

# Bhāvanā

Bhāvanā means development or cultivation of mind. The human mind can be developed, cultivated, and purified. When it is developed through serenity and insight meditation, it reaches the peak of human perfection, which is the liberation or emancipation of mind. About 2600 years ago, Our Supreme Buddha *Sakyamuni* said this was possible for the first time in human history. He did it and then said it to those who are ready to listen without being prejudice. This is not simply a belief, but to be understood and realized by each individual.

Perhaps, you might have heard that man is as fragrant as a flower. It is not

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Man is called “*manussa*” both in *Sinhala* and in *Pāli* because he has a developed mind. It is true; in comparison with all other animals, the human mind is a developed one. Since it is a developed mind, if a person is wise enough, he/she can develop it further and further to the apex. We, each and every one of us have this skillfulness, potentiality. Therefore, let us not forget this precious opportunity even for a second. Let us develop our minds by following the techniques of meditation taught by Our Supreme Buddha.

When the Buddha was born to this world in the 6th century B.C.E., various methods of meditation and cultivation of the mind had been taught and practiced by many Masters and people in Indian

# Bhavana

A Handbook for Meditation

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because of this body, which is filthy but because of the development of mind. When the mind is developed, cultivated, and purified, man is even more fragrant than a flower. The Buddha himself said this in *The Dhammapada*, “The fragrance of virtue is supreme. ... Truly, the virtuous man pervades all direction with the fragrance of his virtue.” The development of mankind means the development of mind. In order to be a virtuous one, a cultured one, a civilized person, one of the best ways to be followed is the development of mind. This is what has been done by all virtuous persons, all Masters in all religions. This does not mean that they all sat cross-legged, but all focused their minds in contemplation. That is why they are called the contemplatives.

# Bhāvanā: A Handbook for Meditation

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When the mind is developed, man is developed. When the man is developed, the whole society is developed and finally when the society is developed, the whole world is developed.

As the result of developing the mind, man can even be born among the deities and Brahmās. Not only that, after the complete eradication of all defilements, he/she can attain different states of spiritual attainment: stream entry, once returner, non-returner, and finally the full enlightenment called arahantship. That is the end of the samsāric journey and the attainment of the highest bliss of *Nibbāna*. That is the greatest fruit of practicing and developing the mind, the true fragrance of virtue.

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# Bhāvanā



*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato  
Sammā Sambuddhassa*

Homage to the Sublime One, the Worthy  
One, the Fully Enlightened One

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Meditation is for mental development, which is a must for each and everyone in society. It is an indispensable factor of life. The life without meditation leads to deterioration, degradation, destruction, and disgracefulness day by day. Such a life is no doubt a miserable life, a life full of sorrow and confusion. Since we have this wonderful opportunity to be born as human, let us now take the chance to understand how to develop and cultivate our minds. Let us develop and cultivate our minds so that we can live happily and peacefully leading successful human lives on earth.

For this purpose, Our Supreme Buddha taught us an unparalleled, specific method. This special method of meditation is called “vipassanā” or insight meditation.

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own mind and all the elements we think of as matter. That itself is the realization of Dhamma.

Then, if the scientists observe many different objects objectively, why can't they attain different stages of holy life like stream entry, once returner, non-returner and arahant hood? The problem is that they start with external things and never come to internal for the observation because they do not have such knowledge and experience of the Dhamma. They pass away without realizing the Dhamma. This is really a spiritual journey that should begin inwardly. It is an introspection, introverted journey.

things as they really are. That is the penetrative wisdom to see the state of imperturbability.

We wrote a booklet in Sinhala on bhāvanā explaining these six methods of meditation in January this year (2014). It was distributed among the pilgrims who visited the holy places in India with us in February during the pilgrimage. After reading the booklet, some of the pilgrims invited us to translate that booklet into English for the benefit of our English readers as well. That was good encouragement for completing this translation.

When the original sponsors of the Sinhalese booklet heard that it would be translated into English, they wanted to sponsor this as well.

society. However, all such methods were given for the development of concentration or serenity meditation only. Insight meditation was unknown at that time. It was Our Supreme Buddha who invented this method of insight (*vipassanā*). That is the real way for the purification of mind from defilements. In accordance with this, there are two methods, or two levels of meditation. They are:

1. **Serenity** (for the calmness, tranquility, and concentration of mind)
2. **Insight** (to see the three characteristics of all animate and inanimate things; nature of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and soullessness/selflessness)

The method of meditation or mental development is very well designed and introduced by the Buddha. It is based on the mind and mindfulness of breathing. All Buddhas attain Buddhahood by practicing mindfulness of breathing. Therefore, mindfulness of breathing is the first thing to be practiced and cultivated. The Buddha said, "When mindfulness of breathing is developed and cultivated, it fulfills the four establishments of mindfulness. When the four mindfulness of establishments are developed and cultivated, they fulfill the seven factors of enlightenment, and when the seven factors of enlightenment are developed and cultivated, they fulfill knowledge and liberation." The Buddha realized all these and revealed them all without reservation.

Of these two levels, insight meditation could be found only in the teachings of the Buddha. Why? Because the third characteristic of the above three is indiscernible in theistic religions. There are no Four Noble Truths, no Noble Eightfold Path; therefore, there are no stream enterers, no once returners, no non-returners and no fully enlightened *arahants* as well. This is the uniqueness of the teaching of the Buddha. This is why thousands of intelligent people both Eastern and Western seek liberation of mind through Buddhism today. Buddhism is as “way of life” neither can be compared with other religions nor there arises such a necessity.

Today, there are many different methods of meditation. Most of them have been adapted and adjusted in recent times by secular people or Meditation Masters. However, whatever the method, if it leads to the complete destruction of defilement and the attainment of full enlightenment with the realization of the four noble truths, the dependent origination, and the three characteristics of existence, that would be the teaching according to the Buddha.

This booklet is designed to show the readers the actual methods of meditation taught by Our Supreme Buddha himself in his own discourses. We give you the references and you are completely free to read these and practice accordingly. The core of the Buddha’s method of

Our Supreme Buddha taught a clear-cut path for the development of mind: meditation. That is the mediation on serenity and insight (*samatha-vipassanā*) tandem meditation. In *The Great Discourse of The Establishment of Mindfulness*, the Buddha taught this method from the beginning to the end of the discourse. This is the method of observing things objectively. This is exactly what all the scientists do today. It is just like the one who goes to a river to see objectively what is there or one who with an agenda such as bird-watching. One has to see things as they really are, without any disturbance. We should see things and observe things in our own body and mind first. Then, we can understand the real nature of our

meditation is the maintaining of mind in the present moment, which is called ‘mindfulness’. One has to maintain mind neither in the past nor in the future, but in the present moment. That is mindfulness. Nobody can attain enlightenment without maintaining mindfulness in the present moment. That is why mindfulness is to be maintained in the present moment. *Nibbāna* itself is in the present moment. That is how it becomes a state of unaffected by time.

Here in this booklet, we introduce and discuss the Buddha’s six different methods of meditation. If one would practice these six methods of meditation respectively, one would definitely be able to gain a very good, strong concentration and sharp insight to see

Almeida and Kushara Almeida from Calgary, Canada for their kindness and generosity for the publication of this booklet in order to show their gratitude and sincerity and to extend their blessings upon the author on his birthday.

Last, but not least, I want to extend my gratitude and thanks to the printers Mr. S.K.P.K.D Samantha and his beloved wife, Mrs. Nayomi Geethika, of Sri Lanka, for the timely and efficient printing of this booklet.

May all beings rejoice and realize the true peace and happiness of *Nibbāna*!

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meditation daily; therefore, they live happily doing their activities properly with a pacified mind.

The aim of meditation is not worldly gains. That should be always noble and spiritual. However, when practicing meditation honestly and sincerely with a pure heart with purity of morality, one can involuntarily gain worldly gains too. Not only that, meditation helps one for the success of one's daily activities as well. However, one should not forget that aim of meditation should be always supreme. It is a supramundane one. On the way to that supramundane state, one can gain mundane things. All those are fringe benefits, but we should not be overwhelmed with such worldly gains.

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We appreciate it very much and should say that this is how the wise persons put the word of the Buddha into practice in their life. This is what is called the gift of Dhamma. The Buddha very clearly said, "The gift of Dhamma excels all other gifts." I humbly and urgently invite you as the reader of this booklet to read and practice this as the Buddha has taught us this wonderful Dhamma, which is rare in the world.

The Dhamma taught by the Buddha is well expounded, directly visible, unaffected by time, calling one to come and see, leading onwards, and to be realized by the wise individually.

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## The Aim of Meditation

In this society today, we see people practicing meditation for many different purposes. Some want to practice meditation just to heal various ailments. Some practice meditation for success in business. Some others practice meditation for the purpose of publicity or simply to deceive others. However, there are still devoted people who genuinely practice for the purpose of calming their mind and or the complete eradication of defilements to attain *Nibbāna*; if not in this very life, in lives to come.

Today, millions of people seek the guidance of Buddhist meditation. As we see, especially in the West and North

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### **This Dhamma is for whom? This Dhamma is:**

1. For one with few desires, not for one with strong desires.
2. For one who is content, not for one who is discontent.
3. For one who resorts to solitude, not for one who delights in company.
4. For one who is energetic, not for one who is lazy.
5. For one with mindfulness established, not for one who is muddle-minded.
6. For one who is concentrated, not for one who is unconcentrated.
7. For one who is wise, not for one who is unwise.

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America, more and more people are seeking the true teachings of the Buddha. For this purpose, they visit many meditation centers and Buddhist temples of different traditions. When they come to understand the real teachings of the Buddha, they are not hesitant, not reluctant to practice the technique of Buddhist meditation.

Though profound, the real teaching of the Buddha is always clear without complicated or confusing utterances. Mainly, he taught the Dhamma for the common people in society of his time. Therefore, his teaching was taught clearly and precisely for the benefit of multitudes of gods and humans.

8. For one who delights in non-proliferation, who takes delight in non-proliferation, not for one who delights in proliferation, who takes delight in proliferation. (A.N.8.30(10))

Let us all strive to read and re-read this Dhamma and practice it in our daily life in order to live happily, peacefully, light heartedly with a calm mind in society and soon attain the supreme bliss of *Nibbāna*.

In conclusion, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to both Mrs. Somalatha Ranawella and Mrs. Vijitha Almaida from Sri Lanka and their children and grand children Dushmantha Ranawella, Tyronne Almeida, Ahinsa

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‘Buddh’ means knowledge or intelligence. This Dhamma or Buddhism was for those who are intelligent enough to understand what is right and wrong, what is good and bad, what is wholesome and unwholesome. That itself is the way to come to understand right which is known as ‘right understanding’. That is in other words ‘wisdom’. This wisdom is not gained through books or other communication methods, such as watching television, reading books or listening to lengthy worldly talks but only through right contemplation, meditation. As long as there are intelligent people in the world, this Dhamma or Buddhism cannot be eliminated from the world. Now, it has become an item of the daily schedule of the intellectual people. They practice

8. In your daily life, you will have a great conviction that you are always following the “Middle Path,” the Noble Eightfold Path of the Buddha.
9. Because of the development of your mindfulness, you will be able to develop not only one, but the four establishments of mindfulness.
10. Since you have developed the four establishments of mindfulness, you would be able to understand and realize the dissatisfaction as dissatisfaction, the cause of dissatisfaction as the cause of dissatisfaction, the cessation of dissatisfaction as the cessation of dissatisfaction, and the path leading to the cessation of dissatisfaction as

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into practice as Our Supreme Buddha taught in different discourses, such as the *Meghiya Sutta* in the *Udana*, Exclamations.

As we have already mentioned, there are two levels of meditation. They are serenity and insight. Of these two, serenity (also called concentration) meditation was practiced and developed by many people even before the enlightenment of the Buddha. As most of us know well, *Alāra Kālāma*, *Uddaka Rāmaputta* and *Asita Kāladevala* were some of the famous teachers who had developed their concentration meditation and gained different powers, such as miraculous power. Some sages of the time of the Buddha had developed their

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When one practices meditation with a clear mind honestly, sincerely, one can eradicate defilements day by day and finally, that person can attain different stages of holy life by complete eradication of craving. There is no relief without meditation and Dhamma, the teachings of the Buddha.

“Living one single day with morality and meditation is better than living hundred years without morality and meditation,” once said Our Supreme Buddha.

## Several Results of Practicing Meditation

1. It helps you to lead a humble and simple life with a delighted heart [mind] and calm body.

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the path leading to the cessation of dissatisfaction. Finally, as the result of practicing and developing this path, one day you can realize the true nature of things and attain real peace, real happiness of *Nibbāna*.

## Six Different Methods of Meditation

I assume that you already know that Our Supreme Buddha has taught us different methods of meditation. In accordance with the teachings of the Buddha, you are supposed to practice different methods of meditation for different purposes as follows.

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2. When facing problems in daily life, you can face them bravely, smilingly, with a calm mind and as a result, you can come to the right conclusion without harming to yourself and the others as well.
3. You can develop and cultivate a great confidence (*saddhā*) and conviction in the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha as well as a great respect, reverence, and honor to them.
4. Since you would be able to develop self-confidence, it will give you an extra reassurance to visit any society, assembly, or congregation and deal with any situation that might arise.

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1. In order to develop and cultivate confidence in the Buddha, practice and develop the great virtues of the Buddha.
2. In order to dispel ill will, aversion, and hatred practice *mettā*.
3. In order to reduce and eliminate lustful thoughts and sensual urges, practice meditation on the repulsiveness of body.
4. In order to live in society peacefully and happily in concord with others and to understand that one has come to this world, not forever, but only for a short time, one has to practice mindfulness of death or awareness of death.

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5. You would be able to understand the true nature of yourself and others by realizing the nature of the three characteristics of existence and as a result, you would be able to live in society with less attachment.
6. Since you are quite free from stress and anxiety, you will have a pacified mind, which helps you to maintain a peaceful and supportive environment at home in which to discuss your family problems.
7. You will be a better person who has right understanding of what is good and bad, right and wrong, and wholesome and unwholesome. With this understanding, you will not simply believe, but be ready to accept pre-existence and/or re-existence.

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5. In order to develop one's memory power, self-confidence, as well as to resolve one's psychological problems and to see things as they really are, one has to practice mindfulness of breathing.
6. In order to arouse and develop *vipassanā* and wisdom and lead a life with a pacified and clear mind being detached from both attachment and revulsion, one has to practice meditation on sense bases (*āyatana*).

Friends, these are the six different methods of meditation, which we are going to introduce and explain in brief in this booklet. Let us now take them one by one and understand how to put them

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attention to each and every part of the body and relax each and every muscle of the body.

6. Now, the body is relaxed and the mind is relaxed. This is what is indispensable for the practice of meditation. Let us now meditate and recollect the virtues of the Buddha.

## The Six Methods

### (1). Recollection of the Virtues of the Buddha

In the Theravada Buddhist countries like Myanmar, Thailand, and Sri Lanka, it is the tradition that the meditation teachers begin with the four-

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#### 1. The Worthy One (*Arahan*)

The Buddha is called the worthy one. Why he is called that? i. As he has not done any evil even in secret, he is called worthy one. ii. He is worthy of receiving our veneration and gifts. iii. He has broken the hub of the *samsāric* cycle. iv. He was endowed with infinite morality, infinite serenity, and infinite wisdom. Therefore, he is called the worthy one.

#### 2. The Self-Awakened One (*SammāSambuddho*)

He realized the Dhamma by himself. As long as we, beings that do not know the four noble truths, we are in deep slumber of ignorance. With the realization of

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minds to the apex, but without the attainment of *Nibbāna*. Lack of *vipassanā* was the problem. The Buddha introduced *vipassanā*. That is the unique teaching of the *SammāSambuddha*. It is true that it is quite impossible to practice and develop *vipassanā* without practicing serenity or concentration. One has to develop concentration even for some limited extent. Recollection of the virtues of the Buddha is a concentration meditation practice.

Let us now start by understanding the way to practice the recollection of the virtues of the Buddha.

### How to be Prepared for Meditation?

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guardian meditations for new practitioners. Those four are as follows:

1. The recollection of the virtues of the Buddha
2. The practice and suffuse *mettā* to all beings
3. The practicing meditation on the repulsiveness of the body
4. The practice of mindfulness of death respectively.

As mentioned earlier, when we practice the recollection of the virtues of the Buddha, we can develop confidence in the Buddha.

There are nine great virtues of the Buddha. They are: 1. The worthy one;

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1. First, find a congenial and convenient place for your meditation where there are only few noises.

2. With a firm determination to practice meditation, take a proper seat and adjust your posture well. (The posture for your practice is very important. When you take a seat for meditation, your posture should be a firm and comfortable one so that you will not want to move your limbs later from time to time. Posture here means the way that you are sitting for meditation.)

3. Keeping the right hand on your left palm, rest your hands on your lap or rest your hands on your knees but closing

2. The self-awakened one; 3. The one endowed with knowledge and conduct; 4. The well-gone one; 5. The knower of the worlds; 6. The supreme trainer of persons to be tamed; 7. The teacher of gods and men; 8. The one who attained enlightenment and preached the Dhamma to enlighten others; 9. The blessed one. (*Araham, sammāsambuddho, vijjācarana sampanno, sugato, lokavidu, anuttarapurisadammasārathi, satthādevamanussānam, buddho, bhagavā.*)

Whenever we practice the recollection of the virtues of the Buddha, we can take these nine great virtues collectively or separately and then recollect them. However, what is more appropriate and

the hands on your knees. Once you start your meditation, you are not supposed to change and move your limbs. Strive to stay as still as a rock mindfully with clear comprehension focused on your meditation object.

4. Your eyes need to be closed or half closed. After that, give your full attention to your body and observe your body from top of your head to the bottom of your toes. Observe your body objectively. Relax and calm your body and mind.

5. Now relax your mind and relax your body. Give your full attention to your shoulders and relax. Give your attention to your belly and relax. Give your

more significant is the knowing the qualities of the Buddha and arousing unshakable confidence in the Buddha. Whenever we develop and cultivate the qualities of the Buddha, simultaneously, we can develop the confidence in the Dhamma and the Sangha as well. While we meditate on the virtues of the Buddha, we can take them one by one and repeat them to concentrate our mind. For instance, take any one like “araham” and then slowly repeat, “araham”... “araham”... “araham.” That is how to practice them to develop concentration or serenity.

Now let us first take these nine great virtues one by one and understand a little bit about their different meanings.

eightfold path is the best, of all truths, the four Noble truths are the best, of all dhammas dispassion is the best and of all bipeds the Buddha, the one with vision is the best.” Since the Buddha rediscovered the path and he trod on that same path to the attainment of awakening, he is called the Well-Gone One. Well gone on the path and well gone to the attainment of awakening (*Nibbāna*).

## 5. The Knower of the World (*Lokavidu*)

Buddha is the real knower of the world. There are many different persons who talk about the world today; however, in comparison to the Buddha, they know nothing. The Buddha’s knowledge of the

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routine, the Buddha allocated the time from around 10:00p.m. - 12:00p.m. for gods to visit him and ask questions. According to the first chapter of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha* (*Samyutta Nikāya*) many deities and angels came to listen to the Buddha during that time. That means the Buddha taught Dhamma not only for humans, but also for deities. Thus, he became the teacher of gods and men.

## 8. Buddha (*Buddho*)

Why he is called Buddha? “Budh” here means knowledge, intelligence, or wisdom. The Buddha caused the flower of wisdom to bloom. He became the enlightened one and he enlightened others as well through the Dhamma. He

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them, they then become enlightened ones, awakened ones. Buddha was the first human in our era that realized the four noble truths and reached the human perfection called “Awakening.” Therefore, he is called the Self-Awakened One. There was no one to support him for this purpose. However, after his awakening, he supported thousands of humans and *devās* to attain the state of awakening. Therefore, their awakening is not a self-awakening - not unaided. Buddha was the only Self-Awakening One.

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world is certainly unparalleled. He talked about the internal world and the external world. Internal world means world within us. Referring to the great fear that all worldly beings have, the Buddha said, “The world, the origination of the world, cessation of the world and the path leading to the cessation of the world is within.”

Then, referring to the external world said that there are ten thousand world systems, thousand world systems, twice a thousand world systems and thrice a thousand world systems. Who else knows these world systems? Can we simply say, “no” to them? Can we simply ignore them saying, “no, there are no such things” simply because we cannot perceive them through our limited

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### 3. The One Endowed With Knowledge and Conduct (*VijjācaranaSampanno*)

The Buddha had different kinds of knowledge and thus he led his life accordingly. He had the knowledge to perform various kinds of miracles, such as twin miracles (emitting water from one side of the body and fire from the other side of the body), ability to read others' minds; ability to know his own previous lives, regarding how he lived in the past and the previous lives of the other beings as well; ability to listen and understand sounds near or far, humans or divine; ability to see how beings depart here and are born in other realms and how different beings die over there in other realms and come here and are

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senses? The Buddha not only knew these world systems, but also went beyond these world systems. That was how he became the supramundane, superhuman being.

### 6. Supreme Trainer of Persons to be Tamed (*Anuttaro Purisa Damma Sārathi*)

Our Buddha has tamed many different rough and tough persons like Angulimāla, Alawaka, Upāli, and Saccaka. They all were tamed only through his kind and compassionate words. Angulimāla, raising his sword ran after the Buddha to kill the Buddha with the intention of collecting a finger of the Buddha to complete a thousand-finger garland. Alawaka, being furious told the Buddha to "Get out" from his

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born here. (This is why the Buddhists accept rebecoming/rebirth.) He had the ability to understand how to destroy all defilements. He had the ability to understand to what extent different individual had developed their spiritual faculties. In brief, he had ten extraordinary powers and four intrepidities. They all are different kinds of knowledge and skills.

### 4. The Well-Gone One (*Sugato*)

Our Supreme Buddha rediscovered a path, which is called the Noble Eightfold Path or the Middle Path. This path was an ancient path. It was on the same path that all early Buddhās and Our Supreme Buddha also trod. Our Supreme Buddha once said, "Of all paths the Noble

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palace. Buddha being obedient went out. For the second time, for the third time he said the same and the Buddha did the same. However, when told the same thing for the fourth time, the Buddha said, "No. I will not go out Alawaka. Do whatever possible." Alawaka then asked questions and finally he became one of the very obedient disciples of the Buddha. In such a way the Buddha tamed them. That was how the Buddha became the supreme trainer of persons to be tamed.

### 7. The Teacher of Gods and Men (*Satthā Deva Manussānam*)

Buddha was the unparalleled teacher. He was the teacher not only for humans, but also for gods. According to his daily

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friendliness in two ways. These two ways are given in the *AnuruddhaSutta* of *The MajjhimaNikaya* (No.127). Buddha's constant admonition for the practicing of loving friendliness was to either extend immeasurable *mettā* to all beings in different directions or practice the exalted method of *mettā*. Let us now understand how to practice these two methods of loving friendliness.

### 1. Immeasurable Release of Mind or *Mettā* (*AppamānaCetovimutti*)

In order to extend *mettā*, one has to generate *mettā* within oneself first. For this purpose, first of all, one should find a quiet place with few disturbances. Then, sit comfortably. It is preferable

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abundant, expansive, immeasurable, without hostility, without ill will." This method is called immeasurable release of mind or immeasurable *mettā*.

### 2. Exalted *Mettā* (*MahaggataCetovimutti*)

Once again, we begin by generating *mettā* within ourselves. Only then can we extend *mettā* to all other beings in the exalted method. This means enlarging and encircling the area systematically to include all beings in the world. Start with the place where you are practicing now. Suppose you are practicing in a room or a hall. Then,

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shared the knowledge of Dhamma with others. It was after listening to his Dhamma, many thousands of beings attained enlightenment during the time of the Buddha and also after his passing away up to the present times. However, it is to be understood clearly that in the whole system of the world, there is only one supreme Buddha at a time.

## 9. The Blessed One (*Bhagavā*)

Our Buddha is called the Blessed One. He is certainly blessed to have all the virtues. It is also true that he has broken all defilements; thereby, he is called *Bhagavā*.

Let us all understand these virtues of the Buddha and recollect them at the

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to sit cross-legged if you can. Otherwise, simply sit upright on a chair or a bench. Close your eyes gently and observe your whole body from top to bottom and completely relax the muscles of your body. Keep the eyes closed until you finish your meditation. Relax your shoulders. Give attention to your chest and relax the muscles. Give attention to your stomach and relax the muscles. Now, again observe your body from head to toes and completely relax your body and mind. No tightness and no tension in the body or mind. Again give full attention to your body and now mentally see yourself and then mentally repeat, "May I be calm and peaceful,

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beginning of our meditation so that we can develop and cultivate our serenity, meditation and confidence in the Buddha. The Buddha himself has given these nine great virtues of the Buddha. For instance, in the discourse on the Banner Protection (*DhajaggaSutta*), the Buddha said, “Bhikkhus, whenever you visit the woods, foot of a tree or an empty hut for meditation, if any fear, terror or hair standing on ends arise, then recite these virtues of the Tathāgata, the Buddha.” These nine great virtues of the Buddha provide powerful protection of both body and mind from all directions. Therefore, let us learn them and put them into practice as meditation. (When first practicing it is better to use words silently to yourself, but eventually no words at all are necessary. Just be

may I be calm and peaceful” for several times and strive to feel calmness and peacefulness of your body and mind. Then repeat, “May I be well, happy, and peaceful” several times and in this manner generate *mettā* or loving friendliness within you first.

Thereafter, feel it like radiance or a beam of light in front of your face. That is how you feel once you have generated *mettā* within you. Then, you are ready to extend loving friendliness. If you do not feel it, you can just imagine the different beings in front of you.

Now, extend *mettā* to all beings in your front direction saying mentally, “May all beings before me be well, happy, and

mindful and let your mind understand and realize the virtues of the Buddha.)

## (2) Meditation on Loving Friendliness

This meditation is commonly called *mettā* meditation. *Mettā* means loving friendliness (not loving kindness). Kindness means compassion. The Pāli term for compassion or kindness is *karuṇā*. Whenever we practice *mettā*, we develop friendliness as well. The friendliness together with immeasurable love is extended to all beings in the world without any discrimination. That is how Our Supreme Buddha taught us. According to the discourses, our Buddha instructed us to practice loving

peaceful.” Repeat it for three times and then suffuse *mettā* to all beings in your front direction. Then, do the same thing to your back direction, right direction, left direction, upper direction and the lower direction. The Buddha recommended that we extend *mettā*, loving friendliness, in these six directions. The Buddha said, “Keep pervading the first direction with an awareness imbued with good will, likewise the second, likewise the third, likewise the fourth. Thus above, below, and all around, everywhere, in its entirety, keep pervading the all-encompassing cosmos with an awareness imbued with good will —

Whenever you are ready to practice this meditation, as instructed earlier, please practice first things first, meaning begin with the practice of mindfulness of breathing. Then, when you have good concentration, switch your attention to different parts of the body. You know the parts of the body, but the Buddha's classification and explanation is a bit different from our modern understanding. He saw this human body as composed of four elements: earth, water, fire, and air. He condensed the whole world into six elements:

1. Earth element
2. Water element
3. Fire element
4. Air element

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as we were born, we will all die. That means we never need to be afraid of our death. Once we are born, death is unavoidable, unpredictable. So if we reflect upon our own death, we can face death bravely as we face life bravely.

When we practice mindfulness of death, there are two methods. Here is some possible alternative wording: One is just thinking about the death of yourself or others in general. This method is not that powerful. One has to reflect deeply upon one's own death and bring it to the present moment. That method is very powerful. All your expectations and attachment can be reduced or cut off. Let us practice that now.

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mentally repeat, "May all beings in this room or this hall be well, happy, and peaceful." Likewise extend loving friendliness to all beings in the world. Whenever we extend *mettā*, our *mettā* is to be extended to all beings in the world without any discrimination. That is the important point here.

If you have already extended *mettā* to all beings in this room/hall, then now extend *mettā* to all beings in this building. Then, extend *mettā* to all beings in this village, in this city, in this province, in this state, in this country, in this world, and finally in this universe. That is how *mettā* is extended to all beings in the world irrespective of their

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5. Space element
6. Consciousness element

According to the Buddha's classification, there are 32 parts in this body:

1. head-hair 2. body-hair 3. nails 4. teeth
5. skin 6. flesh 7. sinews 8. bones 9. bone-marrow 10. kidneys 11. heart 12. liver
13. diaphragm 14. spleen 15. lungs 16. large intestines 17. small intestines 18. stomach 19. feces 20. bile 21. phlegm 22. pus 23. blood 24. sweat 25. fat 26. tears
27. grease 28. saliva 29. mucus 30. oil of the joints 31. urine 32. fluid in brain

When we practice this meditation, we need to give attention to these parts of the body and understand nine different factors of each part so that we can

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color, cast, creed, or any other differences. This is a wonderful practice of meditation taught by the Buddha. This practice of *mettā* really is the antidote for anger, resentment, and hatred.

After practicing this meditation, if you are practicing alone, you can switch to mindfulness of breathing. If you are practicing with a group, it is better to recite all together loudly, “May all beings be well, happy, and peaceful. May all beings be well, happy, and peaceful. May all beings be well, happy, and peaceful!” Then, slowly opening your eyes, say “*Sādhu, sādhu, sādhu,*” three times and it is the end of your meditation practice.

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develop both serenity and insight (*samatha* and *vipassanā*) and eventually understand and realize the true nature of the parts of the body.

The nine factors to be understood at the beginning by mentally repeating them and finally to be realized by us are as follows:

1. This is impure
2. (This is) smelly
3. (This is) repulsive
4. (This is) not mine
5. (This is) not me
6. (This is) not myself
7. (This is) impermanent
8. (This is) unsatisfactory
9. (This is) soulless (without a self)

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### (3) Meditation on the Repulsiveness of Body

There are two methods for practicing this meditation: 1. One can focus attention only to understand the nature of repulsiveness or the loathsomeness of the parts of the body; or 2. Observation and understanding the true nature of all parts of the body as they really are with equanimous mind.

Here we would like to share with you the second method, which is more acceptable, more tangible and reliable to most people living in the countries like America, Canada, and Europe.

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If you practice this meditation properly in this manner, you can understand both *samatha* and *vipassanā* properly. Following this technique, you can successfully practice meditation as a tandem meditation (*samatha-vipassanāyuganaddha*).

### (4) Meditation on Mindfulness of Death

This is also a very powerful meditation. Before beginning this meditation, we should once again start with mindfulness of breathing in order to establish a firm concentration. If we understand our self properly, we can easily understand that

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The Buddha has taught us how to practice this meditation in many a discourse such as the *Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness* (D.N), the *Discourse on Mindfulness of Breathing* (M.N), the *Discourse on Mindfulness gone to the body* (M.N), and the *AnandaSutta* and the *KimbilaSutta* of the *Connected Discourses of the Buddha*. The Buddha has taught us basically four steps of breathing meditation in the *Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness*. However, in other discourses, such as the *Discourse on Mindfulness of Breathing*, Our Supreme Buddha taught sixteen steps of breathing meditation. Those who practice and develop these steps are always on the right path and always progress on the

While practicing further, you can understand from your own experience that your breath has a beginning point and ending point. You can also understand further that the breath has not only a beginning and the end, but also there is middle. Thus you can see the beginning, middle, and the end of the breath. This is what is called whole-breath body. The Buddha said, “Observe your whole breath body.” When you observe your whole breath body, you will experience that you are calming your body and mind. That calmness is the way to quiet your mind, which is known as tranquility, calmness, or serenity. When we come to the state of

As you know well how to practice meditation, first sit properly, in an upright posture and practice mindfulness of breathing for some time. Thereafter, give your attention to your own body, yourself, and contemplate that you might die at anytime. Since we live only short period, life is uncertain, but death is certain. Then, determine and start with 10 years and mentally repeat and contemplate upon your death in the following way.

“I might die within ten years. My life is uncertain, death is certain. My life is uncertain, death is certain. My life is uncertain, but death, death is certain.” Repeat this for a while. Then,

path for the achievement of the highest bliss of *Nibbāna*. Therefore, let us understand these steps and put them into practice so that one day we also can realize that real peace, real happiness of *Nibbāna*.

Unlike other methods for the practice of this meditation, the Buddha recommended the postures and the congenial places for practice. The Buddha first recommended three places for this meditation. The three are:

1. The jungle (woods)
2. The foot of a tree
3. The empty hut (an empty room)

Then, the Buddha recommended the posture as the cross-legged posture.

reduce from ten years to nine years and repeat. “I might die within nine years. My life is uncertain, death is certain. My life is uncertain, but death is certain.” Like that then reduce to eight years, seven years, six years, five years, four years, three years, two years, one year. Then, reduce to month’s like within 11 months, ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one month. Then reduce to weeks, within three weeks, two weeks and then reduce to days. Saying I might die within seven days, six days, five days, four days, three days, two days, one day. Then, reduce to hours. Saying I might die within 24 hours, then reduce to one hour. Then, reduce to minutes and finally to seconds. Finally mentally repeat, “I might die even within this second, in this very moment. My

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However, there are three different postures that we can adopt by ourselves. They are:

1. Full lotus posture
2. Half lotus posture
3. Easy posture

After you adopt the appropriate posture, the Buddha’s advice is to give your full attention to the front of your face and patiently wait for your breath. Since you need to observe your breath, you should give your attention to the base of your nostrils. Then, while you are patiently observing, you can understand your breath, which is flowing naturally in and out that is exactly what one has to understand first. The natural flow of breath should be observed naturally,

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life is uncertain, but death is certain. Death is certain, death, death, death is certain. Death is certain...”

## (5) Meditation on Mindfulness of Breathing

According to the tradition of the Buddhās, all Buddhās attain full enlightenment by practicing meditation on mindfulness of breathing. As Our Supreme Buddha *Gotama* himself has taught us, when he was very young about five years of age, he practiced mindfulness of breathing. From that time he practiced this meditation and it was through this practice of mindfulness of breathing that he himself attained supreme bliss of *Nibbāna*.

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peacefully, without regulating your breath. Let it go naturally, smoothly and understand it clearly as a simple natural flow. This is the way to understand your breath. Never force your breath. Always let it happen. That is the secret of success.

When you are mindfully observing your breath in this manner, you can understand clearly that from time to time your breath is long. Whenever you understand your breath is long, notice it clearly and observe it well. It is the first step of your breath to be noticed. Whenever you have long breath, then there is the short breath as well. Even logically, where there is long, there is short as well, so then you will understand your short breath. Just observe and understand these steps.

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the venerable *Revata*, the venerable *Ananda*, as well as other very well known elder disciples.

On that occasion, these elder monks had been teaching and instructing new monks; some elder monks had been teaching and instructing ten monks, some elder monks had been teaching and instructing twenty...thirty...forty new monks. Then, the new monks, taught and instructed by the elder monks achieved successive stages of high distinction.

It was a full moon night. The Buddha was seated in the open surrounded by the community of monks. Then, surveying the silent community of monks, the Buddha addressed them.

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who abide devoted to the development of the four right kinds of striving...of the four bases for spiritual power...of the five faculties...of the five powers...of the seven enlightenment factors...of the Noble Eightfold Path. There are such monks in this community of monks. In this community of monks there are monks who abide devoted to the development of loving-friendliness...of compassion...of appreciative joy...of equanimity...who meditate on foulness...of the perception of impermanence. There are such monks in this community of monks. In this community of monks, there are monks, who abide devoted to the development of mindful breathing.”Then, the Buddha taught how to practice mindfulness of breathing for the completion of the path

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serenity, we have come to a crossroad where we can switch our mind either to *samatha* or serenity meditation or *vipassanā* or insight meditation. The Buddha’s teaching is not mere *samatha*. Without practicing *vipassanā*, no one enters the path as a stream enterer; so *vipassanā* is the unique teaching of the Buddha. *Vipassanā* is found only in the teaching of the Buddha. Without *vipassanā* no one sees the three characteristics of existence namely, the nature of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and soullessness.

For the realization of all these, the only thing to be practiced and developed is

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“*Bhikkhus*, I am content with your progress. My mind is content with your progress, so, arouse still more energy to attain the unattained, to achieve the unachieved, to realize the unrealized. This assembly is free from prattle; this assembly is free from chatter. It consists purely of heartwood. Such is this community of monks such is this assembly. Such an assembly as is worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of reverential salutation an incomparable field of merit for the world—such is this community of monks such is this assembly. A small gift given to such an assembly becomes great and generous with giving, such is this community of monks, such is this assembly. Such an assembly is rare for this world, such is this community of

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mindfulness of breathing, so the Buddha taught us these four steps of mindfulness. They are:

1. Breathing in and breathing out long
2. Breathing in and breathing out short
3. Observe in and out breath and train your mind by observing the whole breath-body (from beginning to the end)
4. Train the mind by observing the calmness of your breath.

Those are the four steps given in the *Great Discourse of the Establishment of Mindfulness*. As we mentioned earlier, the Buddha explained sixteen different steps of breath. This can be

monks such is this assembly. Such an assembly as would be worth traveling great distance to see, such is this community of monks, such is this assembly. In this community of monks, there are monks who are *arahants* with taints destroyed, who have lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down their burdens, reached their own goals, destroyed the fetters of existence and are completely liberated through final knowledge—such is this community of monks.

“In this community of monks there are monks who, with the destruction of the five lower fetters, are due to reappear spontaneously [in the Pure Abodes] and there attain final *Nibbāna*, without ever returning from that world. There are

found in the *Discourse on Mindfulness of Breathing in the Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* as follows.

### The Sixteen Steps of Breath

The Buddha delivered this discourse while he was living at *Sāvatti* in the Eastern Park, in the Palace of *Migāra*’s mother. One day, there were many very well known elder disciples of the Buddha with him: the venerable *Sāriputta*, the venerable *MahāMoggallāna*, the venerable *MahāKassapa*, the venerable *MahāKaccāna*, the venerable *MahāKotthita*, the venerable *MahāKappina*, the venerable *MahāCunda*, the venerable *Anuruddha*,

such monks in this community of monks. In this community of monks, there are monks who, with the destruction of three fetters and with the attenuation of lust, hate and delusion, are once-returners, returning once to this world to make an end of suffering. There are such monks in this community of monks. In this community of monks, there are monks who, with the destruction of the three fetters, are stream-enterers, no longer subject to perdition, bound for deliverance, headed for enlightenment. There are such monks in this community of monks. In this community of monks there are monks who abide devoted to the development of the four foundations of mindfulness—such monks are there in this community of monks. In this community of monks there are monks

12. He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in liberating the mind.’  
He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out liberating the mind.’
13. He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in contemplating impermanence.’  
He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out contemplating impermanence.’
14. He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in contemplating fading away.’  
He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out contemplating fading away.’
15. He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in contemplating cessation.’  
He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out contemplating cessation.’

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3. Energy
4. Rapture
5. Tranquility
6. Concentration
7. Equanimity

Let us, now understand how this happens. Let us read the very words of the Buddha. “*Bhikkhus*, on whatever occasion a *bhikkhu* abides contemplating the body as a body, ardent, fully aware and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief for the world—on that occasion unremitting mindfulness is established in him. On whatever occasion unremitting mindfulness is established in *abhikkhu*—on that occasion, the **mindfulness** enlightenment factor is

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and attainment of enlightenment. Here the Buddha pointed out the sixteen steps as follows:

1. “Breathing in long, he understands: ‘breathe in long.’  
Breathing out long, he understands: ‘breathe out long.’
2. Breathing in short, he understands: ‘breathe in short.’  
Breathing out short, he understands: ‘breathe out short.’
3. He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body [of breath].’  
He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body [of breath].’

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16. He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in contemplating relinquishment.’  
He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out contemplating relinquishment.’

*Bhikkhus*, that is how mindfulness of breathing is developed and cultivated, so that it is greatly beneficial and fruitful.”

### **Fulfillment — The Four Establishments Of Mindfulness**

In these sixteen steps, we can see that there are four tetrads. When the practitioner is practicing and developing the first tetrad, he/she is practicing and developing the first component of the establishment of mindfulness. That is

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4. He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in calming the bodily formation.'  
He trains thus: 'I shall breathe out calming the bodily formation.'
5. He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing rapture.'  
He trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing rapture.'
6. He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing happiness.'  
He trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing happiness.'
7. He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the mental formation.'  
He trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the mental formation.'

establishment of body as body. When the second tetrad is practiced and developed, they fulfill the second component of the establishment of mindfulness. That is the establishment of feelings as feelings. When the third tetrad is practiced and developed, they fulfill the third component of the establishment of mindfulness. That is the establishment of mind as mind and when the fourth tetrad is practiced and developed, they fulfill the fourth establishment of mindfulness. That is the establishment of mental objects as mental objects. Thus, when these sixteen steps are practiced and developed the four establishments of mindfulness are fulfilled.

8. He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in calming the mental formation.'  
He trains thus: 'I shall breathe out calming the mental formation.'
9. He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the mind.'  
He trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the mind.'
10. He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in gladdening the mind.'  
He trains thus: 'I shall breathe out gladdening the mind.'
11. He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in concentrating the mind.'  
He trains thus: 'I shall breathe out concentrating the mind.'

## **Fulfillment — the Seven Enlightenment Factors**

In this discourse the Buddha very clearly said that breath is a certain body among the bodies. Therefore, we have to understand clearly that our breath body is another body, so now we know that we have two bodies: this tangible, physical body and the breath body. According to the explanation of the Buddha, when the four establishments of mindfulness are developed and cultivated, they fulfill the seven factors of enlightenment. The seven factors of enlightenment are:

1. Mindfulness
2. Investigation of *dhamma*