buddhist's journey has not yet been achieved. What is the goal of this journey? Our goal is nibbana, or Arahatta phala (fruition knowledge of Arahantship). Having come in contact with the Buddha's teaching or sasana, a virtuous Buddhist should take advantage of this opportunity and not spend too much time practising metta meditation to feel contented and satisfied because the practice of metta does not actually lead to nibbana. Only during a time when the Buddha's teaching is accessible and when we can practise vipassana meditation is there a genuine way to reach nibbana. Why is this the case? Metta meditation can be practised by hermits and virtuous people during times when the teachings of the Buddha are not available. When the sasana does not exist, many people can still attain the jhanas with the practice of metta meditation or acquire supernatural powers such as diving into the earth or flying through the air. However at the time of their death, they will be reborn in the Brahma world. Vipassana meditation, however, cannot be practised at a time when the sasana does not exist. It can only be practised when the Buddha's teaching exists. It is true that the practice of metta meditation can help us to live happily both mentally and physically when the defilements have been temporarily abandoned (vikkhambhana pahana) because of the strong concentration of the mind. It is possible to achieve supernatural powers based on jhana practice; however, after death, the practitioner will be reborn in the Brahma realm. Nevertheless, if we only practise metta meditation, we cannot reach nibbana. We cannot be freed from the dangers of old age, sickness and death. The highest benefit to be derived from the practice of metta meditation is the attainment of the Brahma world. Furthermore, when we reach the Brahma world, we will still not be free from old age, sickness and death. Happiness that is not yet liberated from the dangers of old age, sickness, or death is not true happiness. The sole practice that can lead to nibbana is vipassana meditation. Then we can be freed from old age, sickness and death; that is to say, we can be free of the dangers of dukkha (suffering/unsatisfactoriness). Only vipassana can extinguish all kinds of suffering.

Nevertheless, it is worth remembering that the practice of vipassana meditation should rest on the foundation of metta meditation in order to reach the noble realization of nibbana that liberates us from the dangers of old age, sickness and death. The Buddha taught that nibbana was the supreme goal of the journey. Whenever another person gave a dhamma talk or practised meditation, the Buddha was only satisfied when he/she taught or practised in order to reach magga, phala and nibbana. Why was this so?

One day in the town of Rajagaha, a Brahmin called Dhananjhani did not feel well, so he invited the Venerable Sariputta to give him teachings. Venerable Sariputta first asked him about his sickness and pains, and then he began to give the dhamma talk. Then Venerable Sariputta asked the Brahmin which realm was better, the hell realm or the animal realm? Dhananjhani answered that compared to the hell realm, the life of an animal was still better. After that, he asked which realm was better, the animal realm or the peta realm? Dhananjhani said that compared to the animal realm, the life of a peta was better. Next, he asked which

realm was better, the peta realm or the human realm? Again, Dhananjhani replied that compared to the peta realm, human life was better.

Finally, he asked Dhananjhani which of the following realms was better: the human realm or the Catummaharajika Deva Realm, the Catummaharajika Deva Realm or the Tavatimsa Deva Realm, the Tavatimsa Deva Realm or the Yama Deva Realm, the Yama Deva Realm or the Tushita Deva Realm, the Tushita Deva Realm or the Nimmanarati Deva Realm, the Nimmanarati Deva Realm or the Paranimmitavasavatti Deva Realm? Dhananjhani told Venerable Sariputta that the Catummaharajika Deva Realm was better and higher than the human realm, that the Tavatimsa Deva Realm was better and higher than the Catummaharajika Deva Realm, carefully explaining that each succeeding realm was better than the previous one. Then Venerable Sariputta asked which of the two worlds, the Deva world or the Brahma world, was better. When the Brahmin Dhananjhani heard the word 'Brahma world', he got very excited and asked, "Venerable Sir, did you say 'Brahma world'?" With this question Venerable Sariputta concluded that the Brahmin Dhananjhani's mind was inclining to the Brahma world. Therefore, he decided to talk about the way that would lead to the Brahma world. "Issa dhananjhani bhikkhu mettahagatena sedassa ega dithan paritava virahati" This means that the practice of metta meditation for all beings in the ten directions is the practice that leads to the Brahma realm. He further explained that a meditator can attain the Brahma world with the practice of karuna, mudita and upekkha (compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity).

After giving this dhamma talk, Venerable Sariputta returned to Veluvana Monastery, and the Brahmin Dhananjhani continued to practise metta according to the instructions of Venerable Sariputta. After a short while, he passed away and was immediately reborn in the Brahma world. When Venerable Sariputta arrived at the monastery, he went to the Buddha to pay his respects. Then he related the subject of the dhamma talk he had given to the Brahmin Dhananjhani. When he had recounted these events, the Buddha reproached him and said, "Sariputta, why did you only teach him about the practice of metta meditation (karuna, mudita, upekkha) which results in rebirth in the Brahma world? Why didn't you teach him the way that would enable him to reach magga, phala and nibbana? This is only available during my sasana, and compared to the jhanas of the Brahmaviharas, it is both higher and nobler because the Brahma world is inferior to nibbana."

What needs to be emphasized is the fact that it is a rare and extraordinary opportunity to encounter the Buddha's sasana (teaching). So, we should only be content and satisfied when we teach and practise the teaching that leads to the goal of the journey, nibbana. In order to reach nibbana, we need to practise vipassana meditation because it shows us both the way and the final destination. Therefore, it is very important to take the next step and practise vipassana meditation.

From Metta to Vipassana

How should you continue to practise after changing from metta meditation to vipassana meditation? As specified in the Cattukanipata of the Anguttara Nikaya, every mental and physical phenomena which arises while developing metta needs to be observed and noted. Doing this is not difficult; in fact, it is quite easy. After emerging from jhana, you should focus on the lightness of the body and observe it as 'light', 'light' or on the feeling of joy and observe it as 'joy', 'joy'. You should note peacefulness as 'peaceful', 'peaceful'. 'Emerging

from the jhana' means that you have stopped developing jhana based on metta; in fact, you have stopped practising metta meditation.

Let's now consider this in more detail. After a meditator has entered jhana as a result of metta meditation, a thought such as 'That's enough metta practice; I'll do some vipassana meditation now' may occur in his/her mind. As soon as this thought arises in the meditator's mind, he/she stops the practice of metta meditation. This 'stopping of metta meditation' is called 'emerging from the jhana'. When you emerge from the jhana in this way, the calm, peace, and coolness of metta as well as the joy that you gained from practising metta meditation will be manifested very clearly. All these phenomena have to be observed and noted as they truly are as soon as they appear. What I have just explained is especially applicable to virtuous people and meditators who can attain the jhanas with the practice of metta meditation. Those virtuous people and meditators who cannot attain the jhanas with the practice of metta meditation should observe and note the mind that is cultivating metta. Each time 'May they be healthy; may they be peaceful' is recited, the desire to recite, or the movements of the lips, or the sound of this recitation should be carefully observed and noted. These last two points are obviously only for meditators who are reciting the phrases aloud. In other words, any mental or physical phenomena that arise should be observed and noted.

There is another way to change from metta meditation to vipassana meditation. After emerging from jhana when the meditator has attained jhana, or after changing from metta to vipassana, the meditator should bring his/her awareness to the abdomen and observe the rising and falling movement of the abdomen, noting 'rising', 'falling'. This is the method that is practised at this meditation centre. It is important to mindfully note every phenomenon at the time of its appearance in the body and the mind as it really is.

Let's now look at this in terms of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness:

- 1) Many different sensations can arise in the body such as lightness, heaviness, roughness, and softness (pathavi dhatu, earth element), flowing, sticking together (cohesion), wetness, stickiness (apo dhatu, water element), heat, cold, warmth (tejo dhatu, fire element), movement, swaying, stiffness, support (vayo dhatu, wind element). When any of these phenomena arise, you should observe and note them as they are, for example 'hot', 'hot' or 'cold', 'cold'.
Noting these kinds of objects is called kayanupassana satipatthana, the contemplation of the body or physical phenomena. It is the first of the four foundations of mindfulness.
- 2) When unpleasant feelings, pleasant feelings, or neutral feelings like numbness, tingling, aching, or stiffness appear, you should observe and note these feelings as 'pleasant', 'pleasant' or 'unpleasant', 'unpleasant' or 'neutral', 'neutral'.
Noting these three types of feelings is called vedananupassana satipatthana, the contemplation of feeling.
- 3) Mental phenomena like desire, anger, jealousy, pride, worry, planning, thinking, laziness, happiness, wanting to cry, or wanting to laugh should be observed and noted at the time they arise as they really are. For example, you should note wanting or anger as 'wanting', 'wanting' or 'angry', 'angry'.
Noting these mental states is called cittanupassana satipatthana, the contemplation of consciousness together with its concomitants.
- 4) When phenomena such as sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touching sensations, or mental objects arise, you should observe and note these sights or sounds as 'seeing', 'seeing' or 'hearing', 'hearing'.

Noting these kinds of objects is called dhammanupassana satipatthana, the contemplation of dhamma or mind-objects.

Sitting Meditation

At the beginning of meditation practice, you should observe and note the rising and falling movement of the abdomen. Although meditators who have never practised meditation know they should observe the dominant object at the time it arises, they may encounter difficulties. They might be confused as to whether they should note this object or that object. Therefore, when you are beginning your practice, you should note the rising and falling movement of the abdomen.

When we breathe in, the abdomen around the area of the navel gradually expands or rises. This is called 'rising'. Thinking in terms of physical phenomena, this is called vayo dhatu (wind or air element). In terms of the aggregates, it is called rupa khandha (the aggregate of materiality); and in terms of the Four Noble Truths, it is known as dukkha sacca (the Noble Truth of Suffering). In short, all conditioned phenomena are inherently unsatisfactory in nature because they cannot form the basis for real peace or lasting happiness.

When we breathe out, the expansion of the abdomen gradually decreases and the abdomen falls back towards the spine. This is called 'falling'. This is also vayo dhatu, rupa khandha and dukkha sacca. Therefore, meditators should focus on the abdomen and observe and note the rising movement as 'rising', 'rising' and the falling movement as 'falling', 'falling'. When you meditate, you do not have to say the word aloud, just note it mentally.

The mental label is not what is most important, but for beginners noting helps to increase awareness. When concentration becomes much stronger, the mental label is no longer necessary. If you were to use a mental label at that time, it would be like flying through a thick layer of clouds in an airplane – the ride would not be very smooth. So when concentration has become much stronger, it is better to just observe without using a label. However, you should still be aware of the rising and falling movement. To know or to be fully aware of this movement is the main objective. You should focus only on the movement of the abdomen and observe it carefully.

There is another thing you should be aware of. Try not to focus on the words 'rising' or 'falling' as these words are only names or concepts. When some meditators say the words out loud, the noting mind focuses on the words and not on the real nature of the object. Furthermore, you should not pay attention to the form or shape of the abdomen. You do not have to observe it since forms and shapes are concepts or conventional realities (paññati) and not absolute realities (paramattha). In your practice of vipassana meditation, you should observe absolute realities, paramattha, and not conventional realities (paññati). Consequently, you should only observe and note the nature of the rising and falling movement of what is conventionally called the abdomen with the words of 'rising' and 'falling'. It is very important that you are meticulous about this point.

Observing or Noting

'Observing' or 'noting' means that we mindfully focus on and are aware of the nature of every mental and physical object. For example, when we are aware of the rising and falling movement, this is called observing or noting. Sometimes meditators find that the rising and falling movements are not distinct because the breath is very fine or subtle. These meditators can take the sitting posture and use touch points as the primary objects. With awareness of

your legs folded and the upper part of the body upright, you should note this as ‘sitting’ (1). Then you should note the nature of each sensation as ‘touching’, ‘touching’ alternating between the left buttock where it touches the mat (2) and the right buttock where it touches the mat (3). Then note the hands where they touch each other (4), and then first the left ankle where it touches the mat (5) and finally the right ankle where it touches the mat (6).

Instructions for People with Heart Problems

People with heart problems should be cautious and follow these guidelines carefully. Meditators who suffer from high blood pressure or who tire easily should not observe the rising and falling movement at the beginning of practice. Observing the rising and falling movement causes the heart to become agitated, and then meditation will not progress smoothly. When the rising and falling movement is noted, after a short while the meditator may feel tired, dizzy, dazed, or constricted. Therefore, meditators with heart problems and meditators whose breath is very subtle should observe the sitting posture and touch points.

When you note ‘touching’, you should focus your awareness plainly on the touching sensation that is being observed.

The sitting posture and the touch points should be observed in the following order:

- ❑ Sitting – touching (left buttock touches the mat or cushion)
- ❑ Sitting – touching (right buttock touches the mat or cushion)
- ❑ Sitting – touching (the two hands touch each other)
- ❑ Sitting – touching (left ankle touches the mat or cushion)
- ❑ Sitting – touching (right ankle touches the mat or cushion)

The sitting posture and the touch points should be noted in pairs of alternating sensations. Experience has shown that meditation progresses well for people with heart problems or high blood pressure or for those who tire easily when objects are noted in this way. In several instances, noting this way has not only improved symptoms but has completely eradicated the condition.

Whenever the mind wanders or a thought arises in the process of noting the rising and falling movement of the abdomen or the sitting posture and touching sensations, you should bring your awareness to that thought or associated mind state and note it. When you observe the mind or any mental states such as ‘thinking’, ‘wandering’, ‘planning’, ‘imagining’, ‘reflecting’, ‘wanting’, ‘anger’, ‘laziness’, ‘happiness’, ‘desire to laugh’, or ‘desire to cry’, noting should be firm, attentive and quick. You should observe whatever arises, using a mental label. The thought must be noted until it has disappeared. Intent on attaining a calm mind state, some beginners immediately bring the mind back to the primary object (the rising and falling movement of the abdomen or the sitting posture and touch points) as soon as they realize that the mind has wandered. You should not meditate by trying to control the mind in this way.

The practice of vipassana meditation does not involve exercising control over the mind but mindfully observing it and coming to an understanding of different phenomena. Only when the thinking or wandering mind has disappeared by noting it, should you go back to the primary object, the rising and falling of the abdomen, or any other distinct object that has become the main focus of attention. Vipassana meditation implies mental development or mental culture; therefore, the most important thing is to note the mind and its mental states. Only by noting the mind and all mental states will the mind become calm, resulting in the successful practice of vipassana meditation.

The Appearance of Feelings or Vedana

After sitting for some time, different sensations may arise in the body. Whatever sensation arises regardless of whether it is good or bad, it must be observed and noted as it is. These feelings may be unpleasant feelings (dukkha vedana) of pain, stiffness, numbness, aching, or itchiness; or they may be pleasant feelings (sukha vedana) of happiness; or they may be neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant feelings (upekkha vedana).

Observing Unpleasant Feelings (Dukkha Vedana)

In the Mahasatipatthana Sutta, the Buddha said, “Dukkham vedanam vediyamano dukkham vedanam vediyami’ ti pajanati.” In English, this means, “Feeling a painful feeling, the meditator knows that he feels a painful feeling.” Therefore, painful feelings should be carefully observed and noted. However, you should not ‘suffer’ as a result of this painful feeling. Some people believe that unpleasant feelings like pain, aches or soreness should not be observed, as they may lead to unwholesome mental states. It is true that unwholesome mental states like anger or despair can arise, especially if you think, ‘Oh, this is so painful’ whenever an aching feeling arises. The Buddha did not teach that we should suffer from pain in this way; he simply wanted us to understand and realize the true nature of painful sensations. He only taught the importance of noting and observing the painful sensation. Therefore, you should be as patient as possible and bear these words in mind, ‘Patience leads to nibbana.’ Every diligent meditator soon realizes that with the patient observation of painful feelings, there arises mindfulness (sati), which is awareness of the pain, concentration (samadhi), which rests one-pointedly on the painful feeling, and right view (samma ditthi), which realizes the pain. All of these phenomena are part of pubbabhaga magga and consequently part of the Noble Eightfold Path. Pubbabhaga magga is the precursor to the realization of ariya magga; however, it is still a mundane understanding. Practising in this way allows absolutely no unwholesome mental states to arise. You should only observe the painful sensation as long as you can be patient. When you cannot be patient any longer, you should mindfully move your body and continue to observe whatever sensations arise, or else get up and practise walking meditation.

Patience Leads to Nibbana

Generally speaking, in the world the saying ‘Patience leads to nibbana’ often means that you should be patient when someone abuses, shouts, blames, or even beats and tortures you. This implies that if you can be patient during such moments, you may realize nibbana. During the practice of meditation, however, being patient means meditators should observe whatever unpleasant feelings that arise. You should observe and note these sensations or feelings as numbness, pain, aching, stiffness, heat, cold, boredom, weariness, unhappiness, etc. Your patience will eventually lead to nibbana; in other words, you can attain nibbana by being patient and attentive. Therefore, always try to be patient, whenever you are meditating.

When sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touching sensations, or mind-objects arise, they should also be noted as ‘seeing’, ‘hearing’, etc. With the disappearance of seeing consciousness, hearing consciousness, or consciousness of any other object, you should return to noting the rising and falling movement of the abdomen. Only note seeing or hearing whenever these objects are distinct; otherwise, do not note them. There is also no need to observe any sounds that last for a long time, or sounds that are not distinct, like the noise from far-away traffic. You should continue to observe and note the primary object, the rising and falling movement of the abdomen.

Vipassana meditation is not really complete if it only consists of sitting meditation. Meditators must also practise walking meditation and observe daily activities. When practising vipassana meditation, meditators should meditate without any breaks for the whole day. About nineteen hours of every day should be spent practising mindfulness, and only the remaining five hours should be spent sleeping. The Buddha taught four different postures for the practice of meditation: sitting, walking, standing, and lying. However, as meditators may easily fall asleep after a short period in the lying posture, yogis are generally not instructed to practise meditation in this posture. All meditators should practise sitting and walking meditation, and sometimes meditators will also be asked to practise standing meditation. Finally, all meditators are asked to be aware of all their daily activities.

Walking Meditation

During walking meditation, you should observe the movements of each foot. Before you start walking, you should stand at one end of your walking path and be aware of these points:

1. Straighten your body, and bring your head in line with your spine.
2. Hold your hands together, either in front of or behind your body.
3. Your arms may also be crossed in front of your body.
4. Do not let your arms hang by the sides of your body. If you let your arms hang by your sides, your meditation will not progress because your mind will constantly be pulled to the movement of the arms swaying at your sides. This will not allow concentration to develop.

You should lower your eyes and look at the ground directly in front of you, approximately two yards or two metres ahead of your feet. You should soften the focus of your eyes, and place your awareness on the movements of your foot. Do not bend your head too low because this can cause dizziness, neck pain, or an aching in the eyes and forehead. Do not look farther ahead or to your sides. If there is the desire or intention to look, you should note the desire or intention to look. It is very important for meditators to bring their eyes under control. Only when the eyes are restrained and not allowed to wander will concentration develop. Without this visual restraint, concentration will not develop.

Now, bring your awareness to your feet. When you begin walking by taking a step with your left foot, you should note this movement as 'left', and when you take a step with your right foot, you should note this movement as 'right'. You should use mental labelling and note 'left', 'right', but avoid saying the words out loud. Your primary concern is not the labelling, but awareness of the movement of your foot as it is pushed forward. It is the movement of the foot that you should be mindful of. However for beginning meditators, concentration increases more easily when they use a mental label to be aware of the movement of each foot. Walking meditation should not be done quickly; in fact, you should move quite slowly.

1. Each step should not be very long, about one foot in length.
2. When you put your foot down, the entire bottom of the foot should touch the ground.
3. You should not put your heel or your toes down first.

Noting at the End of the Walking Path

When you reach the end of your walking path, you should not turn around immediately. First, put your feet together and stand still. When you are standing still, focus your awareness on the upright posture of the body and note the following:

1. 'Standing', 'standing' about ten times.
2. Before turning around, note the intention to turn around as 'intending', 'intending'.
3. When you turn around, you should note this as 'turning', 'turning'.
4. When you finish turning, and your body faces the direction where you came from, stand still again and note 'standing', 'standing' about ten times.
5. Before you begin to walk, you should note the intention to walk as 'intending', 'intending'.
6. When you start to walk, you should note each step appropriately as either 'left' or 'right'.

Whenever you come to the end of the walking path, do not forget to note any of these six parts. You should practise walking meditation for a full hour. If the meditation is proceeding well, you can walk longer than one hour. When the mind becomes calmer, you can observe each step in more detail, adding the following parts:

- lifting, pushing, dropping (3 parts to every step)
- lifting, pushing, dropping, touching (4 parts to every step), or
intending, lifting, pushing, dropping (4 parts to every step)
- lifting, pushing, dropping, touching, pressing (5 parts to every step)
- intending, lifting, intending, pushing, intending, dropping (6 parts to every step)
- intending, lifting, intending, pushing, intending, dropping, touching, intending,
pressing (9 parts to every step)

If your concentration is still not very strong, you should not observe very many parts of the step; otherwise, you might become dizzy, or your neck might start to ache. You should gradually increase the parts of the step that you note during the walking meditation.

The Benefits of Walking Meditation

While practising walking meditation, it is easy for concentration to develop quickly because the object of meditation is very distinct. The lifting, pushing and dropping movements of each foot can easily be observed and noted. It is also easy for insight to arise. The concentration gained during walking meditation will last for a long time. In the Cankama Sutta of the Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha mentioned five benefits that can be gained from the practice of walking meditation.

- The ability to walk for long distances
- The creation of energy
- Good health and freedom from disease
- Good digestion
- Enduring and stable concentration

With these benefits in mind, you should practise walking meditation with respect and diligence. Do not practise it lightly or superficially.

The Purpose of Walking Meditation

Walking meditation is done with the goal of realizing the characteristics of impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha) and not-self (anatta) of all mental and physical phenomena. It is not only done to relieve stiffness or change posture. Nor is it undertaken only as a means of developing strong concentration. It is essential that meditators understand this point clearly. If this point is not clearly comprehended, meditators may be caught by their own judgements

and say, “There is no need to practise walking meditation. If I practise sitting meditation, the practice of meditation is complete because walking meditation is just a way to ease stiff joints.” However, during walking meditation, mental and physical phenomena are constantly arising and disappearing, so it is essential that these physical and mental phenomena are also observed and noted as they arise and disappear during walking meditation. Without observing these phenomena during walking meditation, the real nature of impermanence, suffering and not-self may not be realized. If these realities are not understood, then wrong views based on concepts such as man, woman, personality, being, or self (atta) are bound to arise. As a consequence of wrong views, defilements such as greed (lobha) or hatred (dosa) will definitely appear, too. In turn, the appearance of defilements will cause suffering to arise. If you are suffering because of the defilements that have arisen, how can you be happy during walking meditation?

Observing Thoughts during Walking Meditation

When thoughts surface during walking meditation, you should stop walking and note each thought attentively until it has completely disappeared. Only after the mind has stopped wandering should you resume your walking meditation and continue noting in the usual fashion.

Observing Daily Activities

Continually observing all actions and movements of the body mindfully is called daily activities. Practising vipassana meditation means being aware of all mental and physical phenomena, as they really are whenever they arise. Mindfulness should be continuous and uninterrupted, without any gaps. If mindfulness is absent for some minutes or for even a few seconds, then defilements such as greed or hatred can creep in unobserved, depending on the mental and physical processes that have not been noted. If all mental and physical processes can be noted at the time of their arising, unwholesome mental states cannot arise anymore.

The Importance of Observing Daily Activities

Meditators who are able to observe all phenomena during sitting meditation with right mindfulness (samma sati), a part of the Noble Eightfold Path, will also come to know mental and physical processes with right understanding (samma ditthi) which is also an essential aspect of the Noble Eightfold Path. For meditators practising like this, no defilements will arise in connection with these mental and physical processes during their sitting meditation. However, unwholesome mental states are sure to arise as soon as they stop their sitting because they have stopped noting the actions and movements involved in standing up, bending and stretching their legs, bending and stretching their arms, eating, or drinking. Once again defilements will arise, depending on the mental and physical processes that were not observed and noted. Therefore, all actions and movements during daily activities have to be observed and noted. A meditator’s day consists of twenty-four hours, which are divided into periods of sitting meditation, walking meditation, the observation of daily activities and sleeping. The time spent observing daily activities is greater than the hours spent doing sitting and walking meditation. If all these various daily activities are not observed, then the amount of time actually spent in meditation will diminish substantially. In the Mahasatipatthana Sutta, the Buddha said, “A meditator should be aware of all activities whether eating, drinking, walking, standing, falling asleep, or waking up”.

In the sutta, this idea is expressed by the term ‘sampajañña’, which is usually translated as ‘clear comprehension’ or ‘full awareness’. In the commentaries, four kinds of sampajañña are listed: full awareness of the purpose of the action (1), full awareness of the suitability of the

means (2), full awareness of the domain, that is, not abandoning the subject of meditation during the daily routine (3), and full awareness of reality, the knowledge that behind these activities there is no abiding self (4). What is essential is that all these activities be done with uninterrupted sustained mindfulness, so that insight into the true nature of phenomena can arise. Therefore, it is crucial that all these daily activities are observed very carefully.

If you stretch your arm in order to reach something, you should observe and note this movement as 'stretching', 'stretching'. When you bend your arm after placing the object your hand, you should observe and note this movement as 'bending', 'bending'. When you lift or lower your arm, you should observe and note 'lifting', 'lifting' or 'lowering', 'lowering'. The noting mind should be placed attentively on the movement of the arm, leg, or any other part of the body that is moving. The noting mind should rest carefully on the object that is being observed. If you are aware of the intention before stretching or bending your arm, this intention should be noted as 'intending', 'intending'. You should also note the stretching and bending of your legs in the same way.

Bowing

Before bowing, you should first place your palms together. All your fingers should be held together like the bud of a lotus flower. Then you should bring your hands to your forehead, with your thumbs touching the area between your eyebrows and your index fingers touching your hairline. After that, focus your awareness on 'Arahan' and other virtuous attributes of the Buddha, mentally reciting 'Buddham saranam gacchami' (I go for refuge to the Buddha). Then bow down slowly by lowering the upper part of your body until it touches the ground. When you are lowering your body, you should only be aware of this movement. When you bow down, five parts of the body should touch the ground: your hands and feet, forehead, elbows, and knees.

Before you bow down the second time, you should mentally recite, 'Dhammam saranam gacchami' (I go for refuge to the Dhamma). And before you bow down for the third and final time, you should mentally recite 'Sangham saranam gacchami' (I go for refuge to the Sangha).

Observing and Noting Daily Activities

When you are practising mindfulness of daily activities, you should observe and note these activities in the following way: Washing your face should be noted as 'washing', 'washing'; taking a shower should be noted as 'showering', 'showering'. Applying soap should be noted as 'applying', 'applying'. Drinking should be noted as 'drinking', 'drinking', washing dishes after a meal as 'washing', 'washing', and drying your hands as 'drying', 'drying'. Standing up or sitting down should be observed as 'standing up', 'standing up' or 'sitting down', 'sitting down'. Every activity should be carefully observed and noted. While you are resting in bed before falling asleep, you should focus on the rising and falling movement of the abdomen and note it as 'rising', 'falling'. You should try to fall asleep with mindfulness. Try this for yourself! Practise diligently, so that mindfulness becomes a constant habit. When you wake up in the morning, you should note 'waking up', 'waking up', and when you get out of bed, note 'getting up', 'getting up'. If there is nothing urgent to attend to after getting up, then note the rising and falling movement of the abdomen for a few moments before getting up. As soon as you are ready to get up, you should first note the intention to get up and then all the subsequent movements that follow this intention. When you are ready to walk to the meditation hall, you should note each step you take as 'left' or 'right' on your way there.

If you happen to raise your head and look around in front of you, behind you, to your side, or here and there, you should note this as 'looking', 'looking'. And when you see an object, you should note it as 'seeing', 'seeing'. If you happen to look at something that causes greed, hatred or any other defilement to arise, you should note these mental states appropriately as 'greed', 'greed' or 'hatred', 'hatred'.

Advice to Householders

Whatever job or activity you do during your daily life should be viewed as an opportunity to practise mindfulness. When you leave your house to go shopping or to walk to work, you should focus your awareness on the movement of your left and right foot and note the movement as 'walking', 'walking'. When you reach the shop, office or factory where you work, you should try to be aware of whatever movements you are performing to carry out your daily tasks with as much mindfulness as you can. Whatever you do, except for calculations and other mental work, try to do the task mindfully. You should practise in this way until it becomes a habit.

When mindfulness practice becomes stronger, meditators will be surprised to find that they experience greater happiness because greed (lobha), hatred (dosa), and other defilements have diminished or disappeared. If the work task you are performing is not urgent, and the time, complexity of the job and the available circumstances are appropriate, you should perform the task as slowly as possible. The meditator should see himself/herself as a weak sick person who must move slowly and carefully. However, if the task at hand is important or urgent, you should carry it out at normal speed. In any case, you should take care, so that you can maintain your mindfulness by focussing on movements and being aware of them, even if you have to do them quickly.

The Benefits of Observing Daily Activities

When you practise in this way, you will no longer be able to say that you don't have time to meditate because there is too much work to do. In fact, the more work you do, the greater the number of meditation objects and, therefore, opportunities to practise mindfulness. As you continue practising mindfulness, your awareness will become stronger and more continuous. When mindfulness becomes constant, you will be able to be aware of all movements. Since you have control over mindfulness, almost no bodily or verbal actions will be performed unmindfully. You will no longer physically or verbally harm anybody because you will not be overcome by greed (lobha) or hatred (dosa). This will be very beneficial as the world will also be freer from these negative effects or misdeeds. Mental states like anxiety, longing, worry, grief, and depression will diminish, and meditators will become more accepting of the situations they find themselves in; they will become less particular. They will be less bothered by thoughts such as 'I don't want to eat that kind of food' or 'I don't want to wear that dress'.

Consequently, you will feel contented with whatever you receive, living happily wherever you reside and associating harmoniously with whomever you meet. This means that you will experience peace of mind, and only with peace of mind will the body cease to suffer. Although many people are miserable as a result of unwholesome mind states, you will experience peace of mind. At the time of death, you will not die with a confused mind because the mind will be clear and peaceful. Instead of speaking incoherently or feeling exhausted, you will die with a calm peaceful mind. After death, you will be reborn either in the human realm or the deva realm. In this way, you will experience many kinds of worldly peace and much happiness. Finally, you will experience the supramundane peace and happiness of magga, phala and nibbana.

The Stages of Insight Knowledge

Practising vipassana meditation in this way, a meditator will go through a sequence of successive experiences or stages. The following short summary outlines the stages of insight knowledge.

Namarupa Pariccheda Ñana (Insight knowledge of Mental and Physical Phenomena)

In the course of this dhamma talk, our focus has changed from metta meditation to vipassana meditation. As we continue the practice of observing and noting our experience, the calm and concentration of the mind will deepen, so that we will eventually come to see that there is no person, I, you, man, woman, human being, deva, or brahma. There is neither a self nor a soul; there are only two phenomena, the object and the knowing of the object. This is the realization of nama and rupa, (mental and physical phenomena), and it is called ‘namarupa pariccheda ñana’.

Paccaya Pariggaha Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Cause and Effect)

Then as we continue noting and observing, the realization dawns that the noting mind arises because there is an object to be observed. Because the rising movement occurs, the noting mind that observes it also comes into being. Because the falling movement occurs, the noting mind that observes it comes into being. Because numbness and tingling occur, the noting mind that knows numbness and tingling comes into being. Because there is an intention to lift the foot, the movement of lifting occurs. Because there is an intention to push the foot forward, the physical movement of pushing forward occurs. Because there is an intention to drop the foot, the physical movement of dropping arises. Because of the existence of colour and the physical sense organ, the eyes, seeing consciousness arises. Because of the existence of sound and the ears, hearing consciousness arises. As a result of a cause, an effect occurs. This realization is called ‘paccaya pariggaha ñana’ (The insight knowledge of cause and effect).

Sammasana Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Clear Comprehension)

As we continue with our practice, our concentration becomes deeper so that we become aware of the beginning, the middle, and the end of the rising and falling movement. We can also note different feelings because they have become clearer and more distinct. When we note them attentively, we see them disappear and so realize their impermanent nature (anicca). With the constant arising and disappearance of objects, we also realize the unsatisfactory and oppressive nature of phenomena or the nature of suffering (dukkha). Whenever we note unbearably painful sensations such as pain and aching, we are aware of only two processes, the painful sensation that is noted and the mind that notes it. And since we are not aware of either the shape of the body, hands, legs, knees, or any other parts, the realization dawns that there is no person, being, I, you, man, woman, human being, or deva. We realize that only natural processes (anatta) exist. This insight into the three characteristics of anicca, dukkha and anatta (impermanence, suffering and non-self) of all physical and mental processes arises and is known as ‘sammasana ñana’ (The insight knowledge of clear comprehension).

Udayabbaya Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Arising and Passing Away)

With deepening practice, insight knowledge of impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha) and the non-self nature (anatta) of all physical and mental phenomena (the five aggregates) becomes sharp and penetrating. At this time, unbearably painful sensations and aching slowly grow weaker, so that noting becomes better. With each moment of noting, we come to see the

rapid disappearance of the object. Whenever an object arises, it is noted and immediately disappears. When a new object appears, we instantly note it, and it again disappears. In this process, we come to see that the object hardly exists for even a single moment before it immediately disappears. It seems as if the object is like a drop of falling rain that instantaneously dissolves and disappears as soon as it touches the clear surface of the river. In the same way, physical and mental phenomena exist for only the tiniest fraction of a moment. We clearly realize that phenomena arise, and as soon as they are noted, they instantly disappear. We come to see that whatever is noted whether it is the rising and falling movement, standing up and sitting down, or stretching and bending an arm, each object subsequently arises and disappears in brief stages, one after the other. When we practise walking meditation, we come to realize that the lifting of the foot happens in stages and that every physical and mental phenomenon is arising and then immediately disappearing. This constitutes the insight knowledge of the arising and disappearing of physical and mental phenomena (*udayabbaya ñana*). At the beginning of this stage of insight knowledge, very few unbearably painful sensations are experienced. In addition, the objects to be noted seem to arise of their own accord, and the noting mind appears to note automatically without any particular effort. Mindfulness has, of course, become strong. As the mind is very calm, other experiences may arise such as the desire to put more effort/exertion (*virīya*) into the practice, rapturous feelings of happiness/pleasurable interest (*pīti*), different manifestations of lights (*obhasa*), tranquility in the body and mind (*passaddhi*), happiness/bliss that has no equal (*sukha*), clear and distinct knowledge (*ñana*) of the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-self nature, and a resolute confidence (*adhimokkha*) in the Triple Gem. With these experiences, attachment (*nikanti*) to these different phenomena can manifest as they are enjoyable. All these phenomena are called ‘*vipassanupakkilesa*’ or the imperfections of insight.

Bhanga Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Dissolution)

When we understand that these experiences are imperfections of insight, we should constantly note these pleasant enjoyable phenomena. When we reach this stage, we come to realize the impermanent, suffering and non-self nature of these mental and physical phenomena more clearly. As we progress further, the arising of mental and physical phenomena will be noted less frequently, and we will only note the disappearance of objects. This experience is similar to looking at a frightened or humiliated person who cannot bear being watched, and so turns his face quickly away from the viewer. It is as if mental and physical phenomena cannot tolerate being observed, so they instantly disappear when they are noted. This is the insight knowledge of realizing disappearance (*bhanga ñana*). When we reach this stage of insight knowledge, forms, shapes and concepts all disappear. At times, the entire form of the body disappears and all that is left is the noting mind, the mind that knows. At this stage, practice sometimes does not seem to be very satisfactory.

Bhaya Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Fear)

When a meditator is only aware of the disappearance of mental and physical phenomena, fear may arise because he/she is confronted with the constant disappearance of all mental and physical phenomena. When the meditator experiences frightening objects, he/she should note ‘fear’, ‘fear’ or ‘afraid’, ‘afraid’. This is the nature of ‘*bhaya ñana*’, the insight knowledge of fear.

Adinava Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Misery)

As the meditator continues noting all mental and physical phenomena, he/she sees only their disappearance with each noting, and so becomes aware of the flawed, imperfect and unsatisfactory nature of these phenomena. Although he/she notes this state, there is no

enthusiasm for the practice. The meditator may feel disheartened and weary; he/she may also feel depressed. By continuously noting these mental states, he/she also sees their disappearance. The realization of the unsatisfactoriness of all mental and physical phenomena is the nature of ‘adinava ñana’ or the insight knowledge of misery.

Nibbida Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Disenchantment)

With deepening insight gained from practice, the more the meditator notes the greater the weariness, boredom and disgust he/she will feel with the body and mind. Although there is no desire to note, he/she continues to note. At times, he/she may have to note disgusting and loathsome objects, and the mind will really feel disgusted, but when these objects are noted, they will also disappear. These manifestations are the nature of ‘nibbida ñana’, the insight knowledge of disenchantment.

Muncitukamayata Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Desire for Deliverance)

When the meditator experiences mental and physical phenomena as wearisome and disgusting, the desire to abandon or get rid of this body and mind arises. There is a strong desire to become free from this body, mind and all the sankharas (conditioned phenomena). When some yogis are practising sitting meditation, they may want to get up and do walking meditation, and when they are doing walking meditation, they will want to resume sitting meditation. Whatever they are doing whether it be sitting or walking meditation, there is a feeling of uneasiness. However, they continue to diligently note the object, and with each noting, the object disappears. This is the nature of ‘muncitukamayata ñana’, the insight knowledge of desire for deliverance.

Patisankha Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Re-observation)

With this fervent desire for liberation, the meditator reverts to the practice and repeatedly notes all mental and physical phenomena. And as he/she continues noting the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-self nature, they are realized even more clearly and distinctly than before. ‘Patisankha ñana’ (the insight knowledge of re-observation) consists of the re-observation of the characteristics of anicca, dukkha and anatta.

Sankharupekkha Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Equanimity)

When the yogi continues with his/her diligent practice, concentration becomes very deep and powerful. Then the nature of anicca, dukkha and anatta is experienced more clearly and distinctly, and the noting mind becomes very steady and tranquil like a board of wood that is securely fixed to the wall with nails. Although the meditator tries to move the mind to another object, it rests securely and comfortably on the mental and physical object that is being noted. The previous weariness and disenchantment have completely disappeared. There is no more boredom or elation, no more suffering or happiness; insight practice is progressing extremely well. Because objects arise and need to be noted, they are simply noted, that’s all. The meditator practises comfortably without any special exertion or effort. Noting both mental and physical phenomena (sankharas) with equanimity is the nature of ‘sankharupekkha ñana’, the insight knowledge of equanimity.

Anuloma Ñana (Insight Knowledge of Adaptation/Conformity)

When sankharupekkha ñana (the insight knowledge of equanimity) matures, the noting mind accelerates, so that the noting of each object occurs in rapid succession. When this happens, some yogis may try harder and apply too much effort to their noting, or they may assume something is wrong and change the way they are noting. In some cases, yogis even start to think about what is happening to them. When this happens, their concentration becomes weaker; consequently, their noting may become sparse, and they may have lapses of attention.

However, if the meditator again notes each object attentively, noting will become as rapid and perceptive as it was previously. The noting mind will again accelerate until it observes and notes each object extremely quickly.

Nevertheless, if the meditator puts too much effort into noting or begins to reflect on his/her experience, then he/she will regress, and the noting mind will become dispersed with many gaps. All these experiences are manifestations of ‘*anuloma ñana*’ (the insight knowledge of adaptation), which integrates the preceding eight stages of insight knowledge with the next ñana, *magga ñana* or path knowledge. This is also called ‘*utthanagamini vipassana ñana*’ or the insight knowledge leading to emergence. *Vutthana* means towards *magga*, and *gamini* means leading.

Gotrabhu Ñana, Magga Ñana, Phala Ñana, Paccavekkhana Ñana

(Insight Knowledge of Change-of-lineage, Path Knowledge, Fruition Knowledge, Insight Knowledge of Retrospection)

When the insight knowledge leading to emergence (*utthanagamini vipassana ñana*) matures and all the faculties are balanced, then noting gathers momentum, and the mind functions with extraordinary rapidity. The first advertence to the cessation of all formations (*sankharas*) is ‘*gotrabhu ñana*’ or the insight knowledge of change-of-lineage. This is the insight knowledge which severs the lineage of the worldings (*puthujjana*) and enters the lineage of the Noble Ones (*ariya*). ‘*Magga ñana*’ (path knowledge) and ‘*phala ñana*’ (fruition knowledge) result in the realization of the cessation of all formations. Reflection on the experience of cessation of all formations is ‘*paccavekkhana ñana*’ or the insight knowledge of retrospection. Yogis and virtuous persons who practise diligently can experience and realize these stages of insight for themselves.

For these reasons, you should first practise *metta* meditation before practising *vipassana* meditation. With the concentration that you have gained from the *metta* meditation as a foundation, you should then turn your attention to the practice of *vipassana* meditation. By practising diligently, may all of you be free from danger and harm and attain the happiness of *magga*, *phala* and *nibbana* easily.

Metta Sutta in Pali

1. Yassanubhavato yakkha
Neva dassenti bhisanam
Yamhi cevanuyuñjanto
Rattindiva-matandito
2. Sukham supati sutto ca
Papam kiñci na passati
Evamadigunupetam
Parittam tam bhanama he
3. Karaniya-matthakusalena
Yamtam santam padam abhisamecca
Sakko uju ca suhuju ca
Suvaco cassa mudu anamimani
4. Santussako ca subharo ca
Appakicco ca sallahukavutti
Santindriyo ca nipako ca
Appagabbho kulesu ananugiddho

5. Na ca khuddam samacare kiñci
Yena viññu pare upavadeyyum
Sukhino va khemino hontu
Sabbasatta bhavantu sukhitatta
6. Ye keci panabhutatthi
Tasa va thavara va anavasesa
Digha va ye mahanta va
Majjhima rassaka anukathula
7. Dittha va yeva adittha
Yeva dure vasanti avidure
Bhuta va sambhavesi va
Sabbasatta bhavantu sukhitatta
8. Na paro param nikubbetha
Natimaññetha katthacinam kanci
Byarosana patighasañña
Nañña-maññassa dukkha-miccheyya
9. Mata yatha niyam puttam
Ayusa ekaputta-manurakkhe
Evam pi sabbabhutesu
Manasam bhavaye aparimanam
10. Mettañca sabbalokasmim
Manasam bhavaye aparimanam
Uddham adho ca tiriyañca,
Asambadham averam asapattam
11. Tittañ caram nisinno va
Sayano va yava tassa vigatamiddho
Etam satim adhittheyya
Brahmametam viharam idhamahu
12. Ditthiñca anupaggamma
Silava dassanena sampanno
Kamesu vineyya gedham
Na hi jatu gabbhaseyyam punareti ti

Metta-suttam nitthitam

Metta Sutta in English

First Version

- 1./2. By the power of this sutta, the yakkhas do not show fearful visions, and a person who makes effort regarding this sutta day and night sleeps comfortably. When he sleeps, he does not have bad dreams. Good people, let us recite this protective sutta, which is endowed with these qualities and others as well.
3. He who wants to dwell penetrating the state of calm (nibbana) and who is skilled in virtue should practise the three kinds of training. He should be capable, frank, extremely honest, obedient, gentle and not conceited.
4. He should be contented, easy to take care of, have few activities, have few possessions, and be controlled in his senses. He should be wise and respectful and not be greedily attached to his devotees.

5. He should not commit the slightest wrong, by doing which he might be censured by wise men. (Then he should think) May all beings be happy and safe. May their hearts be happy.
- 6./7. Whatever living beings exist; be they feeble or strong, long or big, or medium or short, small or bulky, seen or unseen, dwelling near or far, born or yet to be born, may all beings without exception be happy.
8. Let none deceive another or despise any person in any place. Let him not wish any harm to another person with insult or ill will.
9. Just as a mother would protect her only child at the risk of her own life, even so let him cultivate a boundless loving heart towards all beings.
10. Let his thoughts of boundless love pervade the whole world, above, below, and all around; making them unrestricted, free of hate and free of enmity.
11. Whether he is standing, walking, sitting or lying down, as long as he is not sleepy, he should develop this mindfulness. This is the Noble Living here (in the dispensation of the Buddha), they say.
12. Not holding onto wrong views, being virtuous and endowed with vision (the first path knowledge), and removing greed for sensual pleasures, he will surely not be born in any womb again.

End of Metta Sutta

Second Version

This is what should be done by those who are skilled in goodness
 And who know the path of peace.
 Let them be able and upright, straightforward and gentle in speech.
 Humble and not conceited, contented and easily satisfied.
 Unburdened with duties, and frugal in their ways.
 Peaceful and calm and wise and skilful,
 Not proud and demanding in nature.
 Let them not do the slightest thing
 That the wise would later reprove.
 Wishing in gladness and in safety,
 May all beings be at ease.
 Whatever living beings there may be,
 Whether they are weak or strong, omitting none,
 The great or the mighty, medium, short or small,
 The seen and the unseen, those living near and far away,
 Those born and to be born,
 May all beings be at ease.
 Let none deceive another,
 Or despise any being in any state.
 Let none through anger or ill will wish harm upon another.
 Even as a mother protects with her life her child,
 Her only child, so with a boundless heart
 Should one cherish all living beings.
 Radiating kindness over the entire world
 Spreading upwards to the skies and downwards to the depths.
 Outward and unbounded, freed from hatred and ill will,
 Whether standing or walking, seated or lying down,

Free from drowsiness, one should sustain this recollection.
This is said to be the sublime abiding.
By not holding to fixed views, the pure-hearted one
Having clarity of vision, being freed from all sense desires,
Is not born again into this world.

SAYADAW U INDAKA'S BIOGRAPHY

The Sayadaw-to-be was born on Sunday, the second day of the waning moon of Thadingyut, in 1314 of the Burmese Calendar (October 5, 1952) in the village of Thaleba, Ayadaw township, Monywa District. His parents were U Pho Han and Daw Phwa Yee. After completing the fourth standard (class), he learned the basic scriptures of the Pitaka, such as the great Parittas, the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta (the Buddha's first sermon), Pali grammar, and the Abhidhammattha Sangaha at Nemindarama Forest Monastery in Thaleba village. With his mother and father as supporters of the four requisites, he later became a novice at Nemindarama Forest Monastery with Bhanddanta Pandicca as his preceptor. He was given the name Shin Indaka. However, after Shin Indaka became a novice, he stayed for only one vassa (the three-month period during the rainy season) at Nemindarama Forest Monastery. Then he moved to Mahagandhayon Monastery in Amarapura and stayed there with his elder brother U Muninda, who is now a senior monk in a leadership position at the Maha Myaing Monastery in Mandalay.

At Mahagandhayon Monastery, he studied various scriptures from the Pitaka such as the five books of the vinaya, Anguttara Nikaya, commentary to the Dhammapada, Patthana, and Yamaka under the tutelage of the famous Mahagandhayon Sayadaw U Janakabhivamsa as well as other renowned teachers like Bhaddanta Candobhasa, Bhaddanta Mahinda, Bhaddanta Aggavamsa, Bhaddanta Indobhasabhivamsa, and Bhaddanta Kundalabhivamsa. Then the Ganawasaga Committee of Mahagandhayon Monastery asked him to teach the basic scriptures of the Pitaka. On the tenth day of the waxing moon of Tagu in 1334 (1972), Shin Indaka ordained as a monk in the Mohkout Ordination Hall of the Mahagandhayon Monastery in Amarapura with his benefactor the Mahagandhayon Sayadaw U Janakabhivamsa himself as his preceptor. His sponsors were U Khin Maung and Daw Nyunt Nyunt who lived in the Chinese section of Amarapura. After his first vassa as a monk, he moved to Maha Myaing Monastery in Mandalay and continued his studies of the scriptures under various renowned teachers. He studied Pali literature for the State government's religious exam with Bhaddanta Sajjanasara (the chief senior Sayadaw of Maha Myaing Monastery in Mandalay), Bhaddanta Muninda, Bhaddanta Sasana, Bhaddanta Tiloka, Maha Visuddhayon Thandawsint Sayadaw, Sishin Sayadaw, Bhaddanta Ariyanyanabhivamsa, Bhaddanta Agganyanabhivamsa, Bhaddanta Odatabhivamsa (Sayadaw of Waso Monastery), Masoe Yein Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kovidabhivamsa, Sagaing Hill Patthana Sippam Sayadaw Bhaddanta Indaka, Tipitaka Dhammabhandagarika (Yo) Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sirindabhivamsa (from the New Maha Visuddhayon Monastery in Bahan Township, Yangon), and Myotha Shwe Kyaung Sayadaw Bhaddanta Nyanindalankara. He passed the Pali exams at the primary, intermeditate, and the advanced levels up to the Dhammacariya Exam. He subsequently taught the scriptures from the Pitaka to monks and novices for four years at Maha Myaing Monastery in Mandalay, and then for six years at Myotha Shwe Monastery, Ngazun Township in Mandalay.

One day in 1338 (1976) during the extremely hot month of Kason, Sayadaw U Indaka was sitting on a bamboo platform in the shade of a Rain-Tree at Maha Myaing Monastery, Mandalay reading a book called 'A Short Introduction to the Practice of Vipassana

Meditation' by Mahasi Sayadaw. After he had read the little booklet, he put it away and started to practise according to the instructions given in the book. He focussed his attention on the abdomen and mindfully observed the rising and falling movements. While he was practising meditation, he experienced a little bit of happiness from this practice of vipassana meditation, which seemed to be even better than the happiness, which resulted from studying and teaching the scriptures. As a result of this experience, a strong desire arose in Sayadaw's mind/heart to fully experience the exquisite happiness that was said to be the result of practising vipassana meditation. At that moment, he decided that one day he would definitely go and practise in order to experience this.

In December of 1976 following this decision, Sayadaw U Indaka and U Dhammikalangara (Thamanay Kyaw) went to Sein Pan Mahasi Meditation Centre in Mandalay and practised Satipatthana vipassana meditation under Chanmyay Sayadaw (Sayadaw Ashin Janakabhivamsa). After he had practised for fifteen days, Chanmyay Sayadaw went back to the Mahasi Meditation Centre in Yangon, so Sayadaw U Indaka and U Dhammikalangara decided to follow him and study at the Mahasi Meditation Centre in Yangon. Chanmyay Sayadaw entrusted them to Sayadaw U Sujata, and Sayadaw U Indaka continued his meditation practice for another month. In 1350 (1989) during the time prior to vassa, Sayadaw U Indaka went to Kywe Chan Forest Monastery near the town of Paun in Mon state to practise vipassana meditation for one month. Then he spent the following three-month period of vassa at Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre, Yangon practising Satipatthana vipassana meditation under Chanmyay Sayadaw. When vassa ended, he continued to reside at Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre and carry out the duties of pariyatti (duties connected with studying and learning the scriptures) and patipatti (duties connected with teaching and practising meditation) as requested by Chanmyay Sayadaw. While carrying out the duties of pariyatti, he taught the Vinaya Maha Vagga, Parajika Pali, Pali grammar, and Abhidhammattha Sangaha. In addition to carrying out the patipatti duties, he gave dhamma talks to meditators as well as interviews with them. Besides these activities, he carried out other duties at the meditation centre. From 1352 to 1354 (1991 to 1993), Sayadaw U Indaka resided at Hle Bee Monastery in the town of Myeik, Tanintharyi Division where he conducted meditation retreats. After this period, he returned to Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre, Yangon and continued to reside there. In 1355 (1996), Chanmyay Sayadaw sent him to the Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre, Hmawbi to be the abbot. At Chanmyay Yeiktha, Hmawbi, he not only gives dhamma talks and interviews to both Burmese and foreign meditators alike, but he also carries out all the other duties involved with running a meditation centre. From 1996 until the present year and his fiftieth birthday, Sayadaw has carried out all of these duties.

Sayadaw U Indaka has also accompanied Chanmyay Sayadaw on Dhamma tours abroad and within Myanmar to places such as Monywa, Taunggyi, Myeik, Tatgone, and Taunggok, and he has also helped him at Chanmyay Vipassana Meditation Retreats by giving dhamma talks and doing interviews with the meditators. Sayadaw U Indaka's days are filled with a great variety of different duties: giving dhamma talks and doing interviews with Burmese and foreign meditators, answering dhamma questions, managing the meditation centre, overseeing the establishment of Chanmyay Myaing Monastery, going to different towns to lead meditation retreats, giving dhamma talks at other locations in the evenings, and on certain occasions, going to the houses of families or companies to give blessings. When Sayadaw U Indaka finds some time in his busy daily schedule, he uses it to write dhamma books. With unrelenting effort, he works for the benefit of Buddhists as well as all sentient beings. Sayadaw U Indaka has published these books in Burmese:

- ❑ Darukkhandhopama Sutta (The Parable of the Log)
- ❑ Having Mindfulness at One's side, the Dhamma is Realized
- ❑ The Essence of Life
- ❑ Only By Doing Wholesome Deeds Does One Achieve Happiness
- ❑ Metta

Sayadaw U Indaka is presently working on another book that is titled, 'Taking the Medicine of the Bojjhanga - All Diseases Disappear'.

Appendix

The Story of Uttara

One day, while listening to a dhamma talk given by the Buddha, Uttara became a sotapanna. From that day, she did not let a single day pass without performing meritorious deeds. However, both her time and opportunities were limited because she was married to a rich man who was not a disciple of the Buddha. As she wanted to practise generosity and perform meritorious deeds for the Buddha and his sangha in a more significant way, she had to find somebody to take care of her husband. At that time, a beautiful girl called Sirima lived in Rajagaha. For one thousand pieces of money per night, she could be hired as a prostitute. After Uttara had hired Sirima for fifteen days, she took Sirima to her husband and asked his permission to devote herself to doing meritorious deeds for fifteen days. She told her husband that Sirima would look after all his needs during this time. As her husband was delighted by Sirima's beauty and charm, he readily agreed to this arrangement. From that day onward, Uttara daily invited the Buddha and his disciples to her home and offered meals to the sangha. After they had finished their meal, she listened to the sermons. She personally managed the preparation of the meals in the kitchen and helped wherever she was needed. Although the work was quite tiring, Uttara was very happy, so she often smiled and laughed. On the fourteenth day, her husband happened to look down into the kitchen from his room where he saw her covered in sweat and dirt. Seeing her happy face, he smiled to himself and thought that his wife was very foolish to make so much trouble for herself feeding these bald-headed monks.

When Sirima saw him smiling, she immediately became jealous. She thought that the husband's smile was a smile of love for his real wife. Although Sirima had only been in the couple's house for fourteen days, she had already forgotten that she had been hired by Uttara and that Uttara was the real lady of the house. Her jealousy eventually became so strong that she wanted to harm Uttara. So she went down to the kitchen and got a cup of boiling hot butter. When Uttara saw her coming, she immediately began to reflect on the fact that Sirima had helped her in many ways. She felt a great deal of gratitude and loving-kindness towards Sirima. Thanks to her, she had spent all her time doing meritorious deeds and performing her religious duties. When she saw Sirima carrying the cup of hot boiling butter, she took this oath, "If I have harboured any thoughts of ill will or anger towards Sirima, may this boiling butter cause me harm. If, on the contrary, I have not harboured any thoughts of resentment toward her, but only thoughts of loving-kindness and goodwill may this hot butter not do me any harm." At the moment Sirima poured the hot butter over Uttara, it did not harm her; in fact, it felt like cool refreshing water. Sirima, therefore, got another cup of butter, but the maids in the kitchen prevented her from pouring it over Uttara. When she fell to the ground, the maids started to kick and beat her, but Uttara immediately told them to stop and asked them to prepare a warm bath for Sirima, so she could get some relief from her pain. Only then did Sirima realize what she had done, and after the bath she went to Uttara to apologize for her cruel deed. Uttara said she should speak to the Buddha and ask for his forgiveness.

So, they went to the Buddha and after offering the meal, they listened to the teachings and by the end of the dhamma talk Sirima had become a sotapanna. What the Buddha taught was that an angry person should be conquered with loving-kindness, a crooked person should be conquered with good behaviour, and a stingy person should be conquered with generosity.

The Story of Samavati

During the time of the Buddha, King Udena ruled the state of Kosambi. He had three chief queens: Samavati, Magandi, and Vasuladatta. Samavati had become a sotapanna by following

the Buddha's teachings. Everyday, she engaged in wholesome activities such as practising generosity, listening to dhamma talks, or doing voluntary work at the monastery. Magandi, however, felt hostility towards the Buddha because he had not wanted to marry her. Consequently, she had married King Udena. In her hatred, she abused and criticized the Buddha whenever she had the chance. She also disliked Samavati because she was very devoted to the Buddha.

When Magandi discovered that the king would go to Samavati's chamber in a couple of days to have lunch there, she asked her uncle to send her a cobra which had had its poisonous venom sacs removed. When she got the cobra, she put it inside the hollow space in the king's royal harp and covered the opening with flowers. The king always carried his harp wherever he went, and on the day he went to Samavati's chamber, he took it with him and placed it at the end of the couch. After he lay down for a short rest, Magandi entered the room and discreetly removed the flowers from the opening of the harp. As the cobra had already been trapped in the harp for a couple of days, it darted furiously out of the opening and readied itself for the attack. It proudly lifted its head and showed its hood. The king became terrified and immediately called Samavati and her five hundred attendants. Realizing what had happened, Samavati told her attendants, "Do not be angry with anyone. Do not let your thoughts of loving-kindness diminish. Extend metta towards the king and Magandi. Without metta, we have nothing else to depend on in this unfortunate situation." Taking her words to heart, all of them cultivated thoughts of loving-kindness towards the king and Magandi.

Furious with rage, King Udena ordered a servant to bring him his bow and arrow. Then he told Samavati and her attendants to line up. Aiming his bow, he shot the first arrow directly at Samavati. Because of Samavati's strong and genuine metta, the arrow turned around and headed back in the direction of the king's chest. Finally, it dropped on the ground directly in front of his feet. Then the king reflected, "If this arrow can pierce a large stone, and nothing can usually impede it from hitting its target, why didn't it strike Samavati instead of returning to me?" At last it dawned on him, "Oh, even this lifeless arrow knows the virtues of Samavati! But I who am alive and considered an intelligent man do not know Samavati's virtue." With this realization, he placed the bow on the ground, fell on his knees in front of Samavati, and asked for her forgiveness.

The Story of Maga

Long ago, there lived a young man called Maga in the village of Malay in the country of Magada. Maga took great delight in cleanliness, not only in and around the house but also in the environment close to and far away from his house. Whenever he was clearing paths and pulling weeds, he was very happy. His happiness came from the delight and gladness of other people who rejoiced in tidiness and cleanliness. If there were uneven places on the roads within or around the village, Maga made them even. In places where the roads had turned into mudpuddles, he filled them with earth and stones. And if places became overgrown with weeds, he cleared away the weeds. It did not take long before other young men joined Maga in his voluntary work of clearing the roads and improving the infrastructure of their surroundings. Finally, they became a group of thirty-two men. As a result, they extended their work to places as far away as one or two yojanas. (One yojana is about eight miles.) One day, while being engaged in their voluntary work, they reached another village. The village head, however, did not like the intrusion of this group of young men.

He felt that they shouldn't be doing this work because it was of no immediate benefit or use to him. His mind was filled with these thoughts, "If they had brought some fish, or beef or alcohol, I could obtain some of these goods. But now, I cannot get anything that's useful, so there is no advantage in this for me." When the village head approached Maga's group and

told them to bring some fish, beef and alcohol and to carry out some other tasks, Maga and the other men refused to do these things because all these deeds were unwholesome. The young men were clearly aware of the kinds of actions that would lead to wholesome results and the kinds of actions that would lead to unwholesome results. They always refrained from doing what should not be undertaken.

As the young men did not carry out his orders, the village head got upset and angry. His mind started to spin with ugly thoughts and he said, "I'm warning you now! Wait until you get to know me because I will make you suffer, every last one of you. I am going to tell the king about your disorderly impudent behaviour." Immediately, the village head went to the king and told him about this dangerous gang of thugs that was threatening the people of his kingdom. After hearing the bad news, the king ordered his men to arrest this gang and bring them before him. When the king saw Maga and all of his men standing in front of him, he did not hesitate for even an instant to give the order to have them killed. He decided that they should be trampled to death by his killer-elephant.

While waiting for the elephant to be released, Maga addressed his men, "My friends, at this moment we have nothing but metta to depend on. Develop thoughts of loving-kindness for the village head, the king, the elephant, as well as yourselves." Maga and all the young men cultivated the same powerful and genuine thoughts of metta for all the beings involved in their situation. When the killer-elephant was finally released, it did not dare to go near these young men because they had developed such strong and powerful thoughts of loving-kindness. When this news was delivered to the king, the king ordered his men to cover Maga and his men with straw and to release the elephant again. Again, the elephant did not dare to approach them but ran away in the opposite direction. As this behaviour happened again and again, the king found it very strange and assumed that there must be a reason for the elephant's unusual actions. After a careful investigation, he discovered the truth of the situation, and the village head was punished. Because of Maga's strong and powerful metta not even an animal, in this case, a killer-elephant, could kill or trample him to death. Maga's thoughts of loving-kindness had the power of transforming the elephant's mind. Although he had been trained to be angry and to kill, the elephant's mind became free from anger and was filled with thoughts of kindness. This is the virtuous power of metta.

Glossary

abhidhamma:	The Higher Teaching, a systematic description of mind and matter, Buddhist psychology
Anguttara Nikaya:	The collection of the Numerical Discourses of the Buddha
anodisa metta:	Non-specific metta, developing metta for all beings
appana samadhi:	Absorption concentration
Arahant:	A fully enlightened person. As all the remaining defilements are completely uprooted in the fourth and final stage of enlightenment, there is no further rebirth
ariya magga:	With the attainment of the first stage of enlightenment, a person becomes a Noble One (ariya), having gained a supramundane understanding of the path (magga)
asubha:	‘Unbeautiful’, loathsome, repulsive
asubha bhavana:	Contemplation on the loathsomeness of the body
Avici-hell:	Name for the lowest of the hell realms
bhante:	Term of address for a monk
bhavana:	Development, cultivation, meditation
Bodhisatta:	‘A being (striving) for awakening’, the term is used to describe the Buddha before he actually became the Buddha, from his first aspiration to Buddhahood until the time of his full awakening
Brahmavihara:	The four Sublime or Divine Abodes, which can be reached with the development of loving-kindness (metta), compassion (karuna), sympathetic joy (mudita), and equanimity (upekha)
Buddhanussati:	Contemplation on the attributes/virtues of the Buddha
dana:	Generosity, giving
deva:	Literally, ‘a shining one’, celestial being; in general, they are invisible for human beings but they are subject to old age, sickness, and the rounds of birth and death like any other living being; they can live in the world of the senses, the fine material world or the immaterial world. The six deva realms belonging to the world of the senses are: the Catummaharajika Deva Realm (The Realm of the Four Great Kings), the Tavatimsa Deva Realm (The Realm of the Thirty-three Gods), the Yama Deva Realm (The Realm of the Yama Gods), the Tushita Deva Realm (The Realm of the Delightful Gods), the Nimmanarati Deva Realm (The Realm of the Gods who delight in their Creation), the

Paranimmitavasavatti Deva Realm (The Realm of the Gods who lord over the Creations of Others)

dhana:	Wealth, riches
disaparana metta:	The cultivation of metta in the ten directions (the four cardinal directions, the directions in between, above, and below)
dosa:	Aversion, the second unwholesome root, comprises all kinds and degrees of hatred, ill will, anger, irritation, annoyance, and animosity
ekaggata:	One-pointedness, unification (of mind)
gehassita pema:	Affectionate love, family love, the kind of love between family members
jhana:	Absorption, level of deep concentration, jhana is divided into four levels (Suttanta method) or five levels (Abhidhamma method), each progressively more subtle than its predecessor
jhananga:	Jhana factors
kammatthana:	Meditation object, meditation exercise; two divisions: samatha kammatthana and vipassana kammatthana
kaya-kamma:	Intentional actions performed by the body
khanti:	Patience, tolerance, forbearance
lobha:	Greed, the first unwholesome root, covers all degrees of selfish desire, longing, attachment, and clinging
magga and phala:	Path and fruition, the experience of enlightenment is divided at all four stages into two further stages; attainment of the Path, signifying the attainment of the qualities required for that particular stage of enlightenment, and attainment of the Fruit, signifying the attainment of the qualities resulting from that stage of enlightenment
mano-kamma:	Intentional actions performed by the mind
marananussati:	Contemplation on death
metta:	Loving-kindness, goodwill, benevolence, friendliness, amity
moha:	Delusion, ignorance, not-knowing, the third unwholesome root, a synonym for avijja
nats:	Spirits in Myanmar folklore; in pre-Buddhist time, the nats were worshipped; nowadays, the worship of nats co-exists with the Buddhist practices

navanga sila:	The nine precepts, adding the practice of metta to the eight precepts constitutes the nine precepts
nibbana:	Literally ‘extinguish, blow out’, final deliverance from suffering; deliverance from greed, hatred, and ignorance is the principal and highest goal of the Buddhist teaching; the Sanskrit form ‘nirvana’ is more commonly known in the west
nivarana:	There are five hindrances or nivaranas: sensuous desire (kamacchanda), ill will (vyapada), sloth and torpor (thina-middha), restlessness and remorse (uddhacca-kukkucca), and sceptical doubt (vicikiccha)
odisa metta:	Specific metta, developing metta for a specific being or a specific group of beings
parami:	Perfection; to attain Buddhahood, there are ten qualities which have to be developed in the highest degree: generosity (dana), morality (sila), renunciation (nekkhamma), wisdom (pañña), effort (viriya), patience (khanti), truthfulness (sacca), determination (adhitthana), loving-kindness (metta), equanimity (upekkha)
parinibbana:	The final passing away of a fully enlightened person (Arahant) is commonly referred to as parinibbana
peta:	Hungry ghost. The peta realm is one of the four lower realms
phala:	See magga
piti:	Rapture, zest
pubbabhaga magga:	Pubbabhaga magga is the precursor to the realization of ariya magga; it is still a mundane understanding
sabbatthaka kammattana:	A meditation object which can be practised in conjunction with any other meditation object (samatha and vipassana); metta bhavana, asubha bhavana and marananussati are the three sabbatthaka kammattanas
samadhi:	Concentration; it is divided into three levels: momentary concentration (khanika samadhi), access concentration (upacara samadhi), and absorption concentration (appana samadhi)
samatha:	Calmness, tranquility, serenity, one-pointedness
samatha bhavana:	Calm meditation
Samyutta Nikaya:	The collection of the Connected Discourses of the Buddha
sasana:	The teachings of the Buddha

Sayadaw:	The Burmese word Sayadaw, meaning ‘Venerable, Teacher’, is an honorific term and way of address given to senior or eminent Buddhist monks
sila, samadhi, pañña:	Morality, concentration, wisdom; the three basic trainings in the Buddhist teaching
sotapanna:	Stream-enterer. After a person attains the first stage of enlightenment some of the defilements are completely uprooted
sukha:	Happiness
tanha:	Craving
Thera:	Elder
Triple Gem:	The Buddha (the teacher), the Dhamma (Dhamma has two meanings: the teachings of the Buddha and the laws of nature or phenomena), the Sangha (the community of those practising the Buddha’s teaching). For Buddhists, the Triple Gem is the object of veneration and refuge
upacara samadhi:	Access concentration
uposatha day:	A day of observance that coincides with the full moon, new moon, and half moons. Lay Buddhists often observe the uposatha sila (eight precepts) on this day, and monks and nuns recite the Patimokkha (rules of monastic discipline) on the full moon and new moon uposatha days.
uposatha sila:	The eight precepts; they are: refraining from 1) killing living beings, 2) taking what is not freely given, 3) all sexual activity, 4) wrong speech, 5) taking intoxicants which cloud the mind and cause heedlessness, 6) eating after noon, 7) dancing, singing, music, and unseemly shows; the use of garlands, perfumes, cosmetics and jewellery that aim to beautify and adorn the person, 8) using high and luxurious seats and beds
vaci-kamma:	Intentional actions performed by the speech
vassa:	The three-month period during the rainy season from the full moon in July until the full moon in October which monks and nuns have to spend in one designated place. This time is often spent in intensive meditation.
vicara:	Sustained application
vikkhambhana pahana:	Temporary abandonment by suppression
vipassana:	Insight, direct and experiential knowledge into the three general characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and not-self nature of all phenomena
vipassana bhavana:	Insight meditation

- vipassanupakkilesa:** Corruptions of insight; subtle defilements that arise during the development of insight meditation
- Visuddhimagga:** 'The Path of Purification', commentary written by Ven. Buddhaghosa in the fifth century AD
- vitakka:** Initial application
- viveka-sukha:** The happiness of seclusion
- yakkha:** Spirit, a lower level of deva, sometimes friendly to human beings, sometimes not; often dwelling in trees or other wild places
- yogi:** In Myanmar (Burma), the word yogi is used for anyone who is practising meditation