

# PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENT IN BUDDHISM



BY VENERABLE DR. HOK SAVANN

BIOGRAPHY  
Of Venerable Dr. HOK SAVANN

Born on the 10 March 1940 at Prey Krabas in the province of Takeo in Cambodia, the venerable Dr. Hok Savann came from a middle class family which he is the third child in among of Five siblings. After completing his high school, he was ordained novice in the Buddhist community. At the age of 21 he received higher ordination (Bhikkhu). Venerable Dr. Hok Savann extended his studies at the Preah Sihanoukraj Buddhist University of Phnom Penh, where he obtained the two bachelors degree in philosophy and classical language (Pali and Sanskrit) and in comparative religion. He further has studied in the literature and anthropology at the University of Phnom Penh. He was president of Khmer Buddhist Students Association at the Buddhist University of Phnom Penh. He was named professor of literature at the Buddhist College of Phnom Penh, he has also taught meditation up to 1975. He arrived in Canada at Montreal the twenty third of April 1981. He was president of Khmer

Buddhist Society and abbot of The Cambodian Buddhist Temple of Canada. He was secretary general of the convention of Cambodian Monks who are living abroad. He got a Certificate of Canadian Citizenship on June 14, 1984. On June 07, 1990 he got a Master's degree. Recently he received a Ph.D Scholar from the Delhi University of India on February 28, 2004.

Psychological Treatment in Buddhism

By Venerable Dr Hok Savann

The Buddha defined two types of illness: Physical illness and Mental illness. Physical illness can be treated by various types of medicine. Mental illness, however, is treated through the Dhamma of Buddhism as a medicine. This means resolving problems or elimination problems. (*Dhamapada Canon 1955*).

Physical Illness

The buddha stated that as life exists, there will be illness. Some illnesses are less severe than others. The Buddha never stated that when you are sick you should pray to the divine angels, ghosts or to the Buddha himself for blessings to take the illness away. He did advise that when you sick you should take medicine. Treatment is only to help ease and regulate the body's chemical balance. It is not meant to permanently cure you of illness. As human beings we change; we grow old, get sick, and die. If life

does not end, the medical treatment can help to cure the physical illness.

On the other hand, Buddhism taught that all humans should have good hygiene to protect themselves against germs and diseases. The Buddha strongly stressed prevention rather than treatment. Buddhism also recognized science which believes that sickness is caused by viruses and bacteria or deformities or imbalances in the body which medicine can help to cure. However, medicine can only cure disease if the right medicine is used to cure the right illness.

Buddhism teaches cause and effect in which the illness is the effect and what caused it is the cause. If we can eliminate the cause, then the effect will also be eliminated. However, if we are physically healthy but mentally or psychologically depressed, then the Buddha would say that we are not at peace. People around the world pay more attention to physical illness than psychological illness in terms of treatment or “medicine”. (*Discipline of monks 1947*).

### Psychological Illness

The mind does not have a physical appearance, only an imaginary description. But it does have its own definite existence naturally. It is that which leads to happiness, anger, sadness and the acceptance of peace. In Buddhism, physical and mental aspects both arise and die every moment in every individual. This is called “Khanikamarana” which means “death of all organs in the body and changing of thinking.” This “death for all” is the concept of “suffering” or “impermanence” or change. Since the mind can recover from “illness” or “suffering” faster than the physical body, illnesses of the mind, or psychological suffering, tends to occur more frequently than physical suffering. This frequency of illness results in grief or depression. But how much do we know about depression?

### Mental Depression

When we wake up, our mind always awakens first and then our bodies awaken afterwards. Before

our body does anything, our mind works the hardest. That is why we should sleep at least 8 hours a night. If our mind does not get enough sleep or rest, sooner or later we will become sick.

Grieving or suffering is caused by the loss of material possessions or beloved or respected people. It means that an individual whom you really care about or the things that you really like have been destroyed or lost. This causes a crisis in which the person becomes emotionally depressed and saddened because of the loss. The same results occur when a person you love, respect or care for is in a difficult situation, or in danger, or dying. If you have lost a beloved one, you experience deep sorrow. If the love for the lost person is not so strong, then the suffering is not as severe. From the observation that you do not care at all about the person who died, the suffering does not exist at all.

The Buddha confirmed that “depression” or suffering and grieving, derive from “Love”. For example, if a person’s child dies, he will cry but if someone else’s child were to die, he would not cry

this is intended to specify. That he cried because of love when his own child dies and did not cry when the child he did not love died.

Depression is also caused by not reaching a goal as expected. Every individual has a wish or goal for his/her own life. If he is able to achieve his goal, he will be very satisfied and happy. If he is not able to achieve his goal, grief will exist. Another form of grief is when a person suffers because he or she meets or receives people or things the he/she does not desire. He/she only wishes to get away from them. Cambodians say, “I hate it but I always meet it.” This means that association with the unpleasant is suffering.

These are minor griefs which exist within four major types of grief:

1. The grief of being born
2. The grief of being old
3. The grief of being getting sick
4. And the grief of dying.



Another depression exists from the oppression of the society. The disrespect for human rights and control by means of political power both cause mental and physical illness in people. This type of depression exists all over the world in countries which are underdeveloped, non-democratic or where human rights are violated.

The Cambodian people have passed through many traumatic experiences since 1970 because of the civil war and invasion from other countries, and Khmer Rouge which killed many innocent people. Under these circumstances, many people lost lives and relatives. Some who survived are traumatized by their experiences.

The dictatorship of the Khmer Rouge educated the Khmer people to obey their rule which has since collapsed. The goal was to create a country in which there was only one labor class. They educated Khmer people to feel anger against each other thereby creating enemies among one people. This was the extreme opposite of the real ideals of Cambodian people who followed Buddhist beliefs

since ancient times. The Buddhist ideals taught us to welcome one another, not to intrude. Some Cambodians who would not tolerate the oppression forced themselves to leave their beloved country.

This was the first time in history that Cambodians had to run away from their own country. When we heard people swearing at us because we left our country, we got very angry. We left our country because we could no longer live there. It is true that Cambodians left their country and came to live in a foreign country that has difference cultures, costumes and beliefs from our own. However, the best which Cambodians are able to immigrate to has respect for freedom. This country's government gives freedom to all individuals to fulfill his/her own beliefs and goals.

There have been cases where some Cambodians in foreign countries have a lot of arguments between husbands and wives which lead to fighting and abuse. If we observe humanity as a whole, it is not only Cambodian people who have these types of problems. There are other ethnic

groups as well, some with more or less severe problems. Cambodian people have lived through more traumatic experiences than other populations. Some people lost all of their family members. The ones who were fortunate enough to survive therefore become depressed. We will try to use Buddhist principles to solve these problems later in this document.

Outsiders see Cambodians inside Cambodia killing one another violently but this is not characteristic of Cambodian people. Cambodian survivors are depressed. They never had the opportunity to receive a proper education or their education is weak. The leaders who were full of greed, anger and mercilessness toward the people of Cambodia treated themselves and their interests above those of the people. They disobeyed the constitution of the country and wisdom of Buddhism. If someday Cambodia is fortunate enough to have peace, people will need to unite and work cooperatively and democratically, displaying a respect for human rights. To reach this goal, the

Cambodian people need much assistance, especially in mental health care.

Other suffering has arisen from the mind in which humor fluctuates up and down. There are eight types of Dhamma in the world, these are: benefit, loss, glory, lowness, censure, admiration, health and suffering. If one has benefit, glory, admiration, and health, one is happy. But, if one has loss, lowness, censure, and suffering, one is unhappy. These dhammas are present in every human being in the world.

Resolution of suffering in the mind is resolved by those with mental problems by the use of sleeping pills, the use of addictive substances, or the use of alcohol to forget problems. These types of behaviours do not help for when we wake up, the problems remain there and these drugs are not good for our physical health. Those victims of severe mental illness have even tried to commit suicide-hanging, overdose of medication, jumping in front of trains, jumping in fires, or jumping into deep water in order to kill themselves. These types of

solutions will not eliminate the problems. The person who commits suicide will continue in their next life because they cannot solve problems in the present and so those problems will continue into the next life, the problems remain inside our souls. Dying is only a temporary escape from a problem. Some others pray to angels or beg the Buddha for help, some seek spiritual help by inviting monks to give blessings and get rid of evil spirits. These types of methods provide some emotional or psychological relief but can never get rid of problems. By using these methods, the emotional problems are not being solved because real problems are the events which created the actual griefs. If one cannot eliminate the events, the grief remains.

### Emotional Treatment in Buddhism

Scholars have long known that Buddhism says that grief and peace and cause and effect are interrelated. This means that the effect (result) will reflect the cause, and the cause will always be reflected. Therefore, all physical illness and

emotional illness are the result of the cause of disease. According to the law of nature. Everything has a reason and every happening has a cause. For example, a physical illness is caused by an organic malfunction or bad virus. As for emotional changes, either happiness or sadness, they are also caused by something which makes us happy when we are satisfied or sad when we are dissatisfied. For example, a college student receives a diploma and is happy because he has succeeded at his study. If we look at this in terms of cause and effect, the passing of an exam is the cause and the happiness is the effect. In order to cope with the depression, we must solve or eliminate the cause which stimulated the feeling of sadness. It is the same in physical illness, we need to get rid of the cause (bacteria) which brings the illness. Specifically, cause and effect is the Buddha's principle teaching.

The heart of his teaching is contained in the Four Noble Truths. These are: *(what the Buddha taught, 1974)*

1. Suffering (birth, decay, death, sorrow, pain)

2. The origin of suffering (craving, ignorance, aversion)
3. The cessation of suffering. It is the complete fading away and extinction of the cravings; liberation and detachment from it.
4. The path leading to the cessation of suffering.

The Eightfold Noble Path is:

Right Understanding and Right Thought (=Wisdom)

Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood (=Morality)

Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration (=Concentration)

The two resolutions for emotional problems are:

1. A problem which is able to be solved should be solved.
2. A problem which is not able to be solved should be eliminated.

For example, you were doing business and you went bankrupt, you should find a new way, technique, to continue a business. If you fail all these experiments, you should not feel bad but you should try harder. If you lose an object, try to search for it. If you cannot find it, don't feel sad, try to forget it. If your relatives or parents get sick, take them to see a doctor for treatment. If your doctor is able to cure the illness, that is great. But, if the doctor is not able to help and the illness comes severe even resulting in death, what should you practice in your mind? For all of us human beings, if we have death in the family or a loss of a loved one, we always feel saddened. The exception to this is the Noble Buddha. He would remain calm in any event because he understood that the life of all creatures will result in death at the end. The crying will not make any difference, it will not bring the person back to life. For example, Mrs. Padācāra story, according to the three collections of Buddhist texts (the Pali Canon), Padācāra was a daughter of a millionaire who fell in love with her servant and both of them ran away to live in a small village because they were afraid of her parents. Years later



they had two children. One day her husband went into the forest looking for logs and was bitten by a snake and died. She cried very hard because she missed her husband and because her life has been so happy even though they were poor.

With no one else to depend on, she decided to return to her native village and apologize to her parents. Unfortunately, on her journey home she needed to cross a river. She left the older child on one side of the river while carrying the younger child across the river first. When she came back to pick up the older child and was in the middle of the river, a eagle took her younger child. She was so scared, she clapped her hands hard and yelled to scare the eagle. The older child who was on the other side of the river thought the mother was waving for him to come across. The boy proceeded to cross the river and drowned. She saw her son drown, she was so scared she fainted. When she became conscious, she continued her journey without knowing. Along her destination, she saw an oxen keeper and thought that is was her husband. She went quickly to hug him and he pushed her

away and she fell unconscious. When she became conscious again, she continued to walk and saw a woman carrying a baby. She thought that the baby was her child and went directly to the woman and tried to take the child away. The woman pushed Padacara away; she fell unconscious again. When she became conscious, she cried and felt depressed about the loss of her two children and her husband who she loved equal to her own life.

From the good deeds she had earned from her past life, she was guided home to the temple where the Buddha stayed. At that time the Buddha was preaching and Mrs. Padacāra, while exhausted, walked slowly toward the temple with tears and deep depression and torn clothing. She did not feel ashamed of her clothes because she was so depressed about the death of her husband and children and the loss of her parents whom she had not seen for many years. Along her journey, she was told by an oxen cart driver that her parents had died during a hurricane. She walked toward the crowd and listened to the preaching of the Buddha. When the people saw her, they forced her away because

her appearance was not appropriate for a place of worship. When the Buddha saw her, he said, “Do not force her away. Please let her come in because this is the right time for her.”

When she got close to the Buddha, she remembered that when she was young, her parents had spoken highly of him and that they admired his talents and his teachings. She was too young to attend his preaching’s at that time. Now she fell down on her knees and bowed to the Buddha with deep respect and admiration. She begged him for forgiveness and blessings for her problems. The Buddha said, “This is the right time, Padācāra, You should understand and accept that life is full of loss and separation and these circumstances are normal. You must try to forget your husband, your children and your parents because their lives were determined by their actions (karma) which they built. You must care for yourself because you are no different from other people, death will happen to everyone. Even though you cried, felt regret at the passing away of your loved ones, and are in grief, your crying and sadness will not bring them back to

life. When you cry you are only punishing yourself. You are destroying yourself, your life and your health. You must accept your karma (action) and the karma of all human beings.

When she heard the Buddha's teachings, she quickly came to understand the meaning of life and death was able to accept it. Her sadness was not improving even though she had not had any food or sleep for days. It was like she had just taken the perfect medication and the best doctor was treating her. Now she was beginning to feel embarrassed by her inappropriate dress. Again, Mrs. Padācara lifted her two hands and bowed in front of the Buddha with deepest respect and said, "you have cured my illness. I have come to realize now that you have brightened me, that my grief is from love. Now I must try to forget my husband and children and accept the reality. I realize that you are the greatest teacher of all human beings. Your enlightenment has brought the greatest benefit to all. You are the best doctor with many talents in treating emotional problems. From now on I would like to devote myself to you, Buddha. Please allow me to become

a nun and follow your teaching and practice it to eliminate suffering.” Padācāra was ordained and attained to final deliverance as a Noble Woman (Arahanta) in the Buddha’s time. (*Buddhist Story in Dhamapada*, 1960)

In the story, Mrs. Padacara did not have any physical illness but emotional illness. If her illness was treated as if the illness was physical, it would not matter if it was the best doctor. Prolonged sadness could lead to physical illness, however, if the illness cannot be cured soon enough, it would lead to damage to physical health and cause another type of emotional or physical illness because the body and mind are related. When we feel depressed, it causes physical imbalance. Those who constantly feel depressed usually have poor appetites and poor sleeping habits which lead to physical illness. Advancing science uses a microscope to look for the bacteria or virus which caused the illness in contrast to psychologists who gain information from a patient’s history to try to discover the cause of illness. This patient history adds to the physical check-up which may appear normal even though the

patient complains, “I feel pain”. For example, a patient may complain of a headache. Sometimes headaches are caused from too much thinking or from depression. When we think too much or are depressed too long, the stimulation of the nervous system is greater than normal. When the person relaxes enough from thinking or worrying, the headache will disappear. This is an example of how emotional problems lead to physical illness.

Buddhism states that the mind is very powerful. If one speaks or acts with a wicked mind then the result will be wicked because the mind is the forerunner of all evil or good states. The mind is chief, we are mind-made. For example, if we know that the snake which has just bitten us did not have poisonous venom, we are probably still able to walk and we are not afraid. But, if we thought the snake that bit us was poisonous, we would probably faint or be really scared. If the same person got shot by a gun but doesn't see blood, he will still be able to walk; if he sees blood, he will probably faint. Why do people faint? Because we are extremely scared. The mind has lost all hope the fear increases the

heartbeat which sometimes leads to heart attack. That is why a doctor will hide the truth from a patient who is seriously ill, in order to prevent them from fear which could lead to a more serious illness.

If a person is emotionally happy and has support, he or she will feel better soon. If a person were not sick, they would feel better immediately; if they were very sick, they would gradually feel better. There is a true story which says that one night a person had a stomach ache and asked for medication from the guard. The guard was afraid to give the medication because it was against the hospital policy. He did not know what to do because the patient complained a lot about the stomach ache and asked many times for the medication. The guard finally gave in and told the patient to go back to her seat and he would bring her medication later. The guard gave the patient a half glass of water instead of the medicine for the stomach ache. A few hours later the guard went to ask the patient if the medication was helpful and the patient replied with appreciation and thanked him. She said, “since I took the medication my stomach ache has

disappeared.” We should think for a moment whether the patient is feeling better due to the false medication or due to her own mind. The fact was that the guard and the doctor did not give the patient any medication, only water, therefore, it was not the medication but her mind which helped her since the illness was not severe. The positive thinking of the patient’s mind helped her feel better with the hope, or perception, that she would feel better because she was given medication. (*My experience*)

In another story, people heard bad news about their family and felt shaken. This is caused from fear, worry or disappointment in themselves which causes an imbalance of the body chemistry. The faintness and unconsciousness if from extreme excitement which makes the heart beat faster than usual. All these types of problems, Buddhism says, are related to the mind/body connection. If the body chemistry is out of balance then the body and mind are ill. It is no different from a machine, if one part of the machine is broken, it will not work smoothly. Both scientists and psychologists in the west support this theory. It indicates that, in order to



eliminate emotional problems, and therefore physical problems, we must put balance between good and bad; between extreme happiness and extreme sadness. When the feelings become too intense, this causes sadness or grief.

Some people stay awake too long, watching television or playing video games all night, without enough sleep or rest they will become ill. The Buddha called this “extreme happiness,” exceeding their own energy, which causes sadness or illness. The mind is very influential. Some people have enough wealth and good health but are not happy because their emotional problems outnumbered the good things in their lives. The property and physical health do not always bring peace and harmony to the person. The opposite is also true, some poor people do not have enough wealth or health but they live a happy life. Buddhism says we should learn to live with forgiveness, live a normal life. Do not seek for too much because grief is created from greed and the unfulfilled expectation or desires which cause disappointment and depression. Some people desire things so much that they are driven to commit

criminal acts. Buddhists always try to feel in balance, neither happy nor sad. Even when a Buddhist's physical health is in poor condition, his feelings remain in balance. He does not have a desire to look nice, only for simplicity and necessity.

The power of the mind may greatly affect our physical health which could eventually lead to death. For example, a psychologist experimented with the power of the mind by telling a life sentence prisoner that if he would allow an experiment, his name would go down in history. The experiment entailed killing the prisoner by draining all of his blood through cuts made in his feet. At first the prisoner disagreed but then changed his mind since he knew he would be in prison for life anyway. The psychologist took the man into a dark room, tied him to a chair and put a tank under his feet to catch the blood. The experimenter cut his feet with scissors and left the room. The prisoner was left during the night to die in the room. In the morning the experimenter entered the room and saw that the prisoner had died even though there was no blood

drawn from his body. There were no actual cuts made in prisoner's feet, the experiment was done to test the prisoner's mind. The prisoner had died even though there was no physical reason for his death. In Buddhist observation, the prisoner's death was due to the panic, hopelessness and lack of strength which lead to an irregularity of the heart.

Buddhism teaches one to think about death as normal and not to be afraid of it. The prisoner did not understand clearly about death, that is why he was so panic stricken, causing his own death. When we accept death, we can cope with it. The Buddha was not afraid of death because he accepted it and understood it. The Buddha achieved the end of being born, which is death. He said we should think about death in every breath. In Buddhism there is a story of a girl who went to listen to the Buddha's teaching. The Buddha asked her where she came from and where she will return. She replied, "I don't know." He asked her again, "Are you sure you don't know?" This time she said knew. She had only responded that she didn't know to rid off the attention of the crowd around her. The Buddha

again allowed the girl to explain and she replied, “I don’t know where come from in the past life and I don’t know where I will go in the next. I just know that I’m sure to die but I don’t even know when.” (*A story of Dhammapada*)

Another story tells of a man who asked a millionaire which of them was more silly. The man said he wanted the sun and moon which he could really see but the millionaire cried for his dead son who could not be seen. The millionaire began to realize and thought he was the one who was more silly than this man. He felt embarrassed and left the man. Some people who are depressed refuse to solve their problems. They would rather blame their suffering on the Brahma or God. In Buddhism happiness and suffering are the result of a person’s evil or good action in past and present lives. This means that one who does good will receive good and one who does evil will receive evil. They receive the result of their action, their Karma as it is called in Buddhism. The effect is a result of the cause or action. Causality is Karma. Therefore, people who believe in Buddhism should not be

confused with these truths. Even the Buddha who was enlightened and omniscient, earned this through his own strong efforts. So, if we believe something the wrong way, we will follow it the wrong way. We will receive the result of our action because cause and effect is related. (*Said based on Buddhism*).

We should solve any problems immediately. If we keep them too long, they will build up more and make it harder to solve. If you are not able to solve it yourself, you should find someone to help you. Some people like to keep problems of other people in their mind as well. Sometimes they keep the problems of other people in their mind as well. In Buddhism the Buddha told us to eliminate all bad action and to purify the mind. The fire of suffering and passion always follow the person whose mind is not purified. (*Based on Buddhism*).

Some suffering is the result of separation. We should use the Buddha's teaching as a way to help us cope. Some people are so depressed that it leads to a loss of memory as described in the story

of Mrs. Kisagotamī in Buddhist Canon. The story told about Mrs. Kisagotamī carrying her dead child to see a doctor whom she thought could bring her child back to life. When she met the Buddha, he said he could help to bring her child back to life but he had some conditions to it. The condition was for her to find cabbage seed, from a family who did not have a dead person in the past or present, to make medication. She came back and told the Buddha she could not find any because every family had a dead relative. Given that opportunity, the Buddha explained to her that she had experienced it herself; that all human beings are born and will die, including her child. He told her to try to forget her sorrow and take care of herself. After following the Buddha's teaching, her mind was peaceful. (*Story in the Dhammapada*).

Sometimes reminding people of this truth directly will not work. We might create a similar problem or situation for the person to compare their suffering with. For example, there is a story about a millionaire who cried at his son's funeral. At that time, a gentleman wanted to advise him so he

pretended to cry as well. After a while, the millionaire asked him why he was crying. The gentleman replied, “ I cried because I want the sun and the moon to play with.” The millionaire laughed and told him he was crazy; that it was impossible. Even if the gentleman waited until his death, he would never be able to play with them. The gentlemen then asked the millionaire, “which on of us is more silly? I wanted the sun and the moon which is something that we could really see, but you cry for your dead son which you cannot see.” The millionaire was purprised by these words, but understood that he was the sillier. He felt embarrassed and left. (*Story in the Dhammapada*).

The purpose of victory is to win oneself from all evil action including ignorance, and craving in the mind. The Buddha explained two types of battle; the world battle and Dhamma battle. The world battle is fought against another in a battlefield using all kinds of weapons. While the Dhamma battle is fought against greed, hatred and delusion in the mind of human beings. Of the two victories, the victory in the world battlefield is not good because

it is always lost since it creates infinite hatred between people. The victory in the Dhamma battle is excellent because it will beat back the ills of humanity. The Dhammapada of Buddhist Canon says, “Be rather a victor of yourself than a victor of other. None can turn into defeat self-victory.” Another lesson says. “Victory breeds hatred. The defeated live in pain. Happily the peaceful live, giving up victory and defeat.”

The four noble truths of the Buddha’s teaching indicated “suffering” first because, when a person saw suffering, he will eliminate the cause of suffering, just as before the Buddha became enlightened, he saw that there was suffering in aging, illness and death. This event convinced him to find a way to alleviate suffering.

In Buddhism, meditation is the fundamental of suffering. Meditation penetrates the true insight, wisdom, or the true nature of all existence: impermanency, dissatisfaction, or suffering; impersonality or non-self (anicca, dukkha, anatta); and the five groups of phenomena (khandha) that



constitute existence including corporeality, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness. Meditation is the third phase in the elimination of suffering after morality and concentration. First, a person should have morality. He should abstain from bad action in the physical body and in speech (right action, right speech). The second phase is concentration. This phase fights against the five hindrances of the mind in order to make the mind calm. The five hindrances are lust, anger, torpor, restlessness, and mental worries and doubts.

Aniccata means impermanency of things in the rising, passing and changing of things. The meaning is that nothing ever persists in the same state, but that things are vanishing and dissolving from moment to moment. Impermanence is a basic feature of all conditioned phenomena, be they material or mental, coarse or subtle, one's own or external: "All formations are impermanent". (sankara anicca). That the totality of existence is impermanent is also often stated in terms of the five aggregates (khandha), the twelve personal and

external sense bases (āyatana), etc. only Nibbana, which is unconditional, is not a formation (asankhata). (*Buddhist Dictionary*, 1972).

If scientists want to see tiny objects which they cannot see with their ordinary eyes, they use the microscope to see them. Buddhists use insight (vipassanā) to penetrate the noble truths of objects. Vipassanā is the intuitive light flashing forth and exposing the truth of impermanency, suffering and the impersonal and unsubstantial nature of all corporeal and mental phenomena of existence. It is insight wisdom (vipassanā pāññā) that is the decisive liberating factor in Buddhism. This must be developed along with the other trainings of morality and concentration. Insight is not the result of a merely intellectual understanding, but is won through direct meditative observation of one's own bodily and mental processes.

Samatha or Samādhi, concentration, is the work of bringing calmness and stability to the mind. Meditation, vipassanā, is where insight into the truth arises in the mind. Now I would like to express the

four foundations of mindfulness (satipatthana): awareness of mindfulness includes contemplation of body; feeling, mind and mind-objects.

Mindfulness (satipatthana), so important for the practice of Buddhist mental culture, is given in the Satipatthana Sutta. The only way that leads to the attainment of purity is overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, ending pain and grief, entering the right path, and realizing Nibbanā. These are the four foundation of mindfulness.

1. Contemplation of the body (kāyanupassanā) consists of the following exercises: mindfulness with regard to in and out breathing (ānāpānasati), minding the four postures (iriyapatha), mindfulness and clarity of consciousness (satisampajanna), reflection on the 32 parts of the body (kāyagatasati and asubha), analysis of the four physical elements of earth, air, fire and water (dhatuvavatthana), and cemetery meditations (sivathika).

2. the contemplation of all feelings (vedananupassana) that arise in the meditator which are clearly perceived as agreeable and disagreeable feelings of body and mind, sensual and super-sensual feelings, and feelings of indifference.
3. Further, one must clearly perceive and understand any state of consciousness or mind (cittanupassana), whether it is greedy or not, hateful or not, deluded or not, cramped or distracted, developed or underdeveloped, surpassable or unsurpassable, concentrated or unconcentrated, liberated or unliberated.
4. Concerning the mind-objects (dhammanupassana), he knows whether one of the five hindrances (nivarana) is present in him or not knows how it arises, how it is overcome, and how to keep it from arising in the future. He knows the nature of each of the five groups (khandha), how they arise, and how they are dissolved. He knows the 12

bases of all mental activity (ayatana): the eye and the visual object, the ear and the audible object, the nose and the odorous object, the tongue and the gustatory object, the body and the body impression, and the mind and the mind object. (*Buddhist dictionary 1972*).

He knows he fetters (samyojana) based on them and knows how they arise, how they are overcome, and how to keep them from arising in the future, he knows whether one of the seven factors of enlightenment (bojjhanga) is present in him or not, knows how each arises and how they come to full development. Each of the Four Noble Truths (sacca) are understood according to reality.

Satipatthana has to start with one of the exercises out to the group of contemplations of the body which will serve as the primary and regular subject of meditation. The other exercises of the group and the other contemplations are to be cultivated when occasion for them arises during meditation and everyday life.

After each contemplation, it is shown how it finally leads to insight wisdom, “Thus with regard to his own body he contemplates the body; with regard to the bodies of others, he contemplates the body; with regard to both, he contemplates the body. He beholds how the body arises and how it passes away; beholds the arising and passing away of the body. A body is there, but no living being, no individual, no woman, no man, no self, nothing that belongs to a self, neither a person nor anything belonging to that person, thus he has established his attentiveness as far as it serves his knowledge and mindfulness, and he lives independent, unattached to anything in the world.”

In the same way he contemplates feeling, mind and mind-objects. The path is the complete resolution of suffering. (*Buddhist dictionary 1972*)

By the Venerable **Dr. Hok Savann**

