
SATIPANYA BUDDHIST RETREAT

Guided Meditations

Guided vipassanā meditation practices and Pāli chanting

Bhante Bodhidhamma

SHROPSHIRE, WALES · UNITED KINGDOM

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Introducing Vipassanā Insight Meditation

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 39 min

This introductory guided meditation offers a comprehensive foundation in vipassanā (insight meditation) practice according to the Mahāsi Sayadaw tradition. Bhante Bodhidhamma guides practitioners through the essential elements of noting practice, beginning with establishing awareness of rising and falling breath sensations at the abdomen using simple noting words.

The session systematically introduces key aspects of vipassanā: maintaining upright posture, dealing skillfully with wandering mind through gentle acknowledgment, and expanding awareness to include sounds, bodily sensations, and mental states as they arise. Practitioners learn to note experiences such as "thinking," "hearing," "pain," or emotional states like "anxiety" and "excitement," observing how all phenomena arise and pass away naturally.

The meditation culminates in recognizing the three characteristics (tilakkhana) of existence: impermanence (anicca), unsatisfactoriness (dukkha), and not-self (anattā). Bhante emphasizes developing the capacity to observe the distinction between the knower and what is known, fostering the clear comprehension essential to insight practice. The session concludes with guidance for reflective review, encouraging practitioners to assess their diligence, skillfulness, and awareness of the fundamental characteristics of experience.

Make sure you're sitting comfortably and upright. Lift up through the top of the head. Natural curvature in the spine. Shoulders relaxed. Jaw relaxed. Lips together, teeth apart. Eyes gently closed. And hands on the lap, palms facing upward. Probably the most comfortable.

Now placing the attention on the abdomen. Just feeling the rising and falling sensations caused by the breath. Get in touch with those sensations. What do they feel like? And use the noting word rising, falling to keep the thinking mind from wandering. And just notice whether it's a long breath or a short breath, tight, relaxed and so on.

If the mind is wandering, recognise and acknowledge what it's doing. Thinking, thinking, worrying, worrying, dreaming, dreaming and so on. And then bring the attention back to the breath.

As we settle down, we may find there's a gap at the end of the out-breath before the in-breath begins again. Using the noting word touching, find a sensation you can feel, such as the touch of your hands. So now relax and attend to the sensations caused by the breath. Rising, falling, touching.

If the mind is wandering, recognise and acknowledge what it's doing. Thinking, thinking, worrying, worrying, dreaming, dreaming, and so on, and bring that attention back to the abdomen.

You may also begin to feel sleepy or lethargic, in which case sit upright, lift the body up through the top of the head. And if that's not enough, open the eyes a little to let the light in. But don't look around. And if that's not enough to keep us awake, you can stand up. We can practice *vipassanā* standing up just as well.

Now begin to feel the sensations caused by the breath as neutral and pleasant. Pleasant, neutral sensations, relaxing the body, calming the heart, silencing the mind. Rising, falling, touching.

We can gently focus in and notice the very start of the in-breath and the very end. The very beginning of the out-breath and the very end. Rising, falling, touching.

When we feel somewhat settled on the breath, we can allow whatever draws our attention to be felt and observed in the same way. Should a sound draw us, we are interested in the process of hearing. Noting hearing, hearing. Should a feeling arise in the body, pleasant or unpleasant, note it. Pain, pain. Aching, aching. Tickling, tickling. Anxiety, anxiety. Excitement, excitement. And just as with the breath, observe it, feel it, experience it fully.

And don't forget, if we find the mind wandering, just note what it's doing and start again with the breath. The breath is our reference point and anchor. It's where we always start again. Rising, falling, touching.

Noting, feeling, observing anything that draws our attention. Can you see how everything we are experiencing is arising and passing away?

Can you note your reaction to what you're experiencing? If it is unpleasant, aversion, aversion, fear, fear. If it's pleasant, desiring, desiring, wanting, wanting.

Noting, feeling, observing anything that draws our attention, can we see that everything is arising of its own accord, not under our control? Sensations, feelings, emotions and moods arise and pass away whether we want them to or not. Thoughts and imagining draw us away whether we want to go away or not.

Noting, feeling, observing anything that draws our attention, can we sense the distance, a separation, between the observer, the feeler, the knower, the experiencer, and what it is that's being experienced?

So, putting aside all instructions, all thoughts, let's just note, observe, feel, experience anything that draws our attention within the field of awareness. Begin with the breath. Rising, falling, touching.

When we come to the end of a sitting, we can reflect on three things. How diligent was I in bringing myself back into the presenting moment? How did I deal with the various bodily and mental states that arose? Was I skillful or unskillful? Was I confused? Was I aware of one or all of the three characteristics at any time? Impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self.

Can we now make a resolution for the next sitting?

Vipassanā Guidelines

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 3 min

Bhante Bodhidhamma provides comprehensive guidelines for vipassanā insight meditation practice. Beginning with proper posture—an energized spine, relaxed body, and poised head—the instructions focus on observing abdominal sensations during natural breathing, using simple noting words like 'rising' and 'falling' to anchor attention.

As stability develops, practitioners learn to extend awareness to whatever arises—sensations, feelings, emotions, thoughts, and mental images—observing each phenomenon with bare attention and noting words. This choiceless awareness, free from control or judgment, cultivates satipaṇṇā (right awareness with intuitive intelligence).

The talk explains how this impartial observation leads to direct insight into the three characteristics of existence: anicca (impermanence), dukkha (unsatisfactoriness), and anattā (not-self). Through intimate experience of these universal truths, practitioners realize that identification with or attachment to any phenomenon brings dissatisfaction. This vipassanā insight ultimately leads to complete liberation from suffering and the realization of Nibbāna—described as the unborn, unbecome, undying, uncreated, and unconditioned. The instruction concludes with the profound teaching that 'those who are mindful are in the presence of Nibbāna.'

Whatever the sitting posture, it should be comfortable and fulfil three conditions. An energised spine with its natural curvature, the rest of the body relaxed and the head poised on top. The hands are placed on the lap and the eyes are gently closed.

Then the attention is fixed on the process of breathing, just the normal and natural breath. It is the sensations of the abdomen caused by breathing which are to be observed. And a noting word is used to focus the thinking mind onto these sensations. As the abdomen rises, the word "rising" is repeated. As it falls, "falling."

Feeling the sensations of the abdomen as neutral and pleasant, the heart is calmed and the mind is stilled. Then the beginning and end of each in-breath and out-breath are more clearly seen.

When the attention becomes somewhat steady, let it experience whatever draws it within the field of awareness: sensations and feelings, moods and emotions, mental images and thoughts. Using a simple word to note and without any interference whatsoever, all these passing phenomena are to be intimately felt and carefully observed.

Should the mind wander, let it be brought back gently but firmly to observe sensations at the abdomen in order to cultivate a sharp attentiveness. In this way, right awareness with intuitive intelligence, *satipaṇṇā*, becomes established.

This bare attentiveness, simply watching all that arises and passes away, this choiceless awareness that does not control or manipulate, this impartial observation that does not judge or question, this intuitive introspection, fully experiencing each physical, emotional and mental event as it really is, leads to the realisation that everything is impermanent and insubstantial and that to identify with or to become attached to anything whatsoever will bring dissatisfaction.

These *vipassanā* insights into the three characteristics of existence—impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self, *anicca, dukkha, anattā*—lead to the complete liberation from all suffering, the experience of the unborn, the unbecome, the undying, the uncreated, the unconditioned: true refuge, harbour and home, perfect happiness and contentment.

Those who are mindful are in the presence of *Nibbāna*.

Sādhu. Sādhu. Sādhu.

45 Minute Detailed Guided Meditation

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 45 min

This guided meditation provides detailed instructions for practicing vipassanā bhāvanā (insight meditation) according to the Mahasi Sayadaw tradition of Burma. Bhante Bodhidhamma guides practitioners through the complete process, beginning with establishing proper meditative posture and deep relaxation techniques.

The session covers the fundamental elements of the practice: using the breath at the abdomen as the primary meditation object, employing noting techniques ("rising, falling, touching") to maintain concentrated awareness, and skillfully working with wandering thoughts and physical sensations. The guidance extends beyond basic concentration to the heart of insight practice—developing satipaṇṇā (mindful awareness) that observes all arising mental and physical phenomena without attachment or aversion.

Bhante explains how to work with challenging experiences like pain, emotions, and restlessness as opportunities for deeper understanding. The meditation culminates in pointing toward the three characteristics of existence: impermanence (anicca), not-self (anattā), and unsatisfactoriness (dukkha). This practice develops the choiceless awareness that leads to liberation from suffering and the realization of nibbāna.

Suitable for both beginners seeking comprehensive instruction and experienced practitioners wanting to deepen their understanding of traditional vipassanā technique.

A Detailed Guided Meditation Instructions on how to practice *Vipassanā Bhāvanā* insight meditation as taught by the Mahāsi Sayadaw of Burma.

Firstly, we must settle our body into a meditative posture. Some sit on chairs, others use kneeling stools, but the usual position is to sit on the floor with a cushion in a cross-legged posture. Your hands should rest on your lap, preferably one on top of the other.

Now whatever posture you adopt it should at first feel comfortable. Then make sure the spine is straight though keeping its natural curvature. It's best not to lean against anything for this will induce sleep.

Now imagine a puppet string running from the base of the spine to the top of the head and it being gently pulled up so that all the vertebrae separate and there's a feeling of growing tall and light. A feeling of energy running up the spine without any tension or tightness. And the head should feel balanced on top.

Now just let everything relax off that central column. Here we can help ourselves relax with some simple exercises.

Firstly, let's see how relaxed we can become by simply telling muscles to relax. Start from the top of the head and go down the rest of the body relaxing muscles as best you can. So start at the top of the head, come down over the brow, the eyes, the cheeks, the jaw, especially the jaw, the neck, shoulders, arms, and hands. Just feel everything getting heavier as tension stops supporting them. Now go back to the chest. Relax it. Go down the body to the stomach, to the abdomen. Just relaxing as best as you can. And finally, just feel your legs heavy on the floor.

Superficial surface tension should now be released if only a little, but we may feel a deeper level of tension more habitual and therefore not easy to relax by a mental volition. We can use a second technique here of muscular tension. Where you feel tension tense the muscles in that area as hard as you can and release them slowly. This is especially good for tension in the face. Just screw up the face as much as you can now. Hold it. And relax. Now let's try that again. Hold it. Hold it. And relax. It's also good for the neck and shoulders. Just tighten up that whole area now. Hold it. And relax slowly. Let's try that again. Tighten up the whole area. Neck and shoulders. Hold it. And just relax slowly.

A third technique is best for tensions felt in the chest, though it has an effect on the whole body. Controlled breathing. Take a slow, deep in-breath, fill the lungs to capacity, hold for as long as comfortable, and just let the whole ribcage fall quickly, expelling all the air. Then wait for the next breath to arise naturally, and this will prevent hyperventilation. So now let's take in a deep breath, hold it, and just let it go. Let's try that again. Take a deep breath. Hold it. And just let it go.

Hopefully you will have developed a deep relaxation. So now we should find ourselves in a posture highly conducive for meditation. The spine should be energised but not tense. The rest of the body should feel relaxed, hanging, as it were, off this central column of the spine. And the head should be gently poised on top, symbolising the balance between physical alertness and relaxation.

So now, for a few moments, let's feel this posture as a whole, and recognise its qualities of alert energy and yet calm relaxation.

Now we need to develop the same sense of energetic alertness and relaxed calmness in the mind, and to achieve this we use the breath. Place your attention on the abdomen and feel its rising and falling motion as you breathe naturally. Please note this is not a breathing technique. The breath should not be interfered with.

Now it may be that the breath is not obvious to you at the abdomen, in which case see if you can feel it at the chest, rising and falling. The breath at the nostrils may also be used, but for the Mahāsi technique it is preferable to use the abdomen. See now which one is most obvious to you.

Now whichever place you've chosen, this is your primary object of meditation. This means you will use this place to establish an alert and calm awareness. If you move from one place to another, say from the nose to the abdomen, this will undermine your ability to become concentrated, that is, the ability to watch with an alert but calm attention without flitting away.

If you're watching the breath process at the abdomen or chest, observe the movement, the rising and falling, and use a noting word to still the thinking process. With the in-breath, note rising, rising, and with the out-breath, note falling, falling. After the out-breath, there's a rest, and there's danger that the mind will run away on fantasies. Now, to stop this happening, we choose a touch point. It may be the feeling of your hands on your lap, or the feelings of your legs on the floor. Choose what is most obvious.

So as you feel the abdomen or chest rising with the in-breath, feel those feelings, watch them closely and point your attention directly at them, noting, rising, rising. In the same way as you feel the abdomen or chest falling with the out-breath, feel the feelings, the sensations of the movement. Watch them intently and note falling, falling. If there's a pause before the in-breath, note a touching point. Touching, touching, touching. Now be sure as soon as the in-breath starts to return immediately to the abdomen or the chest.

If you're concentrating at the nostrils, it's the same, except it's more appropriate to use the noting words in-in, out-out, while remembering to concentrate on the sensations at the nostrils or the upper lip, wherever the passage of air is felt most acutely.

Please note it doesn't matter how many times you say the noting word. Once may be enough. What is important is to be attentive to the feelings or sensations as they arise. The word itself is of little importance. It's just a simple and very effective way to stop the mind from wandering. What you must pay attention to are all the sensations caused by the process of breathing.

Now you may find that your mind wanders off on thoughts and fantasies. When you wake up out of them, just note thinking, thinking, or dreaming, dreaming, once or twice, and then quickly and firmly go back to watching the sensations of breathing. But

you mustn't be rough or forceful. Training the mind is a bit like training a puppy dog to sit. When it gets up, you have to pat it down kindly but firmly. If you get angry and hit it, it will just want to run away.

So now, let's practice this breathing meditation for a while, observing and noting all the sensations. Rising... Falling, touching. If your mind is wandering, note what it's doing, dreaming, thinking, worrying, and so on, and bring it back gently but firmly to the breath. If you feel sleepy, put more energy into the spine, sit tall, but not tense. This part of the meditation is mainly concerned with establishing concentration. It's normal to spend a good ten minutes doing this until the mind becomes fairly still, at least until gross restlessness has gone, and you can watch the object, in this case the breath, fairly constantly.

We use the breath because it's a neutral feeling, it doesn't excite or depress us. So the mind becomes still and moves to a point of concentration by way of calm and peacefulness. This is different from the sort of concentration we get when we are doing something engrossing, such as watching a film, or having to do a job carefully. That depends upon stimulation, but the concentration we need for insight must arise out of a quiet and still mind.

And when this sort of concentrated, quiet mind is established, we find another faculty becomes prominent, our intuitive intelligence, *paññā*. Sometimes, when you're trying to listen to shortwave radio, there's so much interference, it's hard to hear exactly what's being said. Once the fuzz goes, everything becomes clear. So it is with *paññā*, our intuitive intelligence. Once the heart is calm and concentrated, and thinking and imagining has stopped, the intuitive intelligence is able to see and understand clearly what's going on.

So now, what we have to do is establish this concentrated attentiveness, alive with intelligence, *satipaññā*, not just on the breath, but on anything that comes into our field of awareness. The example I like is that of a bird watcher. They sit in a so-called hide. They hide there, hidden from the birds they are watching. In this way, the birds are not disturbed, and their natural habits can be observed. All the knowledge, such as of feeding, nesting, mating, and so on, comes by just observing, merely watching. In this way, this ability to be simply observers, interested to discover the true nature of our body, mind, and heart, is the key to spiritual insight.

But this watching, please understand clearly, is not a searching for something. We are not looking for something. We're just non-interfering observers, just looking at whatever comes into our field of awareness, just watching whatever arises right here and now, while it's happening, without any thoughts about it or questions.

So we begin by establishing attentiveness on the breath. Should a sound be heard, we avert to it immediately, noting hearing, hearing. Now, try to catch the quality of the sound at the very eardrum. In this way, we'll stop the mind flying out, as it were, to the object, such as a chirping bird or passing car, and set up a whole train of imaginative thoughts. The same with smell. Note it as smelling, smelling, right there in the nostrils. And again with any sensations on the body, such as itching and prickling, just note itching, itching, prickling, prickling, right there, where the sensations are felt, and plunge your attention into them.

Then there are feelings that arise in the body, such as heat and cold, heaviness and lightness, all sorts of discomforts and pleasures. A particular word, such as heat or cold, can be used where appropriate, otherwise a general word, feeling, can be used. Now, it's important we don't react to these feelings unless they are too severe to tolerate, for to react to them will lead us into restlessness. And do remember the noting word is a technique we use to keep the attention steady on the object. In other words, it controls the thinking faculty, but the attention itself should bury itself into the actual sensations.

Again, there are feelings in the body arising from moods and emotions. Dislikable ones, such as fear and depression, and likeable ones such as joy and love. We can use specific words here, such as love, guilt, and so on, but all the time feeling fully the mood or emotion, the actual feelings wherever they occur, such as in the chest or stomach.

Finally, there are thoughts and images. Note these as thinking or imagining, and they will stop. Otherwise, they will carry you off onto a daydream, sometimes for the whole of the meditation period.

And be especially aware of the judging mind. That's terrible, that's good, that's bad, that's nice, and so on. Don't correct or interfere with such thoughts. Just acknowledge them and note judging, judging. We're not trying to become spectators, getting involved in all the mental play, supporting this against that. We must take the position of an observer, an objective observer, just allowing all the play to unfold right there before our very gaze.

All the time we're trying to maintain that separation, that distance, that detachment from what's going on in the body, mind and heart. We observe all these psychophysical events as something other, as if belonging to someone else. In this way we can investigate objectively. So whatever is offered, a sensation, a feeling, a thought, just watch it carefully.

So now, let's sit tall, and with keen interest, let's watch the flow of physical and mental phenomena. Begin always with the breath. Rising, falling, touching. If the mind is wandering, note what it's doing, dreaming, thinking, worrying, and so on, and bring it back to the breath, firmly but gently. If there's sloth, energise the spine, re-establish the posture, slowly, very slowly, or you may disturb your concentration, noting the whole movement, straightening, straightening.

Sometimes there's a lot of pain, aching and tension comes up in the body. This won't be due to posture so long as the posture is correct. They'll probably be caused by unresolved emotions and mental states that have until now been suppressed out of consciousness. It's important to relax around them and develop an attitude of interest. Such discomfort, sometimes severe, may continue throughout a whole sitting or for many sittings until it resolves itself, and it may be that the underlying reason, such as an emotion, will not manifest itself. Just the passing of the discomfort will mean that the curing has taken place.

We need to develop patience to bear this sort of thing and use the opportunity to see pain as pain, just sensations, and to separate out the suffering which is the aversion or fear we feel towards them. We make both sides, the painful sensations and the mental attitudes, objects to be noted, observed, and understood.

So, keep noting, keep observing, maintaining a sharp attentiveness. If you get lost, start again with the breath, your home base and anchor. Always begin again with the breath. Rising, falling, touching. If your mind is wandering, bring it back firmly but gently to the primary object of our meditation, the breath. If there's tiredness or dullness, raise energy up the spine by sitting tall, though not tense, remember. Be especially aware of tension around the shoulders, neck and jaw.

Here we are sitting within ourselves, as it were, watching the inner films. The body, mind and heart display themselves just as they want. We don't interfere. It's a natural process of revelation. In time, many things may arise out of the subconscious which have long been suppressed. They'll reveal themselves when the time is right and the time is right when we'll be ready to accept them. In this way, insight meditation brings about a psychotherapy. Even painful traumatic memories from childhood will be eventually cleared out of the system, and with them all the neuroses and tensions they've caused. All we have to do to attain this purification of the heart is to remain steadfast at our observation post.

Now, although the cleansing of our psychology will happen naturally, it's not the aim of our meditation. The aim of our practice is to go to the deepest levels to see why suffering arises in the first place. One way is to note the relationship we have to whatever

is being observed. The mind constantly jumps from liking to disliking wanting what it likes not wanting what it dislikes. This sort of involvement is simply a way in which we try to find happiness in pleasurable states and escape unhappiness by running away from unpleasurable states.

This constant oscillation, this ricocheting from greed to aversion and back to greed, this is what the Buddha taught as the cause of our suffering in the Second Noble Truth. So, as pleasurable or unpleasurable objects arise, we must keenly note this secondary reaction of grabbing at them or pushing them away, sometimes turning away in fear, the twin of aversion. In this way, this reaction will cool down and even stop, and we shall experience a deeply satisfying equanimous mind. And this in turn will allow us to investigate deeper into the causes of suffering.

So let all that pain and pleasure surface and express itself. Watch the reaction, the grabbing, the aversion, the fear. Begin again with the breath. Rising, falling, touching. If your mind is wandering, note what it's been doing and re-establish your concentration on the breath. If you're sleepy, sit tall and raise energy up the spine.

As we begin to deepen our awareness of all the phenomena arising in our body, mind and heart, we'll become increasingly aware of what the Buddha called the three characteristics of existence. The first is the fact of transience. Everything is arising only to pass away. The second is the difficult teaching of non-self. As we watch all these mental and physical phenomena, we'll notice they arise of themselves. There's no one controlling them. They have their own life, their own energy.

At times the body, mind and heart may seem distant, something other. Before we talked of my sensations, my thoughts, my emotions, but now we find ourselves pointing at them, as it were, through the noting technique. There's a sensation, there's a thought, there's a feeling. We're slowly moving away from a relationship of identity and possession. I am my seeing, I am what I think, I am what I feel. I have a body, I have a mind, I have a heart. Instead, we're moving towards a position of detachment. This is the beginning of the experience of non-self. We discover that the psychophysical organism we call me doesn't constitute anything substantial. It's just made up of many parts that work in unison, just like a car. But there's no core to it, no substance.

Thirdly, as we've noticed, whenever we do fall into a relationship of attachment, desire or aversion to the body, mind and heart, of identifying and possessing, suffering follows.

This is the third characteristic of unsatisfactoriness. We should develop an attitude towards the body, mind and heart as one who rents a house, not as one who owns one.

It is the observation of these three characteristics of transience, insubstantiality and unsatisfactoriness that brings about the spiritual insights that release consciousness from its delusions and leads to liberation from all suffering. And it is this practice of *vipassanā* which is the tool we use. This bare attentiveness, simply observing all that arises and passes away, this choiceless awareness that does not control or manipulate, this impartial watchfulness that does not question or judge, this intuitive introspection, fully experiencing each mental and bodily phenomenon as it really is, this is the faculty of intuitive awareness, *satipaññā*, the very faculty that will eventually bring the realisation of *Nibbāna*, the unborn, the unbecome, the unmade, the unconditioned.

All we have to do is watch, just observe, whatever arises as it arises and passes away. So let's begin again with the breath. Rising, falling, touching.

During daily life, to sit like this even for a few moments, long enough to re-establish a calm and alert attentiveness, will stop our emotions from snowballing. It will undermine the causes of stress. Just fifteen seconds may be enough to re-establish our centre. With practice, this can become a regular state of mind, instead of something that comes only under special conditions.

This calm heart and alert mind is the state we ought to be in all the time, even under stress. It is within this inner environment that this intuitive awareness, *satipaññā*, can operate. Otherwise it becomes lost, drowned and controlled by runaway thoughts and emotions. Constantly make the effort to regain and maintain this inner posture. This is to live fully consciously.

And in this way, the practice of *vipassanā*, insight meditation, will seep into every moment of our lives, and we will be rewarded with great benefits.

Now, when we come to the end of a meditation period, it's best not to just jump out of it, but come out slowly. First, opening the eyes and taking in the light, and gently swaying from side to side. Then, rising slowly and mindfully, and in this way our intuitive mindfulness, *satipaññā*, will be maintained.

May you be well, may you be happy, may you soon be liberated of all your suffering, may you experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

45 Minute Assisted Meditation

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 41 min

This 45-minute guided meditation provides structured instruction in the Mahasi Sayadaw tradition of Vipassanā insight meditation. Bhante Bodhidhamma begins with establishing proper posture and body relaxation, then guides practitioners through breath awareness using the traditional 'rising, falling, sitting' noting technique.

The session progresses from concentrated attention on breathing sensations to the broader practice of open awareness, where practitioners learn to note and observe all arising phenomena - bodily sensations, sounds, emotions, and mental formations - as they appear and dissolve. The guidance emphasizes the natural recognition of the three characteristics of existence (anicca, dukkha, anattā) through direct observation rather than intellectual analysis.

With bell signals approximately every five minutes and a double bell at the halfway point, this meditation teaches the essential skill of returning attention to the breath whenever the mind wanders. The instruction concludes with encouragement to extend practice sessions and incorporate mettā bhāvanā (loving-kindness meditation) into daily routine. Perfect for developing consistent sitting practice and understanding the fundamental mechanics of insight meditation.

A guided meditation.

A bell will ring approximately every five minutes and twice after half an hour should you wish to end your meditation then.

So, let us establish the posture. Lift up the spine. Remember the puppet string. Energise but not tense. And everything else relaxed off the central column. And the head poised gently on top.

Hands on our laps. Now let's just spend a few moments relaxing first by a mental volition telling all muscles to relax, then by tensing and releasing them, and finally by deep breathing. Whatever you feel is necessary to establish calmness in the body.

Now, let us acknowledge just noting and observing the feeling of the whole body. Sitting, sitting, sitting.

Now let us develop the same qualities of alertness and relaxation in the mind using our breath. Note and observe the sensation caused by the process of breathing at your preferred place. If the mind wanders, just bring it back gently but firmly to the breath. Rising, falling, sitting.

If your mind is wandering, note thinking or dreaming and bring your attention back to the breath, gently but firmly. If you feel sleepy, put more energy into the spine. Sit tall but not tense.

By now we should feel more focused and still, so let's open up the awareness and be attentive to whatever comes into the body, mind and heart. Note and observe carefully any sensations arising at the sense faculties, such as hearing a sound. Note and observe all sensations in the body: cold and heat, itching, stiffness and so on. Note and observe all emotional states as and when they occur. Note and catch all thoughts and images before they lead you astray, and if judging starts up, note it quickly.

Don't be concerned to see the three characteristics of existence: transience, unsatisfactoriness and insubstantiality. The intuitive intelligence, *satipaññā*, once unlocked from the body, mind and heart, will see these three signs naturally. If any thought about them occurs, note thinking-thinking. Thought doesn't have the power to make spiritual insight.

So let's just note and observe each physical, mental and emotional event as it arises and passes away. No need to think about anything, no need to experience something extraordinary. Just ordinary consciousness and ordinary sensations, thoughts and emotions will do.

Always begin with the breath. And if we get lost, start again right there. Rising, falling, sitting.

If your mind is wandering, just bring it back gently but firmly to the process of breathing. If you feel sleepy, sit tall and raise energy up the spine. Don't be concerned by how many times we've wandered away and have had to re-establish our attentiveness. This is the practice, this is the training of the mind we must do persistently and patiently, raising interest to see exactly what's happening at the physical, emotional and mental levels.

We keep using the noting technique to tether the mind to all events as they arise and pass away. And if we get lost, we always start again with the breath.

Once you feel confident, try to meditate without the tape and lengthen your time to a good hour once in the morning and once in the evening. Don't forget to practice a little loving kindness meditation, *mettā bhāvanā*.

And when you end the sitting, come out slowly and gently and take that satipaṇṇā, your intuitive awareness, with you into ordinary daily life.

May your practice bear great fruit. May you be liberated of all suffering. May you experience the peace and bliss of Nibbāna.

30 Minute Bodycare Meditation

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 29 min

This guided meditation by Bhante Bodhidhamma transforms our relationship with the body through the practice of mettā (loving-kindness). Drawing upon the Buddha's own teachings, the session begins by examining our unhealthy attachments to the body - our aversion to what we find disgusting, our vanity about appearance, and our clinging to sensual pleasures. The meditation incorporates the three contemplations that inspired the Buddha's spiritual quest: recognizing the body's susceptibility to sickness, aging, and death.

After undermining wrong relationship patterns, Bhante guides us toward appreciation of this precious human birth. We apologize to our body for past mistreatment and systematically offer loving-kindness blessings from head to toe. The practice concludes with a visualization adapted from Tibetan Medicine Buddha tradition, drawing golden healing light through the body, before extending mettā to all beings everywhere.

This meditation beautifully integrates classical Buddhist body contemplation with practical healing visualization, making it accessible for both newcomers to mettā practice and experienced meditators seeking to deepen their relationship with embodied spiritual life. Perfect for anyone struggling with body image, chronic illness, or simply wishing to cultivate greater appreciation for this temporary but precious vessel.

Body care. Offering *mettā*, goodwill, loving-kindness to the body. Remember you can stop the tape any time to develop a particular section.

First we need to undermine the wrong relationship we have to the body. We think it to be me or mine. As we weaken this identity and possession, so we can develop a more wholesome, skillful relationship.

Working first with possession. We hold on to what we like, we discard, we don't look at what we dislike. Bringing to mind a part of the body that disgusts us to some extent, here's some of the Buddha's own list. Feces, bile, pus, blood, sweat, fat, urine. Choose something, something to get in touch with, to feel that disgust. Now change your perspective and see it from a biological point of view. Perhaps your feelings are changing to equanimity, even interest.

Now take a part of the body you dislike because it's ugly. Too thin, too fat, too long, too short, so on. Again, get in touch with that feeling of dislike. Beauty and ugliness come from the judgmental mind. Can't things be just okay as they are? See if you can turn towards those parts with the heart of acceptance.

Finally, there are those parts that bring us great pleasure. Take any of the five senses, for instance. Consider now suffering from an impairment or loss of one of them, say hearing or sight. As we know from people with disabilities, it doesn't mean we couldn't live equally fulfilling lives. So we can see that such suffering comes from attachment.

Now let us work a little with the delusion of identity. Here we can use the three contemplations that awoke the Buddha-to-be to his search for the end of suffering. Repeating each phrase in the heart and accepting its truth value.

First, to undermine our obsession and intoxication with health. This body is subject to disease. This body is of a nature to fall ill. This body has not gone beyond sickness.

Now to undermine our obsession and intoxication with youthfulness. This body is subject to aging. This body has not gone beyond aging. This body is now in a process of aging.

And now to undermine our obsession and intoxication with life itself. This body is subject to death. This body has not gone beyond death. This body will die.

Having undermined to some extent the wrong relationship we have to the body, we can now develop a right relationship. The Buddha said this was a precious rebirth. Here we experience joy and woe and we have the intelligence to rise above them. Firstly, we can't be here without a body. It's as simple as that. Secondly, it's through the senses that we experience the world and learn. Thirdly, it's through the body we relate, communicate and express ourselves. And finally, in this tradition, it's through the very breath of the body that we can develop the spiritual faculties.

Once we realise how precious the body really is, we can't but want to care for it. Now, we haven't done so in the past, so before we can offer it, loving kindness, let us apologise for all the rough times we've given it and perhaps are still giving it. Whatever harm I have done to you in thought, word and deed, by way of greed, hatred and delusion, intentionally or unintentionally, I'm heartily sorry for it, and I determine from this day on to treat you with due care and respect.

So now we can begin to offer our blessings to the body. Choose a phrase which expresses for you healing or well-being. Place it in the heart and offer that blessing to the whole body. Now it may be that you see light or feel heat, all well and good, but there's no need for such manifestations. What is working for us is our acts of will, our intentions.

So now let's take our time and go through the whole body from the top of the head to the tip of the toes. Starting at the hair and scalp, offer your blessings there. Come down into the brain and fill it with loving-kindness. Bless your eyes and your ears. Bless your nose and nasal cavities. Bless your mouth with its tongue, teeth, lips. The jaw. Pour your blessing into your throat, the precious voice box, so that the whole head feels warmed and energised. May you be free of sickness and disease. May you be well and strong.

Turning our attention now to the top of the spine and make your way down, offering each vertebrae your blessing. Come down the neck, down the back, down the small of the back, down to the very tip so the whole spine feels warmed and energised. May you be free of sickness and disease. May you be well and strong.

Starting at the left shoulder, massage it with loving kindness. And make your way down towards the elbow, down towards the wrist, and into the hand. Massage your hand with warm loving kindness. So the whole arm feels warmed and energised. May you be free of sickness and disease. May you be well and strong.

Moving to the right shoulder. Again, massage it with loving kindness. Making our way down to the elbow, down to the wrist, and into the hand. Massage your hand with warm, loving kindness. So the whole arm feels warmed and energised. May you be free of sickness and disease. May you be well and strong.

Turning our attention now to the chest area. Now you can either offer your blessings to particular organs or you can just fill that felt space with loving-kindness. So the whole chest feels warmed and energised. May you be free of sickness and disease. May you be well and strong.

Moving down to the midriff, the stomach area. Again, fill that area with warm, loving kindness. So the whole area feels warmed and energised. May you be free of sickness and disease. May you be well and strong.

Moving down into the abdomen with all its varied systems. Offer your blessings there. Fill that area with warm, loving kindness. Though the whole area feels warmed and energised, may you be free of sickness and disease. May you be well and strong.

Moving to the left hip. Massage it with loving-kindness, making our way down to the knee and down to the ankle and down to the foot. Massage your foot with warm, loving kindness. So the whole leg feels warmed and energised. May you be free of sickness and disease. May you be well and strong.

Moving to the right hip. Offer your blessing there. And making your way down to the knee, and down to the ankle, and into the foot. Massage your foot with warm loving kindness. So the whole leg feels warmed and energised. May you be free of sickness and disease. May you be well and strong.

So now we fill the whole body with warm blessings. Now perhaps there's a part of the body that needs special attention. Go there now and spend a while filling that area with goodwill, loving-kindness.

So now it's time to open ourselves up to whatever source of energy there is in the universe, using a method taken from the Tibetan tradition of the Medicine Buddha. Imagine there's a golden light descending upon you from above. Remember, any color will do, which you feel is healing or energising. And as it pours down, it begins to form a ball just above your head. Don't worry if the image is not strong. Let it pour down until the ball takes on the feel of warm water, the consistency of warm water, and it slowly begins to rotate on itself.

Still pouring down from above, the ball gets heavier, and we can begin to feel it upon our scalps. Let it slowly descend down through the scalp, gently rotating, feeling it over the forehead and the back of the head, descending into the brain, filling it with that warm, vibrant energy. Feel it enter into our eyes, and ears. Feel its energy and warmth entering into your nose and nasal cavities. Slowly, gently rotating. Still pouring down from above. And we can feel its energy now entering into our mouths. Filling our mouths with its warm golden energy. Down into the jaw. Still pouring in from above, the ball gently rotating. And we can feel its warm, golden, vibrant energy filling our throats. The whole head is now this golden ball, gently rotating, full of energy, warmth.

Still pouring down from above, we can feel it beginning to spread over our shoulders and continuing to rotate, gently sinking into our chest, deep into our arms, deep into our chests, filling that whole area with warm golden delight. And it's still pouring down from above, down through the head, down the throat, into this ball gently rotating around our chest.

And it continues downward, filling the rest of our arms, down to the elbows, filling that whole midriff, the stomach, that whole area, filling it with this warm golden delight. Still pouring down from above, down through the head, down the arms, down the throat, down the chest, into this ball, gently rotating around our stomach.

And it continues to go downwards, gently turning, filling the whole abdomen with its warm, golden delight. Still pouring down from above, down through the head, down the throat, down the arms, down the chest, through the stomach into this ball, gently rotating around the abdomen.

And we feel it descending, filling our hands, filling our hips, gently filling those areas with warm, vibrant, golden energy, spiralling downwards, slowly. We can feel it entering our knees, downwards until we can feel it around our feet. Filling our feet with its warm golden energy. Still pouring in from above. Down through the head, down the throat, down the arms, down through the chest, through the stomach, into the abdomen, down through the hips and legs, into this ball, gently rotating around our feet.

So now we can use this energy. With the in-breath, draw that energy, with our own energy, up the spine to the top of the head. And there, let it join with all that energy still pouring down from above. And with the out-breath, let it all cascade down the body. Just breathing in and up, breathing out and down. Just breathing in and breathing out. And if there's a part of the body that needs special attention, let it pass through that part like water through a sponge.

So now we can share this energy with individuals by bringing people to mind and offering them our blessings.

And finally, we can offer our blessings to all beings in all directions. Just breathing in, into the heart and breathing out to all beings. May all beings be free of physical pain. May all beings be free of mental distress. May all beings be liberated of all their suffering. May all beings be well and strong. May all beings treat their bodies wisely. May all beings strive diligently for their liberation. May all beings experience the peace and bliss of Nibbāna.

Sābe satā sukītā hantu Sābe satā sukītā hantu Sābe satā sukītā hantu.

30 Minute Heartcare Meditation

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 28 min

This guided meditation leads practitioners through a complete mettā bhāvanā (loving-kindness meditation) practice, one of the four brahmavihāras or divine abidings taught by the Buddha. Bhante Bodhidhamma guides meditators through the traditional sequence: extending goodwill to loved ones, friends, oneself, and gradually radiating mettā to all beings everywhere.

The session includes the beautiful Karaṇīya Mettā Sutta chanted in Pali, followed by profound work on forgiveness—both asking for forgiveness from those we've harmed and offering forgiveness to those who have hurt us. This practice helps dissolve the cycles of resentment and guilt that create suffering in our hearts.

The meditation concludes with the four great efforts of right endeavor: abandoning unwholesome qualities, preventing their arising, cultivating wholesome qualities, and maintaining those already developed. Through systematic cultivation of goodwill, compassion, and forgiveness, this practice opens the heart and develops the emotional foundations essential for deeper spiritual development.

Mettā bhāvanā, developing goodwill.

Don't be concerned if during the exercise loving feelings don't arise. Here we're concerned with attitude, developing an attitude of goodwill, *mettā*. If pleasant emotions do arise, all well and good. If not, the exercise is still working for us and eventually the heart will respond. Remember you can stop the tape any time and develop a part of it further. So make sure you're now sitting in a comfortable position and feel free to move. So long as you move slowly, it won't disturb your concentration.

So let's begin. Bring to mind someone you have a warm regard for, not connected to erotically or romantically. An old friend, friend of the family, and so on, and offer them some worldly blessings: good health, long life, prosperity, whatever's appropriate. And we can offer them some spiritual blessings:

May you be free of greed and selfishness, hatred and ill-will, fear and anxiety, ignorance and delusion. May you be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May you be forgiving and compassionate. May you be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May you be peaceful and calm. May you be liberated of all your sufferings. May you experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

Allowing those images to fade away, sensing that goodwill in our hearts, and bring to mind all those who are near and dear to us, offering them worldly blessings.

May you be free of greed and selfishness, hatred and ill will, fear and anxiety, ignorance and delusion. May you be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May you be forgiving and compassionate. May you be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May you be peaceful and calm. May you be liberated of all your sufferings. May you experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

Allowing those images to fade away and bring to mind friends, people at work, whomever we wish, offering them worldly blessings.

May you be free of greed and selfishness, hatred and ill will, fear and anxiety, ignorance and delusion. May you be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May you be forgiving and compassionate. May you be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May you be peaceful and calm. May you be liberated of all your sufferings. May you experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

Allowing those images to fade away and turning the stream of compassion inward towards ourselves, let's offer ourselves some worldly blessings.

May I be free of greed and selfishness. May I be free of hatred and ill will. May I be free of fear and anxiety. May I be free of ignorance and delusion. May I be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May I be forgiving and compassionate. May I be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May I be peaceful and calm. May I be liberated of all my sufferings. May I experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

Having generated now this goodwill within our hearts, let's begin to radiate it outwards. First of all, to those immediate to us, in our household, in our group, offering everyone worldly blessings.

May we be free of greed and selfishness, hatred and ill will, fear and anxiety, ignorance and delusion. May we be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May we be forgiving and compassionate. May we be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May we be peaceful and calm. May we be liberated of all our sufferings. May we experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

Continuing to radiate it outwards till we've covered the whole of our area or town or city, offering everyone, the good and bad alike, worldly blessings.

May you be free of greed and selfishness, hatred and ill will, fear and anxiety, ignorance and delusion. May you be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May you be forgiving and compassionate. May you be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May you be peaceful and calm. May you be liberated of all your sufferings. May you experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

Continuing to radiate it outwards till we've covered the whole of our country, offering everyone worldly blessings.

May you be free of greed and selfishness, hatred and ill will, fear and anxiety, ignorance and delusion. May you be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May you be forgiving and compassionate. May you be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May you be peaceful and calm. May you be liberated of all your sufferings. May you experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

Continuing to radiate it outwards till we've covered the whole of the earth, offering everyone worldly blessings.

May you be free of greed and selfishness, hatred and ill will, fear and anxiety, ignorance and delusion. May you be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May you be forgiving and compassionate. May you be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May you be peaceful and calm. May you be liberated of all your sufferings. May you experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

Pausing for a while to consider those areas where there's war, destitution, oppression.

And now, choosing a phrase which most expresses whatever quality we wish to develop, be it love, compassion, joy or just peacefulness, a phrase such as "may all beings be happy," gently repeating it in our hearts and offering it to all beings, to all beings before us and behind us, to the left, to the right, below and above and all around.

I shall chant The Discourse on Loving Kindness:

*Karaṇīyaṃ atthakusalena yaṇ taṃ santaṃ padaṃ abhisamecca
Sakko ujū ca suhujū ca suvaco cassa mudu anatimāṇī

Santussako ca subharo ca appakicco ca sallahukavutti
Santindriyo ca nipako ca appagabbho kulesu ananugiddho

Na ca khuddaṃ samācare kiñci yena viññū pare upavadeyyuṃ
Sukhino vā khemino hontu sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā

Ye keci pāṇabhūtatthi tasā vā thāvarā vā anavasesā
Dīghā vā ye mahantā vā majjhimā rassakāṇukathulā

Diṭṭhā vā ye ca adiṭṭhā ye ca dūre vasanti avidūre
Bhūtā vā sambhavesī vā sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhittā

Na paro paraṃ nikubbetha nātimaññetha katthaci naṃ kañci
Byārosanā paṭiḥhasaññā nāññamaññassa dukkhaṃ iccheyya

Mātā yathā niyaṃ puttaṃ āyusā ekaputtam anurakkhe
Evaṃ pi sabbabhūtesu mānasambhāvaye aparimāṇaṃ

Mettañca sabbalokasmiṃ mānasambhāvaye aparimāṇaṃ
Uddhaṃ adho ca tiriyañca asambādhaṃ averaṃ asapattaṃ

Tiṭṭhañcaraṃ nisinno vā sayāno vā yāvatassa vigatamiddho
Etaṃ satiraṃ adhiṭṭheyya brahmametaṃ vihāraṃ idhamāhu

Diṭṭhiñca anupagamma sīlavā dassanena sampanno
Kāmesu vineyya gedhaṃ na hi jātu gabbhaseyyaṃ punaretīti*

Having established this goodwill, a heart of openness, generosity, compassion, let us now work with that area of forgiveness. First, bring to mind someone we have hurt, and as the incident comes to mind, the attendant emotions will arise, perhaps a feeling of self-righteousness, or a feeling of shame, guilt, remorse, whatever. As those emotions arise, we will have a reaction to them. We'll want to indulge our self-righteousness and we'll not want to feel or experience our sense of remorse or guilt.

So, using that memory to contact these emotions and being wary not to allow the memory to shoot off into fantasy, but just to contact emotions, let those emotions arise, and let's see how we relate to them. Just working with that little vicious circle: the memory, the attendant emotions, and how we relate to those emotions.

Can we see how we cause suffering for ourselves? Can we acknowledge these attitudes and emotions as unskillful, unwholesome, negative, life destructive, not life enhancing, undermining our capacity to love, to relate, leading only to more suffering, not the end of it?

And the antidote, of course, is to ask for forgiveness, arising out of a sense of remorse, a desire to be reconciled, a desire to put right what we did wrong, a desire to compensate.

Bringing that person to mind, let's talk about the situation with them and ask them to forgive us.

Whatever harm I have done to you, in thought, word and deed, by way of greed, hatred and delusion, intentionally or unintentionally, please forgive me.

Perhaps you can see a change in them, a desire in them to forgive, to become reconciled. Can you accept their hand of friendship? Can you accept their forgiveness? Can we forgive ourselves?

Let's offer them some worldly blessings.

May you be free of greed and selfishness, hatred and ill will, fear and anxiety, ignorance and delusion. May you be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May you be forgiving and compassionate. May you be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May you be peaceful and calm. May you be liberated of all your sufferings. May you experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

So, allowing that image to fade away, sensing that goodwill in our hearts, and let's bring to mind someone who has hurt us. And again, using that memory to contact feelings, emotions, the feelings of hurt, the feelings of revenge. And again, to see that reaction, how we don't want to feel the hurt, how we want to indulge our sense of revenge, just working with that little vicious circle: the memory, the attendant emotions, and our reaction to those emotions, being careful not to spin off into fantasy.

Can we see how we cause suffering for ourselves? Can we acknowledge these attitudes and emotions as unskillful, unwholesome, negative, life-destructive, not life-enhancing, undermining our capacity to love, to relate, leading only to more suffering, not the end of it?

And the antidote, of course, is to forgive. Remembering that to forgive is not to forget, it's not to excuse, it's not to condone. It's simply a change of attitude, away from revenge and hurt, towards understanding and compassion, driven always by a desire to be reconciled.

Let us bring that person to mind, talk about the event and offer them our forgiveness.

Whatever harm you have done to me, in thought, word and deed, by way of greed, hatred and delusion, intentionally or unintentionally, I forgive you.

Perhaps we can see a change in them, a feeling of relief, a desire to be reconciled. Can we offer them a hand of friendship and with it worldly blessings?

May you be free of greed and selfishness, hatred and ill-will, fear and anxiety, ignorance and delusion. May you be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May you be forgiving and compassionate. May you be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May you be peaceful and calm. May you be liberated of all your sufferings. May you experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

Allowing that image to fade away. And now we've completed two of the four great efforts: to develop what is beautiful in us and to get rid of what is ugly within us. The next two are to prevent further ugliness and to develop virtues which are not developed.

So first, let us recognize a certain trait, unskillful, unwholesome within us, which we don't want to develop. Using the four affirmations: I can, I am able to resist its temptation. I ought to for my own benefit and the benefit of others. I want to and I will. Can, ought, want, will. And let us make a resolution that should ever a temptation arise, we will be resolute not to fall to it.

Sometimes there's a trait within us, a virtue which is not fully developed. Sometimes we see a virtue in another which we would like for ourselves. Again, using the four affirmations: I can, I am able to develop that virtue. I ought to, for my own benefit and the benefit of others. I want to, and I will. And let us make a resolve that should an occasion offer itself, we will practice that virtue.

So again, let us turn that stream of compassion inwards and offer ourselves again some worldly blessings.

May I be free of greed and selfishness. May I be free of hatred and ill will. May I be free of fear and anxiety. May I be free of ignorance and delusion. May I be kind and gentle, sympathetic and benevolent. May I be forgiving and compassionate. May I be joyful and rejoice in the success of others. May I be peaceful and calm. May I be liberated of all my sufferings. May I experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

And so finally, let us offer our goodwill once more to all beings in all directions.

May all beings be free of physical pain. May all beings be free of mental distress. May all beings be liberated of all their sufferings. May all beings live in contentment and joy. May all beings live together in peace and harmony. May all beings experience the peace and bliss of *Nibbāna*.

Sabbe sattā sukhitā hantu. Sabbe sattā sukhitā hantu. Sabbe sattā sukhitā hantu.

Abiding in the Present Moment: Developing Equanimity

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 14 min

In this guided standing meditation, Bhante Bodhidhamma leads practitioners through a systematic exploration of present-moment awareness, beginning with mindful attention to bodily sensations and expanding to encompass both inner and outer experience. The practice emphasizes developing upekkhā (equanimity) - one of the seven bojjhaṅgas (factors of awakening) - through receptive, non-reactive awareness.

The meditation progresses from detailed body scanning, noting the earth and fire elements in sensations of pressure and heat, to a more expansive awareness that dissolves the boundaries between inner and outer experience. Bhante guides practitioners into what he describes as 'calm abiding' - a state of passive receptiveness that naturally cultivates four awakening factors: sati (Right Awareness), passaddhi (tranquility), samādhi (concentration), and upekkhā (equanimity).

From this foundation of present-moment stability, practitioners can observe the arising of wholesome and unwholesome intentions with clarity and space, allowing for conscious choice rather than reactive patterns. The teaching emphasizes how this simple but profound practice of 'achieving nothing, going nowhere, being nobody' creates the optimal conditions for investigating the three characteristics of existence: anicca (impermanence), dukkha (unsatisfactoriness), and anattā (not-self). This approach demonstrates the revolutionary potential of sustained present-moment awareness in transforming our relationship to experience and supporting genuine spiritual development.

So here we are standing. Standing tall. Lifting up to the top of the head. Chin goes in a little. Relax the shoulders. Relax the jaw. Lips together, teeth apart. It helps to bend the legs a little to relieve the back. When the legs get tired, just straighten them up. The eyes gazing downward about a metre or so away.

Let us now bring our attention to the feet. What sensations can you feel on the soles of your feet? Can you distinguish two types? Sensations of pressure, the earth element. Sensations of heat, the fire element. Can you become more aware of how the sensations in the feet are constantly changing, due mainly to the body rebalancing itself?

In the same way, come up the body and see what sensations you can find, both on the surface and inside. And notice those areas where there seems to be no feeling at all. When you get to the scalp, do there what you did at the soles of your feet.

Now launch your attention outward. Keeping the eyes gazing downward, become aware of the colours and shapes, the sounds entering your ears, the atmosphere of the room, the sense of other people. Open up now the awareness to include all the body sensations and feelings as well, so that the distinction between inner and outer lose their strict definition. It's just all one mass of sensations and feelings, and relax into the presenting moment, wide awake.

Relaxing into the present moment like this, we're not trying to achieve anything. When we're trying to achieve something, we're doing something now for some future result. But being fully aware in this present moment, there's both the achieving and the result.

Relaxing into the present moment, like this, we're not going anywhere. Fully aware of each moment, we lose a sense of past and future. So we've not come from somewhere and we're not going anywhere. But by being fully aware in this presenting moment, we've already arrived.

Relaxing into the present moment like this, just receiving, there's no need to react or respond. So when we are fully aware of this moment, there's no need to perform. There's no need to be a personality, a person.

Relaxing into the present moment, wide awake, achieving nothing, going nowhere, being nobody. When we're in this passive mode, we're developing four factors of awakening: awareness, calmness of the body and mind, steadiness of attention or concentration, and equanimity.

Equanimity means openness, receptiveness, receiving whatever comes to us from a place of don't know, not sure. This is the basic ground out of which our curiosity can rise, untainted by conceptual thinking, untainted by history, to investigate the three characteristics of existence: impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self.

In this mode of calm, quiet abiding, we can see intentions arise. If they're unwholesome, we can resist the temptation. We have time, we have space. If wholesome intentions arise, we can decide to empower them. In this very simple way, we can change ourselves for the better.

So you can see, developing this calm abiding in the present moment can have a revolutionary effect on our lives.

Just Mettā

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 12 min

This guided mettā meditation follows the traditional Theravāda progression of cultivating loving-kindness, beginning with settling awareness on the breath before systematically developing goodwill. Bhante Bodhidhamma guides practitioners through the classical sequence: starting with a benefactor; extending mettā to loved ones, friends and acquaintances, neutral persons, and then courageously including difficult people—described as "the gateway to universal, unconditional love."

The practice then expands from the particular to the universal, radiating loving-kindness to all present, the local community, country, continent, and ultimately all beings on earth. The meditation concludes with the traditional directional mettā, offering goodwill to all beings in the six directions—before, behind, left, right, below, above, and all around.

This classical brahmavihāra practice develops one of Buddhism's four divine abidings, cultivating the heart's natural capacity for unconditional friendliness. Suitable for practitioners at any level seeking to develop emotional balance, overcome ill-will, and prepare the mind for deeper meditative states.

Let's spend a little time just settling on the breath, developing *metta* in the particular.

Bring to mind and into your heart a benefactor. Bring to mind and into your heart all those who are near and dear to you. Bring to mind and into your heart friends, work-mates, even good acquaintances. Bring to mind and into your heart a neutral person.

Turn the stream of goodwill towards ourselves. Bringing to mind and into that heart of goodwill someone whom we find difficult, remembering that here lies the gateway to universal, unconditional love.

Having developed our metta in the particular, let us radiate it outwards, first of all, to all those who are here with us now. To all those in this district, whether they live wholesome or unwholesome lives. To all those in our country. To all who live in Europe. To all people on earth.

Offering metta to all beings in the six directions. All beings before us. All beings behind us. All beings to our left. All beings to our right. All beings below us. All beings above us. And to all beings in all directions.

Investigative Eating

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 12 min

*In this guided meditation, Bhante Bodhidhamma explores the practice of investigative eating as a path to understanding pleasure without attachment. Drawing on the Buddha's teachings on *yoniso manasikāra* (right attention), he guides practitioners through a detailed examination of the eating process, from the initial intention to eat through the final moments of reflection.*

The talk emphasizes approaching food as medicine for the body rather than seeking ultimate happiness through sensory pleasure. Bhante Bodhidhamma breaks down the eating experience into its component parts: bodily sensations at the tongue, emotional responses in the heart, mental attention, and the will or intention behind our actions. This deconstruction helps practitioners understand the difference between gratification (which leads to continued craving) and contentment (the mind without desire).

Practical guidance includes maintaining close attention to sense bases, using simple noting like 'tasting' rather than conceptual labels, and recognizing the body's natural signals for satiation. The meditation concludes with instruction on quiet abiding after meals, cultivating the three factors leading to awakening: calmness of body and heart, steadiness of attention, and receptive awareness that allows insights to arise naturally.

So now it's time to eat again. And just to spend a bit more time reflecting on this process.

So remember that we have to find a way of being with pleasure and the joys of life in a way that it doesn't have this aftermath, this comeback. Frustration when you can't get it, grief when you lose it, and take out insurance just in case you do. All that is underneath. While we're enjoying stuff, it's not a problem. Nothing like it.

So, food or eating, which we have to do every day, is just the opportunity to remind ourselves about how to be with pleasure in a non-attached, non-indulgent way.

The beginning is to get the right attitude. So if there's an attitude in the mind which is going to really enjoy this food, then there's going to be a danger that it's indulging it. And what we mean by that is that we're seeking happiness in food. Real happiness, lasting happiness. It's momentary, but it doesn't deliver the ultimate that we're looking for.

So, you have to put the right intention into the mind, which is to nourish the body. Food is just medicine for the body. And I do a chanting, it's more formal this lunchtime, I receive the food and then I do a chant which basically says that I'm not eating food in order to escape my problems or to add to them or to get for the pleasure of it, I'm just eating the food for the purpose of keeping the body healthy so that I can live the spiritual life.

So that's important to actually when you take your food and you sit in front of it you remind yourself so there's your attitude and this leaves you free to investigate the process around the whole action of eating so as you make your intention to eat you see and you pick up your fork or whatever you see.

You know, really begin right at the beginning by contacting the body. So how does the metal feel? Begin right there at the sense of touch. And then as you scoop it and put it into your mouth, just that first delightful explosion on the tongue, you see. Just stay there right with it. Keep the attention right on the tongue.

And if you use a word like tasting rather than curry or whatever, then it keeps you attentive to the process that's happening. And we're just trying to find out what taste is before it fits into some conceptual pattern. That's another problem we have, that we keep looking at things from history. We keep looking at things from a past experience. So we need to get back to a very original mind, which is a direct experience of things. And it's not that difficult to develop. It's just a case of keeping the attention very close to the sense base.

So while you're tasting, tasting, tasting, you see, your attention is right there on what's happening at the tongue, what it's doing, how you're chewing. You're just there with the mechanics of it. And you're aware of the pleasure. That's the point. You're aware of the pleasure. The pleasure is pleasurable, right? You don't have to say to yourself, this is pleasurable taste, but it's most unpleasurable. It's pleasurable taste. It's a total openness to it, a receiving of what that sense base is giving you.

And it may be that after some time, after you've swallowed the first, you can just stop for a moment and just recognize what's happened within the heart, the emotional base. Hopefully, it is now in a state of delight. And to feel that, to get into the feel of it so that you know, well, this is also a form of energy, a form of energy, but it's not the same as the gross physical energy. And it's making that distinction, deconstructing our experience, which begins to undermine this idea of who I am.

So by disconnecting, as it were, the body with its sense space, with its sensations, and the heart with its more subtle emotional feelings, we're beginning to deconstruct the event, you see.

Then as you, before the next bite or sometime, just to hold on for a minute and just to feel that intention to eat. Make it very obvious to yourself. So that intention is coming from a natural base, it's just appetite, the body wanting some nourishment. But there's also, remember, behind it, this seeking for desire, this seeking for happiness. Just stay with it, feel it. Is that an emotion? What is it? What is that force that drives us to eat? What is it? And it's not a case of an intellectual answer. It's a case of a direct experience of it.

Normally speaking, all this is just one thing, isn't it? You know, you go into a restaurant and eat a pizza. That's it. It's like it's one experience. But here we're trying to deconstruct the event, you see. It's the same with the cinema. You go in the cinema or watching a VD, it's one experience. You hear and you're seeing and you're empathizing. You're doing all things all in that one moment. But actually there's a whole load of processes going on, you know. The hearing isn't the seeing and the seeing isn't the empathizing, see. So it's really just trying to investigate this.

And remember our purpose is to get to the end of suffering, or to put it more positively, is to be happy, right? We're trying to get to a decent happiness, that's what we're trying to get to. So this process isn't just a nice little exercise we're doing, we're actually trying to get to a point where we're happy, heaven's sake.

So, we've made these three distinctions now, there's the body, there's the heart with its, of course we've got the mind, the mind's, you know, we're using the mind to keep the attention steady, so it's down to one word, so it's not thinking about anything. See, that's our greatest hindrance, to think about something. And then we've got this process of the will, right? The will, intention.

And hopefully there'll come a part of the meal where you get this feedback from the body saying enough. And it's hanging on there with that and just feeling the override and just knowing that that's the old greed. Now, normally speaking what we would do is just keep eating till even the greed was satisfied. That's when the body signals back that it's getting sick. And at that point you might say it's a point of gratification. So we feel gratified, and we have a little rest period, and then the old desire rises again.

However, if we stay with the desire and not feed it, we put our attention just on the desire, that wanting, wanting, and just wait for that to fade out, we get to something which feels like gratification, but it's better called contentment, because this is the mind

without desire. Now to know the distinction between being gratified and being contented is crucial. Because one leads you towards liberation and the other one towards hell. So it's worth making that distinction.

Now it may be that you've taken a little too much food and you've got this food left and your body's telling you actually you've had enough. So now you've got a choice. You can either stuff it into your body knowing it's not going to do the body any good or throw it away and feel guilty. Because all these people, especially these days, are having a shortage of food in some areas.

So now, what I would suggest you do is that you throw it away and feel guilty. And the reason for that is that as you contact your guilt and really feel it, you see, that then becomes your guardian. Because the next time you approach food, you'll say to yourself, now I don't want to feel that guilt again. That's horrible. So you take a little less and there's always a chance of getting some more food afterwards. Yeah? So, even though that's not PC, that's what I would suggest you do. And feel the guilt.

Then, when it comes to the end of the meal, you see, just stop for a minute and just recollect. What was it you've experienced? This recollection is important because it makes you revisit those places, you see. And by doing that, it becomes a habit in the mind, a moment of reflection. It's one of the things the Buddha constantly goes on about. *Yoniso manasikāra*, it means right attention, right reflection, to think about things properly.

Now, after the meal, there's a little break there, and what is good to practice there is this quiet abiding. So there's these three factors that lead to enlightenment. The calmness, calmness of the body, calmness of the heart. Even if you feel agitated or the heart's very troubled or whatever, you can still, as it were, take it for a walk. Just relax around it. Steadiness of attention that's always there so you have to keep the noting going or else the mind will just wander and this attitude of just receiving just receiving not doing anything about anything and just dropping for a while the inquiry, the inquiry.

As an actual intention, you'd be surprised that in those receptive moments insights arise naturally, because although we make a distinction between awareness and this intuitive intelligence, they're two sides of the same coin. One is passive, receiving, and one is active in insight. So it's the same, you know, when something goes wrong, I don't know, you can't find something or something goes wrong with your car or something, you open the bonnet, see, first you look. Look, that's the receiving. And then you see, the

engine's gone. It's like there's always that listening and then understanding, hearing and then listening, understanding. So there's always this flick from the passive to the active.

So after lunch, if you want to take a walk around the paddock or whatever, then just practice that. You can practice walking up and down in meditation, but with the attitude of just relaxing into the present moment, wide awake. And then, by all means, feel free to take a rest.

Mahāsi Sayādaw Introductory Talk

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 41 min

This introductory discourse by the Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw provides complete instructions for establishing Vipassanā (insight) meditation practice. The teaching begins with mindfulness of the rising and falling of the abdomen as the primary meditation object, emphasizing the importance of noting mental activities such as thinking, planning, and wandering without identifying them with a permanent self.

The Sayādaw explains how to work skillfully with physical sensations like stiffness, heat, and pain as objects of Vedanānupassanā (mindfulness of feelings), emphasizing patience and the understanding that these are merely arising and passing phenomena rather than experiences of an 'I' or 'self'. Detailed instructions are given for walking meditation, noting the movements of raising, pushing forward, and dropping the foot, as well as maintaining awareness during daily activities like eating, washing, and changing postures.

The discourse outlines the progressive stages of insight knowledge (Vipassanā ñāṇa), from Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa (knowledge distinguishing mind and matter) through to the three characteristics of impermanence (anicca), unsatisfactoriness (dukkha), and not-self (anattā). The teaching concludes with encouragement about the possibility of attaining the path knowledge (magga-ñāṇa), fruition knowledge (phala-ñāṇa), and Nibbāna through dedicated practice of the Satipaṭṭhāna method, referencing the Venerable Ānanda's attainment of Arahantship through mindful noting of bodily movements.

This is a talk given by the Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw, Aggamahāpaṇḍita Bhaddanta Sobhana, to his disciples on their introduction to vipassanā meditation at Sāsana Yeiktha Meditation Center, Yangon, Myanmar.

The practice of vipassanā or insight meditation is the effort made by the meditator to understand correctly the nature of the psychophysical phenomena taking place in his own body. Physical phenomena are the things or objects which one clearly perceives around one. The whole of one's body that one clearly perceives constitutes a group of material qualities — rūpa. Psychical or mental phenomena are acts of consciousness or awareness. These nāma-rūpas are clearly perceived to be happening whenever they are seen, heard, smelled, tasted, touched or thought of.

We must make ourselves aware of them, observing them and noting thus: seeing, seeing; hearing, hearing; smelling, smelling; tasting, tasting; touching, touching; or thinking, thinking. Every time one sees, hears, smells, tastes, touches or thinks, one should make a note of the fact. But in the beginning of one's practice, one cannot make a note of every one of these happenings. One should therefore begin with noting those happenings which are conspicuous and easily perceivable.

With every act of breathing, the abdomen rises and falls, which movement is always evident. This is the material quality known as *vāyo-dhātu*, the element of motion. One should begin by noting this movement, which may be done by the mind intently observing the abdomen. You will find the abdomen rising when you breathe in and falling when you breathe out. The rising should be noted mentally as "rising" and the falling as "falling." If the movement is not evident by just noting it mentally, keep touching the abdomen with the palm of your hand.

Do not alter the manner of your breathing — neither slow it down nor make it faster. Do not breathe too vigorously either. You will tire if you change the manner of your breathing. Breathe steadily as usual and note the rising and falling of the abdomen as they occur. Note it mentally, not verbally. In *vipassanā* meditation, what you name or say doesn't matter. What really matters is to know or perceive.

While noting the rising of the abdomen, do so from the beginning to the end of the movement, just as if you are seeing with your eyes. Do the same with the falling movement. Note the rising movement in such a way that your awareness of it is concurrent with the movement itself. The movement and the mental awareness of it should coincide in the same way as a stone thrown hits the target. Similarly with the falling movement.

Your mind may wander elsewhere while you are noting the abdominal movement. This must also be noted by mentally saying "wandering, wandering." When this has been noted once or twice, the mind stops wandering, in which case you go back to noting the rising and falling of the abdomen. If the mind reaches somewhere, note as "reaching, reaching," then go back to the rising and falling of the abdomen. If you imagine meeting somebody, note as "meeting, meeting," then back to the rising and falling. If you imagine meeting and talking to somebody, note as "talking, talking."

In short, whatever thought or reflection occurs should be noted. If you imagine, note as "imagining." If you think, "thinking." If you plan, "planning." If you perceive, "perceiving." If you reflect, "reflecting." If you feel happy, "happy." If you feel bored, "bored." If you feel glad, "glad." If you feel disheartened, "disheartened."

Noting all these acts of consciousness is called *cittānupassanā*. Because we fail to note these acts of consciousness, we tend to identify them with a person or individual. We tend to think that it is I who is imagining, thinking, planning, knowing, or perceiving. We think that there is a person who from childhood onwards has been living and thinking. Actually, no such person exists. There are instead only these continuing and successive acts of consciousness. That is why we have to know these acts of consciousness and know them for what they are. That is why we have to note each and every act of consciousness as it arises. When so noted, it tends to disappear. We then go back to noting the rising and falling of the abdomen.

When you have sat meditating for long, sensations of stiffness and heat will arise in your body. These are to be noted carefully too. Similarly with sensations of pain and tiredness — all of these sensations are *dukkha-vedanā*, feelings of unsatisfactoriness. Noting them is *vedanānupassanā*. Failure or omission to note these sensations makes you think: "I am stiff, I am feeling hot, I am in pain. I was alright a moment ago, now I am uneasy with these unpleasant sensations." The identification of these sensations with the ego is mistaken. There is really no "I" involved, only a succession of one new unpleasant sensation after another. It is just like a continuous succession of new electrical impulses that light up electric lamps. Every time unpleasant contacts are encountered in the body, unpleasant sensations arise one after another.

These sensations should be carefully and intently noted, whether they are sensations of stiffness, of heat, or of pain. In the beginning of the yogi's meditational practice, these sensations may tend to increase and lead to a desire to change his posture. This desire should be noted, after which the yogi should go back to noting the sensation of stiffness, heat, and so forth.

"Patience leads to *Nirvāṇa*," as the saying goes. This saying is most relevant in meditational effort. One must be patient in meditation. If one shifts or changes one's posture too often because one cannot be patient with the sensation of stiffness or heat that arises, *samādhi* — good concentration — cannot develop. If *samādhi* cannot develop, insight cannot result, and there can be no attainment of *magga* — the path that leads to *Nirvāṇa* — *phala* — the fruit of that path — and *Nirvāṇa*. That is why patience is needed in meditation.

It is patience mostly with unpleasant sensations in the body like stiffness, sensations of heat and pain, and other sensations that are hard to bear. One should not immediately give up one's meditation on the appearance of such sensations and change one's meditational posture. One should go on patiently, just noting as "stiffness, stiffness," or

"heat, heat." Moderate sensations of these kinds will disappear if one goes on noting them patiently. When concentration is good and strong, even intense sensations tend to disappear. One then reverts to noting the rising and falling of the abdomen.

One will of course have to change one's posture if the sensations do not disappear, even after one has noted them for a long time, and if, on the other hand, they become unbearable. One should then begin noting as "wishing to change, wishing to change." If the arm rises, notice "rising, rising." If it moves, notice "moving, moving." This change should be made gently and know that it is "rising, rising," "moving, moving," and "touching, touching." If the body sways, "swaying, swaying." If the foot rises, "rising, rising." If it moves, "moving, moving." If it drops, "dropping, dropping." If there is no change but only static rest, go back to noting the rising and falling of the abdomen.

There must be no intermission in between, only contiguity between a preceding act of noting and a succeeding one, between a preceding *samādhi* — state of concentration — and a succeeding one, between a preceding act of intelligence and a succeeding one. Only then will there be successive and ascending stages of maturity in the yogi's state of intelligence. *Magga* and *phala* — knowledge of the path and fruition — are attained only when there is this kind of gathering momentum.

The meditative process is like that of producing fire by energetically and unremittingly rubbing two sticks of wood together so as to attain the necessary intensity of heat when the flame arises. In the same way, the noting in *vipassanā* meditation should be continual and unremitting, without any resting interval between acts of noting whatever phenomena may arise.

For instance, if a sensation of itchiness intervenes and the yogi desires to scratch because it is hard to bear, both the sensation and the desire to get rid of it should be noted, without immediately getting rid of the sensation by scratching. If one goes on perseveringly noting this, the itchiness may generally disappear, in which case one reverts to noting the rising and falling of the abdomen. If the itchiness does not in fact disappear, one has of course to eliminate it by scratching. But first, the desire to do so should be noted. All the movements involved in the process of eliminating this sensation should be noted, especially the touching, pulling, pushing and scratching movements, with an eventual reversion to noting the rising and falling of the abdomen.

Every time you make a change of posture, you begin with noting your intention or desire to make the change and go on to noting every movement closely, such as rising from the sitting posture, raising the arm, moving and stretching it. You should make the

change at the same time as noting the movements involved. As your body sways forward, note it. As you rise, the body becomes light and rises. Concentrating your mind on this, you should gently note as "rising, rising."

The yogi should behave as if he were a weak invalid. People in normal health rise easily and quickly or abruptly. Not so with feeble invalids, who do so slowly and gently. The same is the case with people suffering from backache, who rise gently lest the back hurt and cause pain. So also with meditating yogis — they have to make their changes of posture gradually and gently. Only then will mindfulness, concentration and insight be good. Begin therefore with gentle and gradual movements. When rising, the yogi must do so gently like an invalid, at the same time noting as "rising, rising."

Not only this — though the eye sees, the yogi must act as if he does not see. Similarly, when the ear hears, while meditating, the yogi's concern is only to note. What he sees or hears are not his concern. So whatever strange or striking things he may see or hear, he must behave as if he does not see or hear them, merely noting carefully.

When making bodily movements, the yogi should do so gradually as if he were a weak invalid, gently moving the arms and legs, bending or stretching them, bending down the head and bringing it up. All these movements should be made gently. When rising from the sitting posture, he should do so gradually, noting as "rising, rising." When straightening up and standing, note as "standing, standing." When looking here and there, note as "looking, seeing."

When walking, note the steps whether they are taken with the right or the left foot. You must be aware of all the successive movements involved, from the raising of the foot to the dropping of it. Note each step taken, whether with the right foot or the left foot. This is the manner of noting when one walks fast. It will be enough if you note thus when walking fast and walking some distance.

When walking slowly, or doing the walking meditation, walking up and down, three movements should be noted in each step: when the foot is raised, when it is pushed forward, and when it is dropped. Begin with noting the raising and dropping movements. One must be properly aware of the raising of the foot. Similarly, when the foot is dropped, one should be properly aware of the heavy falling of the foot. One must walk noting as "raising, dropping" with each step. This noting will become easier after about two days. Then go on to noting the three movements as described above as "raising, pushing forward, dropping."

In the beginning, it will suffice to note one or two movements only — thus "right step, left step" when walking fast, and "raising, dropping" when walking slowly. If when walking thus you want to sit down, note as "wanting to sit down, wanting to sit down." When actually sitting down, note concentratedly the heavy falling of your body. When you are seated, note the movements involved in arranging your legs and arms. When there are no such movements but just stillness — static rest of the body — note the rising and falling of the abdomen.

While noting thus, if stiffness and sensation of heat in any part of your body arise, go on to note them, then back to "rising, falling." While noting thus, if a desire to lie down arises, note it and the movements of your legs and arms as you lie down. The raising of the arm, the moving of it, the resting of the elbow on the floor, the swaying of the body, the stretching of the legs, the tilting of the body as one slowly prepares to lie down — all these movements should be noted.

To note as you lie down thus is important. In the course of this movement — that is, lying down — you can gain distinctive knowledge, that is *magga-ñāṇa* and *phala-ñāṇa*, the knowledge of the path and its fruition. When *samādhi* — concentration — and *vipassanā* — insight — are strong, the distinctive knowledge can come at any moment. It can come in a single bend of the arm or in a single stretch of the arm.

Thus it was that the Venerable Ānanda became an *arahant*. The Venerable Ānanda was trying strenuously to attain arahantship overnight on the eve of the first Buddhist Council. He was practicing the whole night the form of *vipassanā* meditation known as *kāyagatāsati*, noting his steps — right and left, raising, pushing forward, and dropping of the feet — noting happening by happening the mental desire to walk and the physical movement involved in walking. Although this went on till it was nearly dawn, he had not yet succeeded in attaining arahantship.

Realizing that he had practiced the walking meditation to excess and that in order to balance *samādhi* and *vīriya* he should practice meditation in the lying posture for a while, he entered his chamber. He sat on the couch and then lay himself down. While doing so and noting "lying, lying," he attained arahantship in an instant.

The Venerable Ānanda was only a *sotāpanna* — that is, a stream-winner or one who has attained the first stage of the path to *Nirvāṇa* — before he thus laid himself down. From *sotāpanna*-hood he continued to meditate and reached *sakadāgāmi*-hood — that is, the condition of the once-returner or one who has attained the second stage on the path — *anāgāmi*-hood — that is, the state of the non-returner or one who has attained

the third stage on the path — and arahantship — that is, the condition of the noble one who has attained the last stage on the path. Reaching these three successive stages of the higher path took only a little while.

Just think of this example of the Venerable Ānanda's attainment of arahantship. Such attainment can come at any moment and need not take long. That is why the yogi should note with diligence all the time. He should not relax in his noting, thinking this little lapse should not matter much. All movements involved in lying down and arranging the arms and legs should be carefully and unremittingly noted. If there is no movement but only stillness of the body, go back to noting the rising and falling of the abdomen.

Even when it is getting late and time for sleep, the yogi should not go to sleep yet without noting. A really serious and energetic yogi should practice mindfulness as if he were foregoing his sleep altogether. He should go on meditating till he falls asleep. If the meditation is good and has the upper hand, he will not fall asleep. If on the other hand drowsiness has the upper hand, he will fall asleep.

When he feels sleepy, he should note as "sleepy, sleepy." If his eyelids droop, "drooping." If they become heavy or leaden, "heavy." If the eyes become smarting, "smarting." Noting thus, the drowsiness may pass and the eyes become clear again. The yogi should then note as "clear, clear" and go on to note the rising and falling of the abdomen.

However perseveringly the yogi may go on meditating, if real drowsiness intervenes, he does fall asleep. It is not difficult to fall asleep — in fact, it is easy. If you meditate in the lying posture, you gradually become drowsy and eventually fall asleep. That is why the beginner in meditation should not meditate too much in the lying position. He should meditate much more in the sitting and walking postures. But as it grows late and becomes time for sleep, he should meditate in the lying position, noting the rising and falling movements of the abdomen. He will then naturally, automatically fall asleep.

The time he is asleep is the resting time for the yogi. But for the really serious yogi, he should limit his sleeping time to about four hours. This is the *majjhima-yāma* time permitted by the Buddha. Four hours' sleep is quite enough. If the beginner in meditation thinks that four hours' sleep is not enough for health, he may extend it to five or six hours. Six hours' sleep is clearly enough for health.

When a yogi awakens, he should at once resume noting. The yogi who is really bent on attaining *magga* and *phala* should rest from the meditational effort only when he is asleep. At other times in his waking moments, he should be noting continually and without rest.

That is why, as soon as he awakens, he should note the awakening state of his mind as "awakening, awakening." If he cannot yet make himself aware of this, he should begin noting the rising and falling of the abdomen. If he intends to get up from bed, he should note as "intending to get up, intending to get up." He should then go on to note the changing movements he makes as he arranges his arms and legs. When he raises his head and rises, note as "rising, rising." When he is seated, note as "sitting, sitting." If he makes any changing movements as he arranges his arms and legs, all of these movements should also be noted. If there are no such changes, but only a sitting quietly, he should revert to noting the rising and falling movements of the abdomen.

One should also note when one washes one's face and when one takes a bath. As the movements involved in these acts are rather quick, as many of them should be noted as possible. There are then acts of dressing, of tidying up the bed, of opening and closing the door. All these should also be noted as closely as possible.

When the yogi has his meal and looks at the meal table, he should notice "looking, seeing, looking, seeing." When he extends his arm towards the food, touches it, collects and arranges it, handles it and brings it to the mouth, bends his head and puts the morsel of food into his mouth, drops his arm and raises his head again, all these movements should be duly noted. This way of noting is in accordance with the Burmese way of taking a meal. Those who use fork and spoon or chopsticks should note the movements in an appropriate manner. When he chews the food, he should notice "chewing, chewing." When he comes to know the taste of the food, he should note this "knowing, knowing." As he relishes the food and swallows it, as the food goes down his throat, he should note all these happenings. This is how the yogi should note as he takes one morsel after another of his food. As he takes his soup, all the movements involved, such as extending of the arm, handling of the spoon, and scooping with it and so on, all these should be noted.

To note thus at meal times is rather difficult as there are so many things to observe and note. The beginning yogi is likely to miss several things which he should note, but he should resolve to note all. He cannot of course help it if he overlooks and misses some. But as his *samādhi* concentration becomes strong, he will be able to note closely all these happenings.

Well, I have mentioned so many things for the yogi to note. But to summarise, there are only a few things to note. When walking fast, notice "right step, left step" as "raising, dropping" when walking slowly. When sitting quietly, just note the rising and falling of the abdomen. Note the same when you are lying, if there is nothing particular to note. While noting thus, and if the mind wanders, note the acts of consciousness that arise,

then back to the rising and falling of the abdomen. Note also the sensation of stiffness, pain and ache and itchiness as they arise, then back to the rising and falling of the abdomen. Note also as they arise the bending and stretching and moving of the limbs, bending and raising of the head, swaying and straightening of the body, then back to the rising and falling of the abdomen.

As the yogi goes on noting thus, he will be able to note more and more of these happenings. In the beginning, as his mind wanders here and there, the yogi may miss noting many things, but he should not be disheartened. Every beginner in meditation encounters the same difficulty, but as he becomes more practised he becomes aware of every act of mind-wandering till eventually the mind does not wander any more. The mind is then riveted on the object of its attention, the act of mindfulness becoming almost simultaneous with the object of its attention, such as the rising and falling of the abdomen. In other words, the rising of the abdomen becomes concurrent with the act of noting it and similarly with the falling of the abdomen. The physical object of attention and the mental act of noting are occurring as a pair. There is in this occurrence no person or individual involved, only this physical object of attention and the mental act of noting occurring as a pair. The yogi will in time actually and personally experience these occurrences.

While noting the rising and falling of the abdomen, he will come to distinguish the rising of the abdomen as physical phenomena and the mental act of noting of it as psychical phenomena, similarly with the falling of the abdomen. Thus, the yogi will distinctly come to realise the simultaneous occurrence in pair of these psycho-physical phenomena. Thus, with every act of noting, the yogi will come to know for himself clearly that there are only this material quality which is the object of awareness or attention and the mental quality that makes a note of it. This discriminating knowledge is called *nāma-rūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*, the beginning of the *vipassanā-ñāṇa*. It is important to gain this knowledge correctly.

This will be succeeded, as the yogi goes on, by a knowledge that distinguishes between the cause and its effect, which knowledge is called *paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*. As the yogi goes on noting, he will see for himself that what arises passes away after a short while. Ordinary people assume that both the material and the mental phenomena go on lasting throughout life, that is, from youth to adulthood. In fact, that is not so. There is no phenomenon that lasts forever. All phenomena arise and pass away so rapidly that they do not last even for the twinkling of an eye. The yogi will come to know this for himself as he goes on noting. He will then become convinced of the impermanency of all such phenomena. Such conviction is called *anicca-anupassanā-ñāṇa*. This knowledge will be succeeded by *dukkha-anupassanā-ñāṇa*, which realises

that all this impermanency is suffering. The yogi is also likely to encounter all kinds of hardship in his body, which is just an aggregate of sufferings. This is also *dukkha-anupassanā-ñāṇa*.

Next, the yogi will become convinced that all these psycho-physical phenomena are occurring of their own accord, following nobody's will and subject to nobody's control. They constitute no individual or ego entity. This realisation is *anattā-anupassanā-ñāṇa*. When, as he goes on meditating, the yogi comes to realise firmly that all these phenomena are *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anattā*, he will attain Nirvāṇa. All the former Buddhas, Arahants, and Ariyas realised Nirvāṇa following this very path.

All meditating yogis should recognise that they themselves are now on this *Satipaṭṭhāna* path in fulfilment of their wish for attainment of *magga-ñāṇa*, knowledge of the path, *phala-ñāṇa*, knowledge of the fruition of the path, and *Nibbāna-dhamma*, and following the ripening of their *pāramī*, perfections. They should feel glad at this and at the prospect of experiencing the noble kind of *samādhi*, tranquillity of mind brought about by concentration and *ñāṇa*, supramundane knowledge or wisdom, experienced by the Buddhas, Arahants and Ariyas and which they themselves have never experienced before. It will not be long before they will experience for themselves the *magga-ñāṇa*, *phala-ñāṇa* and *Nibbāna-dhamma* experienced by the Buddhas, Arahants and Ariyas. As a matter of fact, these may be experienced in the space of a month or of twenty or fifteen days of their meditational practice. Those whose *pāramī* is exceptional may experience these dhammas even within seven days.

The yogi should therefore rest content in the faith that he will attain these dhammas in the time specified above, that he will be freed of *sakkāya-diṭṭhi*, ego-belief, and *vicikicchā*, doubt or uncertainty, and saved from the danger of rebirth in the lower worlds. He should go on with his meditational practice in this faith.

May you all be able to practise meditation well and quickly attain that Nirvāṇa which the Buddhas, Arahants and Ariyas have experienced.

Sādhu, sādhu, sādhu.

Why Chant

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 3 min

In this instructional talk, Bhante Bodhidhamma explores the role of chanting and ritual in establishing a meditation practice. He explains how simple ceremonies—bowing, lighting candles and incense, and reciting traditional formulas—can help set the proper tone and intention for practice, though emphasizes these are not strictly necessary.

The talk provides detailed pronunciation guidance for essential Pāli chants, including the threefold recitation of taking refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha (Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi), and the five training rules (pañca-sīla). Bhante carefully explains the meaning of each precept: refraining from harming living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, wrong speech, and intoxicants that cloud awareness.

The episode concludes with guidance on closing practice with gratitude and the traditional final bow, along with making a daily determination to cultivate Right Awareness with a caring heart. This practical instruction serves both newcomers learning these foundational elements and experienced practitioners seeking to deepen their understanding of Buddhist ritual and its psychological benefits for establishing mindful presence.

Now as a daily practice, some like to start with a little ritual: bowing, lighting a candle and incense, and taking the refuges and training rules. Although this is not necessary, some small ceremony can set the tone. I have recorded the chant for bowing, taking the three refuges in the Buddha, *Dhamma*, and *Saṅgha*, and also the five training rules, should you want to take them before a sitting. There is also at the end a final bow.

This is how to pronounce the Pali, the language of the scriptures. When bowing, the end of the word is like our "ang" in "I rang the bell." It means "I bow to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha."

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyampi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyampi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Tatīyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Tatīyampi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Tatīyampi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. For the second time, I take refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha. And for the third time, I take refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and the Saṅgha.

The five training rules or precepts are pronounced like this:

Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi
Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi
Kāmesumicchācārā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi

And they are translated like this: not to harm any living beings, not to take what is not freely given, not to abuse our sexual powers, not to use wrong speech, not to take any drugs or drinks that tend to cloud the mind.

At the end of the session, it is customary to complete it with another three bows:

Imāya dhamānudhammapaṭipattiyā
Buddhaṃ pūjemi
Dhammaṃ pūjemi
Saṅghaṃ pūjemi

By following the path of the Dhamma, the true law, I bow to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha.

And finally, before you rise, make a determination to devote this day, just this one day, to mindfulness with a caring heart.

Morning Chant

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 18 min

Join Bhante Bodhidhamma for a traditional Theravāda morning chanting practice that begins each day at Satipanya Buddhist Retreat. This guided session includes the fundamental devotional recitations that establish the spiritual foundation for Buddhist practice.

The chant begins with taking the Three Refuges (Tisaraṇa) in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha, followed by the Five Precepts (Pañcasīla) that form the ethical foundation of Buddhist life. Bhante leads the recitation of the qualities of the Triple Gem, including the traditional epithets of the Buddha as 'Arahaṇ Sammāsambuddho' and the Dhamma as 'Svākkhāto' and 'Sandiṭṭhiko'.

The session includes the recitation of the twelve links of Dependent Origination (Paṭiccasamuppāda) and the fundamental teaching that 'Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā' - all conditioned things are impermanent. The practice concludes with the beautiful Mettā Sutta, cultivating loving-kindness for all beings, followed by a moment of personal intention-setting for the day ahead.

This daily practice helps establish Right Awareness and creates the proper mental conditions for deeper meditation and ethical living throughout the day.

Uddhanku Jai Bhi Dhammanku Jai Bhi Sangam Pu Jai Bhi

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato samasambuddhasa Namō tassa bhagavato arahato samasambuddhasa Namō tassa bhagavato arahato samasambuddhasa

Udang Saranang Gacami Dhamang Saranang Gacami Sanggang Saranang Gacami Duthi Ampī Udang Saranang Gacami

Duthi Ampī Dhammam Saranam Gacchami Duthi Ampī Sangam Saranam Gacchami Thati Ampī Budham Saranam Gacchami Thati Ampī Dhammam Saranam Gacchami

Kati Ampī Sangam Saranam Gacchami Anati Pata Veramani Sikapadam Samadhyami Adi Nagana Veramani Sikapadam Samadhyami

Kame sumi cacara veramani sikapadam samadhi amin.

Musa wada veramani sikapadam samadhi amin.

Surah Meriah Majjhapamadathana

Vairamani Sikapadam Samadhi Amin.

Vida me silam agapalanyanasa pachayohotu.

*Iti piso bhagavah arahamsammasambuddho vijjacharanasampanno sugato lokavidhu
anuttaro purisadhammasarati satta-deva-manusanamputtobhagavati*

*ye ca buddha-aditha ca ye ca buddha-anagadha pachupanna ca ye buddha-aham vand-
ami-sabhadha nati me saranam anyam buddho me saranam varam etena sacca vajena
hotu me jaya-mangalam*

*Kāye na vāca-cittay na pā-māde na māyā-kathāṃ Ācchayāṃ kāma-mibhante bhūrī-
paññā tathā-gathā Svakāto bhagavata-dhammo sāndhitiko akaliko*

*Ehi Pasiko Opanayiko Pachatam Veditabo Vinyuhiti Yechadama Atitacha Yechadama
Anagatha Pachupanachaya Dhamma Aham Vandami Sabadam*

*nāti me sāraṇaṃ anyāṃ tamo me sāraṇaṃ varāṃ ete na saccā vācchē na hūtu me
jāya-maṅgalāṃ kāye na vācchā cittē na pāma de na māyā kathāṃ acchā yāṃ kāma me
dhammā sāndhitika akalika*

*Supatipanno bhagavato savakasangho Pujupatipanno bhagavato savakasangho
Nyayapatipanno bhagavato savakasangho*

*Samicchipatipanno bhagavato savakasangho Yadidhanjatari purisayugani attapuris-
apukala*

*Hei sa bhagavato sa vakasangho Pahuneyo pahuneyo Dakineyo anjali karaneyo Anut-
taran punaketam lukasati Ye ca sangha adhita ca Ye ca sangha anagata*

*Pachupanna Chayi Sangha Aham Vandami Sabadam Gnatime Saranam Ganyam San-
gome Saranam Varam Etena Satya Vachena Hotume Jaya Mangalam Kayena
Vachachitena Pamatena Mayakatam*

*Acheyankamamesangapunyaketamanuptaran Anekajatisansaransandawisanmanibis-
an Gahakerakamgawesantudukajatipunapunam*

*Gahakarakadithauzipunagehanakahazi Sabatebhasukabagakahakuthamvisankatam
Visankarakatanchitamthananamkayamachakam*

*Awija Pacha Sankara Sankara Pacha Vinyana Vinyana Pacha Nama Rupa Nama Rupa
Pacha Salayatana Salayatana Pacha Paso Pasa Pacha Vedana Vedana Pacha Tangha
Tangha Pacha Upadana*

*Upadana Pachabhava Upavapachajati Jati Pachaya Jara Maranan Soka Parideva
Dukkha Domina Supaya Sasambhavanti Deva Mitasa Kevalasa Dukkha Kandasa
Samudaya Hoti*

*avijjaya tveva asesā virāga niroda saṅkara nirodo saṅkara niroda vijñāna nirodo
vijñāna niroda nama rūpa nirodo nama rūpa niroda salayatna nirodo*

*salayatana niroda, paśa nirodo paśa niroda, vedāna nirodo vedāna niroda, taṇḍa
nirodo taṇḍa nirodo, upadāna nirodo upadāna nirodo, bhava nirodo*

*Bhava Nirodha Jati Nirodo Jati Nirodha Jara Maranam Soka Hari Deva Dukha Domina
Supayasa Nirojanti Ewa Vittasa Kevalasa Dukha Kandasa Nirodo Hoti*

*Sabbe saṅkarāni jāti yadapānya yapaśati Adhāni bindati dūke esaṃago viśśudhaya Sabbe
saṅkarāni jāti yadapānya yapaśati Adhāni bindati dūke esaṃago viśśudhaya*

*Sabbe dhamma anattati adhapānya yappaśati Atthāni bhindati dūke esaṃago viśśud-
hiyam Anicca vattasaṅkara upadhavaya dhammino Upajitvanirujanti tesam upasa-
mosukho*

*Dukkha Vata Saṅkara Upadavaya Damino Upajitva Nirujanti Tesam Upasamo Sukho
Anatta Vata Saṅkara Upadavaya Damino Upajitva Nirujanti Tesam Upasamo Sukho*

So we can bring to mind anyone we know is having a hard time. At this moment, there are people who are suffering from a physical or mental disease. There are people in the process of dying and those who have died and left grieving family, relatives and friends. There are people going hungry, homeless and destitute. There are those struggling with personal or interpersonal difficulties.

All the victims of prejudices, all those caught up in wars and repressive regimes and those being tortured. All those suffering from natural disasters and climate crisis. All the sentient beings are being cruelly treated and unnecessarily slaughtered, and all who find life meaningless.

*Karāniyam ratakusaleṇa yaṅtaṃ saṅtaṃ paḍaṃ abhisame ca saḷoju ca suju ca suvaḷo
ca saṃudu anapṭimaṇi saṅtu saḷoḷa subhara ca*

*Apakicchocha salaha kauti Saṅtindriyocha nipakocha Apagabokule suvaṇaṇukido Na-
cchakudamsamaḷare keṅshi Yena viṇyupare upavadeyom Sukhino vaḷemino hontu*

*Sābe sātā bāvantu sukhi tathā Ye keccā pāna-bhūtati Tāsa vāta-vāra-vāāna-vāseṣa
Dīgāvā ye vāntava Majjhima-rasa-kaṇukatulā*

*Dītāvā yevā adhītā yecchādure vāsānti āvidhūre Bhūtāvā sambhāveṣivā sābe satāvā
vāntu sukhi tathā Nāparo parambhikubheta nātimanyetā kathā cīnā kīcchī*

Byalosana bhakti-kasanya, Nanyamanya sadhukam itchaya.

Mata yata niyamputta, Ayusahekamputtambanurake.

Pevampi sababutesu, Manasambhavaye aparimana.

*Netencha Sabalokasmi Manasambhavaye Aparimanam Udamadocha Thiriyamcha
Asambhadam Maweram Asambhadam Thitancharam Nisinova Sayanova Yavatasa Vigat-
amido*

*etam satimna dhiteya brahma-metam viharam itamadhu dhiting ca anupagamah sil-
avah dasanena sampanam kameh suvinayakedham nahijatukabhasayam punaretiti*

Our resolutions for the day, something we want to do, something we don't want to do.

*Ima ya dhamma lu dhamma pati pati ya buddham puje mi Ima ya dhamma lu dhamma
pati pati ya buddham puje mi*

Himayadham anudam apati-patiya Sangam pujebi

Evening Chant

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 19 min

This traditional Theravāda evening chant opens with the threefold refuge (Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa) and flows into the comprehensive mettā bhāvanā (loving-kindness meditation) practice. Bhante Bodhidhamma guides practitioners through extending goodwill to all beings in the ten directions, following the classical progression from self to loved ones, neutral persons, difficult people, and ultimately all sentient beings throughout the cosmos.

The session includes recitation of the Maṅgala Sutta, one of the most beloved protective chants in Theravāda Buddhism, which outlines the highest blessings leading to wellbeing and spiritual progress. The chant also incorporates muditā bhāvanā (sympathetic joy) meditation, encouraging practitioners to rejoice in the happiness and success of others as an antidote to envy and ill-will.

This evening practice concludes with the traditional blessing 'Sabe sattā sukhitā honu' (May all beings be happy), creating a peaceful transition into rest while cultivating wholesome mental states. Suitable for both beginners learning traditional chanting and experienced practitioners maintaining daily devotional practice.

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa. Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa. Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa.

Pahaṃ nāverohomi, abhayāvajohomi, anīgohomi, sukhī attānaṃ pariharāmi, dukkhaṃ mujāmi, yathāladhasampañjito, māvikacāmi. Amākaṃ cātu paccayādāyakā, averā honu, abhayā bhājā honu, anīgā honu, sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu, dukkhaṃ mucantu, yathāladhasampañjito, māvikācantu.

Amāka mātā pitū ācariyo yati mitā samūhā - averā hantu, abhayā bhājā hantu, anīgā hantu, sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu, dukkhaṃ mucantu, yathāladhasampañjito, māvikācantu.

Imasmim vihāre sabbhe bhikkhū, sabbā bhikkhunī, sabbhe ācariyā, sabbe yogino - averā honu, abhayā bhājā honu, anīgā honu, sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu, dukkhaṃ mucantu, yathāladhasampañjito, māvikācantu.

Ārakkadevatā - averā honu, abhayāvajā honu, anīgā honu, sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu, dukkhaṃ mucantu, yathāladhasampañjito, māvikācantu.

Imasmiṃ gāme janapade Yūropāya lokasmiṃ sabbe janatā - averā hontu, abhayāvajā hontu, anīgā hontu, sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu, dukkhaṃ mucantu, yathāladdhasampañjito, māvikācantu.

Pūrathimāya disāya, pacchimāya disāya, puttārāya disāya, dakkhiṇāya disāya, pūrathimāya anudisāya, pacchimāya anudisāya, uttarāya anudisāya, dakkhiṇāya anudisāya, heṭṭhimāya disāya, uparimāya disāya - sabbe sattā, sabbe paṇā, sabbe bhūtā, sabbe puggalā, sabbe attabhāvapariyāpannā, sabbā itthiyo, sabbe purisā, sabbe ariyā, sabbe anariyā, sabbe devā, sabbe manussā, sabbe vinipātikā - averā hontu, abhayāvajā hontu, anīgā hontu, sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu, dukkhaṃ mucantu, yathāladdhasampañjito, māvikācantu.

Mettā bhāvanā - developing goodwill, loving-kindness. May you be safe, well and happy. May you live contented, in harmony with the world.

So we can bring to mind some of our benefactors. Those who are near and dear to us. Friends, people at work, whomever we wish. A neutral person towards ourselves. Someone we have difficulties with towards each other. All those in our neighbourhood, all the people in our country. All the peoples of Europe. All people on earth. And to all beings in all directions.

Muditā - developing joy. The traditional blessings: may you be joyful, may you be ever more joyful, may you experience the bliss of Nibbāna.

Let's bring to mind moments of joyfulness, happiness we've experienced today. Let us wish ourselves to be joyful. Let's bring to mind somebody we know who has cause to be joyful. Wish them greater joy.

Let us bring to mind that at this moment there are people who are happy and content with their lives, who are enjoying the warmth of various types of friendship from intimate to acquaintance, who enjoy the delights of art, nature, sport, hobbies and so on, who find their work meaningful, who are reaping the fruitfulness of their spiritual practice, and who rejoice in the success of others.

Let's offer our goodwill joy to all beings in all directions.

Pūjā ca pūjanīyānaṃ etam maṅgalam uttamaṃ. Paṭirūpa desa vāso ca pubbe ca katapuātā. Atta sammāpaṇidhi ca etam maṅgalam uttamaṃ. Bāhusaccaṃ ca sippaṇ ca vinayo ca susikkhito. Subhāsītā ca yā vācā etam maṅgalam uttamaṃ.

Mātāpitu upaṭṭhānaṃ puttadārassa saṅgaho. Anākulā ca kammantā etam maṅgalam uttamaṃ. Dānaṃ ca dhamma cariyā ca ñātakānañ ca saṅgaho. Anavajjāni kammāni etam maṅgalam uttamaṃ.

Ārati virati pāpā majjapānā ca saññaṃ. Appamādo ca dhammesu etam maṅgalam uttamaṃ. Gāravo ca nivāto ca santuṭṭhi ca kataññutā. Kālena dhamma savanaṃ etam maṅgalam uttamaṃ.

Khantī ca sovacassatā samaṇānañ ca dassanaṃ. Kālena dhamma sākacchā etam maṅgalam uttamaṃ. Tapo ca brahmacariyañ ca ariyasaccāna dassanaṃ. Nibbāna sacchikiriyā ca etam maṅgalam uttamaṃ.

Phuṭṭhassa lokadhammehi cittaṃ yassa na kampati. Asokaṃ virajaṃ khemaṃ etam maṅgalam uttamaṃ. Etādisāni katvāna sabbattha maparājitā sabbattha sotthiṃ gacchanti taṃ tesaṃ maṅgalam uttaman ti.

Sabbe sattā sukhitā hantu.

Sādhu, sādhu, sādhu.

Refuges and Precepts

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 2 min

This guided chanting session presents the foundational liturgy of Buddhist practice: taking refuge in the Triple Gem (Tiratana) and undertaking the Five Precepts (Pañcasīla). Bhante Bodhidhamma leads the traditional Pali recitation beginning with veneration of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha, followed by the formal taking of refuge three times in each of the Three Jewels.

The session continues with the undertaking of the Five Precepts: refraining from harming living beings (pāṇātipāta), taking what is not given (adinnādāna), sexual misconduct (kāmesu micchācāra), false speech (musāvāda), and intoxicants that cause heedlessness (surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhāna). These ethical guidelines form the foundation for all Buddhist practice, creating the stable ground necessary for meditation and the development of wisdom.

Perfect for daily practice, retreat beginnings, or anyone wishing to connect with the traditional forms that have preserved the Buddha's teaching for over 2,500 years. The chanting cultivates devotion, mindfulness, and commitment to the path of Awakening.

Buddhang pūjayāmi, Dhammang pūjayāmi, Sanghang pūjayāmi. Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa. Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa. Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa. Buddhang saranang gacchāmi. Dhammang saranang gacchāmi. Sanghang saranang gacchāmi. Dutiyampi Buddhang saranang gacchāmi. Dutiyampi Dhammang saranang gacchāmi. Dutiyampi Sanghang saranang gacchāmi. Tatiyampi Buddhang saranang gacchāmi. Tatiyampi Dhammang saranang gacchāmi. Tatiyampi Sanghang saranang gacchāmi.

Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadang samādiyāmi. Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadang samādiyāmi. Kāmesumicchācārā veramaṇī sikkhāpadang samādiyāmi. Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhāpadang samādiyāmi. Surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadang samādiyāmi.

Evening Mettā Chant

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 4 min

This traditional evening mettā chant in Pali extends loving-kindness and goodwill to all beings throughout the universe. Bhante Bodhidhamma leads this beautiful recitation that begins with cultivating mettā for oneself, then progressively extends it to teachers, supporters, monastics, and all sentient beings in every direction.

The chant systematically radiates loving-kindness to the ten directions (east, west, north, south, northeast, northwest, southeast, southwest, above, and below), encompassing all categories of beings: those who are born, those who breathe, all creatures great and small, females and males, noble ones and ordinary beings, devas, humans, and those in unfortunate states.

The traditional phrases wish for all beings to be free from hostility (avera), free from affliction (abyāpajja), free from distress (anīgha), to maintain their happiness (sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu), to be released from suffering (dukkhā mucantu), and to not fall away from their good fortune (yathāladdha-sampadāya mā vigacchantu). This practice cultivates the first of the four brahmavihāras and supports both formal meditation and daily life with an attitude of universal friendliness.

Ahaṃ avero homi, abyāpajjo homi, anīgho homi, sukhī attānaṃ pariharāmi, dukkhā mucāmi, yathāladdha sampattito, avigaccāmi.

May I be free from hatred, free from ill-will, free from anxiety. May I keep myself happy and free from suffering. With whatever gains I have, may I not be parted from them.

Amākaṃ catupaccaya dāyaka, averā hontu, abyāpajjā hontu, anīghā hontu, sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu, dukkhā mucantu, yathāladdha sampattito, avigaccantu.

May our donors of the four requisites be free from hatred, free from ill-will, free from anxiety. May they keep themselves happy and free from suffering. With whatever gains they have, may they not be parted from them.

Amākam mātā pitu ācāriya ñāti mittā samūhā averā hontu abyāpajjā hontu anīghā hontu sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu dukkhā mucantu yathāladdha sampattito avigaccantu.

May our mothers, fathers, teachers, relatives and friends be free from hatred, free from ill-will, free from anxiety. May they keep themselves happy and free from suffering. With whatever gains they have, may they not be parted from them.

Imasmiṃ vihāre sabbe bhikkhū, sabbā bhikkhunī, sabbe upāsakā, sabbe upāsikā averā hontu abyāpajjā hontu anīghā hontu sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu dukkhā mucantu yathāladdha sampattito avigaccantu.

May all monks, all nuns, all male lay disciples, all female lay disciples in this monastery be free from hatred, free from ill-will, free from anxiety. May they keep themselves happy and free from suffering. With whatever gains they have, may they not be parted from them.

Imasmiṃ gāme, janapade, yāvañca ukāsiṃ, sabbe janatā averā hontu, abyāpajjā hontu, anīghā hontu sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu dukkhā mucantu yathāladdha sampattito avigaccantu.

May all people in this village, in this country, as far as the horizon, be free from hatred, free from ill-will, free from anxiety. May they keep themselves happy and free from suffering. With whatever gains they have, may they not be parted from them.

Purattimāya disāya, pacchimāya disāya, uttarāya disāya, dakkhiṇāya disāya, purattimāya anudisāya, pacchimāya anudisāya, uttarāya anudisāya, dakkhiṇāya anudisāya, heṭṭhimāya disāya, uparimāya disāya.

In the eastern direction, western direction, northern direction, southern direction, southeastern direction, northwestern direction, northeastern direction, southwestern direction, the downward direction, the upward direction.

Sabbe sattā, sabbe pāṇā, sabbe bhūtā, sabbe puggalā, sabbe attabhāvapariyāpannā, sabbā itthī, sabbe purisā, sabbe ariyā, sabbe anariyā, sabbe devā, sabbe manussā, sabbe vinipatikā, averā hontu, abyāpajjā hontu, anīghā hontu, sukhī attānaṃ pariharantu, dukkhā mucantu, yathāladdha sampattito, avigaccantu.

May all beings, all breathing things, all creatures, all persons, all individuals, all females, all males, all noble ones, all ordinary beings, all devas, all humans, all in woeful states, be free from hatred, free from ill-will, free from anxiety. May they keep themselves happy and free from suffering. With whatever gains they have, may they not be parted from them.

Kāmasukkhā.

May all beings be happy.

Mettā Discourse

Bhante Bodhidhamma · 2 min

In this beautiful chanting session, Bhante Bodhidhamma recites the classical Mettā Sutta (Khp 9), one of the most beloved texts in the Theravāda tradition. Also known as the Karaṇīyametta Sutta, this discourse presents the Buddha's comprehensive teaching on cultivating mettā (loving-kindness) as both a meditation practice and a way of living.

The sutta begins by outlining the moral foundation necessary for mettā practice—being skilled in goodness, upright, gentle in speech, humble, and contented. It then presents the famous aspiration: "May all beings be at ease," extending this wish to all categories of life without exception. The text includes the powerful simile of a mother's boundless love for her only child, encouraging practitioners to extend such care to all living beings.

The chanting concludes with guidance on maintaining this "sublime abiding" (brahmavihāra) in all postures and activities, while remaining free from fixed views and sense desires. This practice is traditionally used for protection, healing relationships, and developing the heart qualities essential for spiritual progress. Regular listening to and contemplation of this discourse supports both formal mettā meditation and the cultivation of loving-kindness in daily life.

So this is what should be done by one who was skilled in goodness and who knows 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 skillful, not proud or 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 a 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, outwards and unboun-

ded, 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.

And 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.

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