Mettā, Applied and Sustained Thought, Buddha Mind

Bhante Bodhidhamma · Notable Dhamma Teachers — Bhante Bodhidhamma · 45:38

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa
Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa
Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa

Homage to the Buddha, the blessed, noble and fully self-enlightened one.

So the question about *metta*: we practice *metta* at the end of the day, could you say something about when and in what circumstances we can and should cultivate *karuṇā*, *muditā* and *upekkhā*, and how they fit in with *vipassanā* practice overall?

One of the problems that may occur with *vipassanā* is an objectivity which turns into an indifference. That's your problem there: taking this stand within ourselves of the objective observer just watching things arise and pass away can become too passive, and you can move towards indifference with the usual phrase, "Oh, it's just *kamma*." So if somebody falls down screaming with pain before you, you can stand completely calm and say, "Oh, it's all right, it's just a bit of *kamma*." It's like the heart's not drawn because it's found this little place where it's untouched.

And it's often a case of being afraid to get engaged, frankly. There can be fear there of actually getting engaged in suffering. And we do that when we note something and we're actually pushing it away. See, that's the case where we're callousing ourselves, where we're drawing a thick skin in between that which knows, that which feels, and what there is to be felt, because it doesn't want to go there, basically. But it kids itself and says, "Well, I can see it as a process, I can see the *anicca*, I can see it's not me, not mine." But it's not me, not mine in that sense—it's not quite the right "me not mine." It's still ours in a conventional sense; it's our baggage, for heaven's sake. So you have to be slightly careful about that. So that's the right understanding when we do it properly.

But you can see that in the Eightfold Path you start off with this right understanding which has three levels, remember: the level of receiving information from a teacher, from the books and so on; making it our own intellectual knowledge by contemplating it, by thinking about it, so that intellectually we have a confidence in it because it's now become our thought; and making it real through *vipassanā*, a direct experience. So now that's the first step, right understanding.

The next one is *sammāsaṅkappa*, right attitude. So it has to systematically drop from this understanding

into the heart as an attitude, or else it remains too remote. And that's why we do *metta*. That's the purpose of *metta*. Because then it draws it. So what is wisdom in action? It's compassion, isn't it? It's love, compassion and joy. That's wisdom in action. That's what it manifests as: some form of love, compassion, sympathetic joy and all the other virtues, as an attitude that is in the heart.

And then it goes right speech. So that's the next thing. It comes out through what we say. Right action and then right livelihood. So you see it flows out into society. And because it flows out into society that way doesn't mean it can't flow back this way. So depending on your job and what qualities your job demands, it will come back up the other way into attitude and into wisdom.

So if you have a job which demands a certain service, a quality of service—and virtually every job does, apart from trafficking in human beings and arms and all the nasty bits—but most jobs can be seen as a service. It's a compassionate thing, it's a loving thing, and that feeds into your attitude, and that gives you that interconnectedness. The more you see yourself as interconnected, the less that is of this "me" on my own, doing my own thing in my own time in my own way, to hell with you lot. So it works either way. So that's why you can start with love and it'll feed back into wisdom and feed out into action. So there's your three paths: path of insight, path of wisdom, path of love, and the path of action, three *karmas*.

The Hindus delineate that, I think, more clearly than do the Buddhist lineage. They have these three *karm as*. But it's there within the Buddhist teaching; there's no problem with that. But the Buddha is very much inclined to approach the situation from right understanding. Whereas you can see a religion like Christianity approaches it more from love, approaches it from that point of view.

So in terms of the question, how does it fit in with *vipassanā* practice? That's how it fits in. So in a sense, every time you do a session of *vipassanā*, there ought to be a little—one minute, it doesn't take long, one minute, two minutes—of just bringing it into an attitude. So the exercise we did there, the first bit takes about what, fifteen minutes when you do it long ways. There's only a couple of minutes when you just flash through all the different categories. You don't even have to do that. You just give it to yourself and all beings.

And remember, if you want to use it to calm yourself, if you're having difficulty sleeping, that's one of the gifts of *metta*. It helps to relax the mind. It gives the heart a good feeling when you fall asleep. But to do that, you must choose somebody whom you have no problems with. If you choose somebody you have problems with, it excites the mind itself. And definitely somebody whom you love who's passed away or fallen ill or something—then it just brings grief and stuff. So it's basically to yourself and somebody, or to all beings. Simple phrase. And you don't make these complicated phrases because that wakes you up. It's very simple.

I had a very interesting experience with that. There's an Israeli man turned up at Kanduboda. And he said he hadn't slept in his life. He hadn't slept in his life ever. And I said, "No, not since I was a child." Mainly because of trauma, the bombs and all that. I said, "You must sleep." He said, "No, what happens is I lose

consciousness for just a moment and then I'm awake again." And I questioned him about it and he said he never slept. He went into this sort of momentary blackout and came out again. He was doing *vipassanā*. So I said to him, "Well, the antidote, according to the Buddha, is loving-kindness." So I gave him the instructions that I've just given you, which is a classic instruction. And he came back the next day and he said he'd slept for two hours. Very joyful, very happy. And by the end of the week he was oversleeping. Sent me a present from Israel.

So that was powerful, wasn't it? So, back to the question. When and in what circumstances? Well, in the discourse on loving-kindness, the Buddha says to do it all the time. It's just a way of being in the world, coming into a situation with that open-heartedness, with that kindness. And remember, you can flavour your own meditation with that when you're looking inward. You can flavour the way that you're looking with a certain kindness, and that's very helpful if you're working with something which isn't particularly pleasant. So in terms of when and where: all the time. That's what the Buddha says. Those who live like that will achieve liberation.

So if you think about it, we're made up of these composites. We're made up of the mind in terms of thinking and that, and the heart with its emotional life, and the body with its actions. So somehow it's got to all work together. And it's just looking upon our lives as that way of being interconnected, which brings up the idea of service. You're never doing anything just for yourself. There's always some—even if you're only doing it for yourself, it's so that you can be healthy and wise to help other people. Do you know what I mean? It's like always trying to make that connection.

I mean the Buddha does say you do things for yourself and others, both yourself and others. But I think you can sort of twist things to make it so that everything you do is in some sort of relationship with the world. So that's when you do it. I mean consciously, when do you do it consciously as a mental effort?

Well, the morning, obviously, and before you—in the evening sometime, with the meditation. That's the two times we're supposed to sort of practise. The morning is setting ourselves in the right frame of mind for the day. And the evening is really letting whatever we've accumulated during the day just give it time to evaporate. And then you end with loving-kindness, and that sets you up for the evening really, the evening TV. It's all right as long as it's football.

But of course there are specific times when the various things are called upon, like *karuṇā*, compassion, *m uditā*, sympathetic joy. And these things of course in the literature have their obvious enemy and their very subtle enemy. So the obvious enemy of love is hatred, but its more subtle enemy is attachment. Now so long as we've got a self, there will be attachment. There's no way we can get rid of attachment just because we think it shouldn't be there. It'll be there. It's just knowing its manifestations.

You can always normally tell when you're acting from an attached point of view because you're very pleased that somebody's doing what you told them to do. You're very irritated because they're not doing what you told them to do. And you're very annoyed because, or you're very afraid because they're not

doing what you told them to do. You see what I mean? There's always some negativity comes up which manifests the attachment. Which doesn't mean to say that what you're telling them to do isn't the right thing for them to do, or you're advising them to do.

See, when I started this teaching, I used to get quite irked, miffed, by the fact I'd give these instructions and people wouldn't do them. I thought, "What's the bloody point? I'm the teacher. I said go slow. They should go slow." See? And then I had a long talk with myself. And I thought, "What are you getting miffed for?" See? So now, if people don't do what I ask them to do, that's fine. But I'm very happy when they do. You can move yourself over. See? So it's just a case of recognising that attachment, some form of attachment will be there with relationships and with things, and it's just knowing that that causes us some form of discomfort and sometimes heavy pain really. But it's just knowing it as the product of self.

And then, the way we deal with it is exactly what *vipassanā* is teaching us. You know, we feel it, we let it go, we don't feed into it. And then as it passes away, we feed into the opposite. There's a case in the scriptures where there's three *arahats* living together, the Anuruddhas, as they're called. Of course, they are fully liberated. And the Buddha asks them, how is it they live so peacefully together? And Anuruddha says, "Well, I say to myself, what if I put aside what I want to do and do what the others want to do?" See? Now that's the selfless way. But it only works if everybody else is doing the same. Because if you say that and they're not saying it, you just get abused. See? So you have to be very careful about that one. But at least you can have that attitude of at least first opening up to what the other wants.

When anybody, for instance, came to the Buddha and said, "What do you teach about *kamma*? What do you teach about this and that?" he would always reply, "Well, what's your understanding?" He never sort of launched into his, "Well, this is it and this is the way it should be." So, "What's your understanding?" And then when they'd given their understanding, he would argue with them to show that their understanding had a flaw in it. See? And then when they saw the flaw, they immediately dropped probably their conceited position of "I'm right and the Buddha and this guy's wrong." And because they were that open, then he told them what his teaching was. Not everybody accepted it even so.

Now that's interesting, because when they asked the Buddha, "How do you feel when somebody doesn't receive your teaching?" he says, "Well, it's all right, it's all calm." "But how do you feel when they do?" "They feel joyful." He knows his limits. You can't enlighten somebody, can you, when we say that "Let me enlighten you, let me disabuse you..."

When it comes to *karuṇā*, the opposite, the obvious opposite is cruelty, of course. Instead of wishing somebody's free of harm, you give them some, give them some pain. The subtle one is pity, grief, feeling sorry for somebody. Now, if you think about that, it sounds right to feel sorry, but you're not. See? There's an "I" in there feeling sorry for somebody. There's a difference between that and empathy, isn't there? Because with empathy you connect with that feeling because you've had similar feelings, and that draws you to want to help. But to say, "Oh, you poor thing, you want to hit him, don't you? I'm so sorry for you."

"Thank you very much." So it's a subtle one because people think they're being kind by saying, "I feel so sorry for you."

Muditā is joy. The obvious enemy of that is envy, obviously, envy and jealousy. So by developing *muditā* we undermine those two qualities. But the subtle one is excitement, interestingly enough, just getting excited, getting overexcited, sort of moving into an indulgence with it.

And what keeps it from doing that is this *upekkhā*. What stops all these things from sort of going off is *upek khā*, just that basis of an equanimous mind, the equanimity. And the equanimity is—remember, always begins with that position of openness. So you're not coming from a position. So when the heart resonates with somebody else's happiness, it's at the level of their resonance. You're not overdoing it. Which we often do because often underneath it we're pushing away the jealousy and the envy. "Oh, I'm so happy for you. Oh, absolutely wonderful."

I remember once there was this monk—it was just so painful. And we were opening a centre and he said these lovely things about the centre and all these people who'd been involved and so on. And then during lunch, such a telltale, he turned round and he said, "You know, I meant every word I said." That's a giveaway, isn't it? You have to tell people that you meant every word you said. Anyway, I prayed for him.

It's funny, isn't it? Now, you see, this is something that doesn't really come up in Buddhist psychology. Buddhist psychology, the way it comes from the Buddha—I mean it's there in the sense of the *anusaya*, the potential defilements that sit underneath—but I haven't really come across the Western idea of unconscious motivation which is actually affecting what you do and you don't really know it. People know it because it's in the inflection of your voice, it's in the way that you hold yourself, and what you are trying to make sincere and what you might actually believe as sincere, other people actually perceive as completely insincere. Do you know what I mean?

And of course *vipassanā*—one of the things about *vipassanā* is that you might be sitting here and if you do really note, you'll catch these underlying thoughts because they'll come up. See? All the ones that we don't like to describe ourselves by, that don't fit in with our self-esteem. The obvious one is envy and jealousy. Envy is just about allowable, but jealousy is the way I would distinguish the two. Maybe it's just my distinction, but envy is basically just wanting what the other person has. And jealousy is the same, except you hate them for it. You hate them for having what they have. And you know that that's basically saying to ourselves "I'm inferior." So we don't like to acknowledge that we're really envious or really jealous. And so these things we hide from ourselves, those things that don't fit into our idea of who we are, our self-esteem.

And *vipassanā* often gives us these little ins to ourselves which can be humiliating, but at least now we know why nobody likes us. Before we didn't understand why people get upset with us. People who say they're never angry and they're fuming—that sort of silliness. So opening up...

Vipassanā opens us up to ourselves, and then we have to translate that. So in terms of when and in what circumstances—I mean there are obvious places where these illimitables manifest, but generally speaking what we're trying to develop is a concurrent attitude that runs with the wisdom we have. That's all it is—it runs concurrently.

So in the morning when I say do these resolutions for the day, try and add... See, I've got four of them now. I keep building up. It's getting ridiculous. But you make a resolution on the wisdom side, a resolution on the attitude, a resolution about your work, a resolution... See what I mean? And just by doing that sincerely, eventually it turns. It actually does work. Things can creep up on you.

I'll give you an example. When you go to the east as a monk, especially as a *suddhahāmaduru*, as they call you in Sri Lanka—a white monk—you get this generally special treatment, because people have their faith raised that somebody of another culture should become a Buddhist. It's not so strange now, but in the old days it would have been amazing. And you get there and people give you food and they ask you what you need and you get the medicine you want, the clothes you want, the shelter and everything.

So I'd gone back to Sri Lanka on one occasion and I was staying at this monastery in Colombo and they were serving this food, and over a period of two or three days I was getting really irritated. I thought, why not? I'm a Westerner, why don't they offer me an egg? See, they don't... Sri Lankans don't offer eggs to monks because it's part of meat, and the order's meant to be vegetarian.

Just as an aside, when I first joined this order in Kanduboda, one of the monks said very proudly to me that we're vegetarians, you see. And on the same meal, all this fish was served. A westerner made a wry comment that fish were automated self-propelling vegetables. Sort of allowable.

And to my surprise, I was feeling really disgusted with this food, which not so long ago I was really delighting in. I thought, this is really strange, you see. And then I just caught this complete lack of ingratitude for the food that was being given me. And I was moaning that they weren't giving me spaghetti and toast. And as I saw that and I came back and I thought, for heaven's sake. So I began to develop gratitude. And of course the food started to taste beautiful again. It just shows how your attitude really governs your relationship to things.

So just to bring it all together: the reason why the Buddha practices *mettā* is because that's your basic attitude to all living beings, and once that's set properly the other two illimitables—*muditā*, this joy, and compassion—arise naturally. You don't have to worry about it. I know that in Buddhist history the Mahāyāna took compassion as their big thing, which is understandable because the Buddha is talking about suffering and the end of suffering. But that was generally a reaction against what was a tradition that had become too vipassanā bound, too head bound really, and somehow was losing contact with the people, it seems. You get this movement, and then it goes right the other way. There's some schools that think that *karuṇā* is more important than wisdom. It's completed a circle, you see.

Any questions come up about that?

Well, I'm only suggesting that. It can be any resolution. Whatever the day is. Like, for instance, if you know you've got a hard day at work coming up, you resolve to endure patiently. If you know it's going to be a day off, you make a resolution to use it to the best advantage rather than just fritter the time away. Anything, anything really. But there may be certain resolutions which are very continuous because you're working with something. I mean, to make a resolution to develop moment-to-moment mindfulness is a sort of basic attitude. And sometimes I find it comes up during the day, quite spontaneously.

Could you explain what is meant when one reads about applied or sustained thoughts and where they appear in the jhānas? Also, how do they differ in quality? I assume that they are skilful application of thought. Can you explain in what way and what's to look out for in case of slipping into an unskilful application?

These are technical terms, *vitakka*, *vicāra*, and in a sense they are slightly mistranslated by "thought." It's more that the thinking mind is directed to an object—it's not thinking about something.

So talking about it in terms of vipassanā: when you note something like, for instance, you're noting the breath—so "rising, falling"—and then if you have a touching point, let's just say, make it easy, "rising, falling." So "rising, falling." You can see that the intellect is involved, but in a sense it's not actually drawn into the object as it were. And that's why, because the effort, the focus isn't there, it flits away. But you keep bringing it back. Keep bringing it back. You see? And that's the process of *vitakka*. The image that they give in the commentaries is a bee flying around a flower. A bee flying around a flower.

As you keep doing that, as you're "rising, falling," there's a feeling of sort of being drawn into it and getting stuck on the object, as it were. It feels like you can't even move off it sometimes, that sort of feeling. That's when the bee's landed on the flower, you see. That's the *vicāra*. And it's a sign to the meditator that their focus, their concentration is now matured, right? And as you know, you've got to do this every sitting. It's not as though it's matured and that's the end of that, like cheese. You've got to keep working at it.

So then it becomes this *vicāra*, you see, *vitakka vicāra*. If you were doing *mettā* practice, you would just do your good wishes: "May all beings be happy," you see. But the mind would be moving all over the place, but as you keep doing it, it's as though the phrase now comes naturally, and you're stuck with it, and it's there in the background, and it's easy to stay with that phrase. So at that point it's become *vicāra*, *vitakka vicāra*.

When that's really nicely developed, the mind's very still, you're probably in what's known as the first *jhāna*. That's the sign of the first *jhāna*. And there are two types of *jhānas* which I have written about on the website. There's one called *lakkhaṇa jhāna* and there's one called *ālambaṇa jhāna*. I'm giving you now the commentarial stuff. I'm sounding very learned, but this is about the limit of it.

The *lakkhaṇa jhānas* are those concentration states which are developed on the three characteristics of

impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self, and therefore they belong to the Vipassanā tradition. The *ālambaṇa jhānas* are those that are developed on an object, such as loving kindness or the breath, which are to do with the *jhānas*. So what that's saying is that the level of concentration is the same, but with the *jhāna* there's no investigation—there's just the development of that mental state and the enjoyment of it. And the Buddha said that's good because it's developing the heart. With the vipassanā there's always the intelligence, there's always the investigation.

That's the difference, and that's why anybody practicing *jhāna* can even unwittingly slip into vipassanā, and those in vipassanā can unwittingly slip into *jhāna*. They just move between the other. But certain traditions will go down one of those paths—there will be a combination of *jhāna*-vipassanā or just vipassanā. The Mahāsi was the *suddhavipassanā*, the dry way as it's called—*suddhavipassanā* only. So that's the meaning of this *vitakka vicāra*—"applied and sustained." It's just a funny translation. It's difficult to translate these things sometimes.

Any questions?

Bhante, could you say more about the meaning of *Satipaññā*? Also, I've heard the term *sati-sampajañña* which sounds similar but I don't know the origin or significance of it.

Now *Satipaññā* is not scriptural. You'll not find anywhere in the scriptures the two words *satipaññā* stuck together like that, and I pinched it from the great teacher Buddhadāsa, who taught—because he used to talk about it, at least that's what I remember. And what they are are the two qualities of the Buddha mind, of the enlightened person. Now although we talk about them being two things, actually they're one and the same thing. One is its passive quality and the other one is active.

So first of all, to understand something you've got to look, and when you look then you see or you don't see. So the first is receiving, you see. That's why I try to emphasize this quiet abiding of just being open, of the equanimity of just receiving. You see, that's your *sati*. And in receiving, once in receiving, one sees, one understands.

There's a difference between opening up and letting things come to you as opposed to looking for something, because when you're looking for something you're coming from a position, you're coming from a past experience, a conceptual idea. Now that's going to corrupt the *paññā*. And we can say in general, spiritually speaking, when you're looking for something because you're coming from some idea, some notion—if you get what it is that you've been looking for... well, if you don't get it you're disappointed and you're frustrated, and if you do you're deluded. You go around thinking you are enlightened because it fits in with your concepts of what *Nibbāna* is. Then that's it, you've had it—you're in the state of perdition, there's little hope, at least in this lifestyle.

They say—how do they put it now—the illness caused by the intellect, by conceited intellect, is like the illness caused by a medicine. If you've got a medicine to cure an illness, that's good. But if the medicine

itself gives you an illness, then you're really stuck.

So the idea of *sati* is this complete openness, and that's what the Buddha called his discourse on this whole vipassanā thing: *Satipaṭṭhāna*, the establishment of *sati*. And if you go through the opening stanzas of that—you get good translations now, Bhikkhu Bodhi and places like that—you'll see he goes through the stages of just first of all just getting in touch with the breath: "It's a long breath, a short breath." He's just getting in touch with the breath. And then as you get in touch with the breath, you calm the body, you calm the mind. See, that's the *sati*—you're just pulling back from it, just letting it calm itself through the breath.

And then you begin to note the impermanence of it, or the process of it, the beginning and the end and the middle bits. And then he says when... just when there's just enough *sati*, just enough *paññā*, insight will arise. And you can't make that happen. You just slowly develop it through this attitude of placing your attention on the object with that openness and with the presumption, with the faith, that there is this intelligence within that looking.

Now the three things that always come together, the three words that always come together is *ātāpī-sampa jāno-sātimā*. So the *ātāpī* is the effort, and it's continuous unremitting effort. It's actually a word which is somehow related to mortification exercises, but it's meant to be that sort of continuous unrelenting gentle effort to remain mindful.

The *sampajañña* is with this intelligence, with this intuitive intelligence—not the intellect, not thinking and being aware. It's an adjective. So that *sampajañña-sati-mā*, the nouns that come from that are *sati-pañ ñā*.

And just as a little aside: what happened was in '98 when I returned from Sri Lanka, and during that year decided I was going to stay in Britain, I wasn't going to go back. And I realized that to stay here meant that I'd have to teach because the support, there wasn't the internal structure for easy support for a monk. You have to teach really. I asked a friend—well somebody said to me, well, you need to set something up. So they set a website up for me. It said you need a logo. So I asked this fellow who's a printer, who worked a little bit in—those early in '98—it's funny how things have moved so fast—to make up a logo.

And I gave him some ideas, you see. I said well I wanted to be a *dhammacakka*, a wheel, and I wanted to have twelve spokes for the twelve links of the dependent origination, cut into four for the Four Noble Truths, eight for the eightfold path. And it had all these—sixteen of them, ten of those—had everything on this wheel, you see. Well, the poor man struggled at it. And when it came out, it was horrible. And I didn't know what to say. We must have spent hours on this thing. And I felt really terrible. I thanked him, of course, and quietly put it to the side. He wasn't a sort of person to hold grudges.

And what it did was, it made me stop and think, well, what am I teaching? That's what it made me do, which is rather good, actually. I said, what is it I'm teaching? And these words came quite spontaneously

at the time: I'm teaching *Satipaññā*. And that's how I ended up with this logo I've got.

And the five whiskers—the actual circle, the circle without the whiskers, if you can imagine it, it's just one circle with all those petals. You often get that symbol, especially in Burma, and they're the twenty-four *paṭi cchas* that we chant, twenty-four relations. And I stuck these whiskers in for the five spiritual faculties going inward and coming out. They were supposed to be the four illimitables with wisdom pushing them out, you see. And the inner circle, which is free of colour, where the things stop, that was meant to be a symbol for *Nibbāna* in this life, for the Buddha as he was living. And the black spot is *Parinibbāna*, total *Ni bbāna*. That was the idea of it. All this you will find written up on my website in great detail.

So, that's the *Satipaññā*, anyway, that's what it means. And as I say, I filched it off a very good teacher, Buddhadāsa, whom I really was following yesterday when I was talking about this business of rebirth. If you look at the text carefully enough, the Buddha is talking about rebirth of self—it's all about the rebirth of self and the suffering of rebirth of self. And there's a phrase which is not quoted so often actually but it should be, and it's in the... it's "a consciousness"—in the Pali it's... That's one of the five quotes that I know. I don't want you to think, oh, this fellow knows Pali. I've learned this one especially off by heart so I can keep quoting it.

And it's "a consciousness"—see, he used the word consciousness. It's the same word that he uses for the five *khandhas*, for the five aggregates. So one is *viññāṇa*, you see. But there it has a different meaning. There it's an act of cognition, right? But then he says there is this consciousness which is not touched by any of the senses, so you can't see it, you can't smell it or anything else, you can't think about it, you can't emote—there's nothing there at all. And he says it's boundaryless because there's no phenomena. It's only phenomena that makes a boundary, isn't it? It's only the walls of this room that give the room a boundary. If there's no phenomena, it's boundaryless. And in all directions, full of light.

And as far as I know, that only comes up once in the scriptures. And it comes up as an answer to a question.

And the question is, where is it that the four great elements come to an end? Now the four great elements, remember, are fire, earth, water and air. So what the question is really saying is, where does the world come to an end? And he says, that's the wrong question. He says, where does the world not find a footing? And then he makes this statement.

Now, the whole of Mahāyāna is basically based on that statement. Because in early Buddhism, the Buddha is much more... the Buddha likes to put the emphasis on the experience of *Nibbāna*. In later Buddhism, the question was asked, well, what is it that experiences Nibbāna? And that's where the thing shifts towards consciousness and the study of consciousness as such. Some very good histories on that, by the way, if you want to read about it — the evolution of Buddhist thinking and practice. And that's where you get the evolution of the practice of Zen and Dzogchen, you see, just the awareness.

So when you trace that back to the original scriptures, whether it's the Theravāda scriptures or the Sarvāstivādin scriptures, you always come across this emphasis on *sati*. You know, if you were to put the whole of the Buddha's teaching — in a practical teaching anyway — in one word, it would have to be *sati*. I can't think of another word that would fit so closely to what he's trying to teach. What is *sati*? How do you develop it? Where does it lead to when you develop *sati*? That's it.

So you can see why I cling to the words Satipanya. You can see why I'm very attached.

So I think that brings us to the end of our questions in terms of what's written there, I think.

Transcriptions produced locally using Swiss low-carbon electricity. Corrections and rewriting by cloud-hosted AI.