

Ānāpānassati Session 2

Here is some reference material, based on our work in the First Tetrad

[Another Translation of the Ānāpānassati Sutta](#)

[The First Tetrad](#)

[Ṭhānissaro Bikkhu on Breath Energies](#)

[Buddhadāsa on Prāṇa, Breath and the First Tetrad](#)

[Ṭhānissaro Bikkhu's use of the same map we use in his book](#)

[Buddhadasa_and_counting](#)

[Ajahn Sucitto on Pāna \(Prāṇa\)](#)

This week, for home practice,

Session 2 Home Practice

- Continue a regular practice of 20-40 minutes of daily sitting practice, if possible.
- Try to use the roadmap we have used in class to visit the breath centers in the body
- Remember that the first resting spot of 'a calm and relaxed body' lies with step 4 in this tetrad.
- Remember that we start out attending to particular areas in the 'map' we have chosen, but we end up with a sense of the whole body breathing, using a broad, spacious sense of the body. Relax any tension that you can let go of along the way as you move through the map.
- Use the counting of the length of the inhale and exhale for at least the first half of your practice time.
- Keep 80% of your attention on the feeling of the breath energy in the body, using the other 20% for counting or a meditation word or phrase.
- Follow along with this guided **audio file** if you would like

- Notice at times in daily life, where the breath is felt in the body as you breathe.
- Read as much of the reference material as you would like. The main points to take away are that breath energy is more than just air. The fact that we can feel, hear, taste, smell, see or conceptualize anything depends on the presence of 'life-force', (Pāna in Pali and Prāna in Sanskrit), which is always present in each moment of life and which is renewed with each breath.

First Tetrad

1. Dīghaṃ vā assasanto dīghaṃ assasāmī'ti pajānāti
Dīghaṃ vā passasanto dīghaṃ passasāmī'ti pajānāti
Breathing in long, one knows 'I breathe in long';
Breathing out long, one knows 'I breathe out long';
2. Rassaṃ vā assasanto rassaṃ assasāmī'ti pajānāti
Rassaṃ vā passasanto rassaṃ passasāmī'ti pajānāti
Breathing in short, one knows 'I breathe in short';
Breathing out short, one knows 'I breathe out short'.
3. Sabba-kāya-paṭisaṃvedī assasissāmī'ti sikkhati
Sabba-kāya-paṭisaṃvedī passasissāmī'ti sikkhati
One trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body'.
One trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body'.
4. Passambhayaṃ kāya-saṅkhāraṃ assasissāmī'ti sikkhati
Passambhayaṃ kāya-saṅkhāraṃ passasissāmī'ti sikkhati
One trains thus: 'I shall breathe in calming the bodily formations'.
One trains thus: 'I shall breathe out calming the bodily formations'.

[Back to top](#)

Breath

the word “breath” covers a wide range of energies in the body. Most prominently, there’s the energy of the in-and-out breath. We tend to think of this breath as the air coming in and out of the lungs, but this air wouldn’t move if it weren’t for an energy in the body activating the muscles that draw it in and allow it to go out.

When you meditate on the in-and-out breath, you may start by paying attention to the movement of the air, but as your sensitivity develops, you become more focused on the energy. In addition to the energy of the in-and-out breath, there are subtler flows of energy that spread through all parts of the body. these can be experienced as the mind grows more still. there are two types: moving energies; and still, steady energies. the moving energies are directly related to the energy of the in-and-out breath. For instance, there is the flow of energy in the nerves, as all the muscles involved in breathing, however subtly, are activated with each breath. is energy ow also allows you to have sensation in the different parts of the body and to move them at will. There is also the flow of energy that nourishes the heart with each breath, and then spreads from the heart as it pumps the blood. This can be felt with the movement of blood through the blood vessels and out to every pore of the skin.

As for the still, steady energies, these are centered in different spots in the body, such as the tip of the breastbone, the middle of the brain, the palms of the hands, or the soles of the feet. Once the in-and-out breath grows calm, these energies can be spread to fill the whole body with a sense of stillness and fullness that feels solid and secure.

To some people, these energies in the different parts of the body might seem mysterious—or even imaginary. But even if the concept of these energies seems foreign to you, the energies themselves are not. They form the way you directly experience the body from within. If they weren’t already there, you wouldn’t have any sense of where your own body is.

So when you try to acquaint yourself with these energies, there are three points to keep in mind:

- 1) You’re not concerned with your breath as it might be observed by a doctor or a machine outside you. You’re concerned with your breath as only you can know it: as part of your direct experience of having a body. If you have trouble thinking of these energies as “breath,” see if thinking of them as “breathing sensations” or “body sensations” helps —whatever enables you to get in touch with what’s actually there.

2) is is NOT a matter of trying to create sensations that don't already exist. You're simply making yourself more sensitive to sensations that are already there. When you're told to let the breath energies flow into one another, ask yourself if the sensations you feel seem unconnected to one another. If they do, simply hold in mind the possibility that they can connect on their own. This is what it means to allow them to flow.

3) These energies are not air, they're energy. If, while you're allowing the breath energies to spread through the various parts of the body, you sense that you're trying to force energy into those parts, stop and remind yourself: Energy doesn't need to be forced. There's plenty of space even in the most solid parts of the body for this energy to flow, so you don't have to push it against any resistance. If there's a sense of resistance to the energy, it's coming from the way you visualize it. Try to visualize the energy in a way that can slip around and through everything with ease. The best way to get in touch with these energies is to close your eyes, notice the sensations that tell you where the different parts of your body are, and then allow yourself to view those sensations as a type of energy. As you get more sensitive to those sensations and see how they interact with the energy of the in-and-out breath, it will seem more and more natural to regard them as types of breath energy. That allows you to get the most use out of them.

Ṭhānissaro Bikkhu

[Back to top](#)

The First Tetrad

In the kāya tetrad, or kāyānupassanā (contemplation of the body), we study and understand the breath. We learn to understand the different kinds of breath, their various qualities and characteristics, and the influences they produce. We get to know the breath in all aspects and from all angles in order for it to be correct. To put it briefly, we must have correct prāṇa. Prāṇa is a Sanskrit word, the Pali equivalent is pāṇa. Ordinarily, this word means “life” or “life force” or “that which preserves and nurtures life.” We must understand it correctly; our prāṇa should be healthy and correct. Then our lives will be correct. Thus, it is necessary to study the subject of the breath.

In India every style of yoga—and there are dozens of styles—has trainings involving the prāṇa. These trainings are called prāṇāyāma, which means “control of the prāṇa” or “breath control.” To control the breath is to control life. When the prāṇa enters the body, it is called āna and when it leaves it is called apāna. The two words combined become ānāpāna, that is, the prāṇa enters and the prāṇa exits. To control the prāṇa is to control that which enters to preserve life. Then we live a life that is fresh and cheerful, ready and fit for training and practice. Such prāṇa training can be found even in Buddhism.

Prāṇāyāma is the first subject of ānāpānasati. Although this may seem surprising, it does not contradict our principles at all. In fact, ānāpānasati is the equivalent of any system of yoga; indeed, it actually improves on all of them. This system of kāyānupassanā (contemplation on the body) takes up the prāṇāyāma of the Indian yogas and improves upon them in appropriateness and practicability.

Thus, our first item of study is this system of training known as kāyānupassanā. If we adjust the prāṇa-body, so that it is good, healthy, and calm, it makes the flesh-body good, healthy, and calm as well. Calm and healthy prāṇa brings the greatest peace and well-being in this life. This is why we must understand both kāya (bodies): the flesh-body and the breath-body. Then we shall be able to cultivate the “good” until there is good peace and good calm. The word good here means “fit and proper to be used in performing duties and work.” The last item of this tetrad is calming the body-conditioner, that is, making the preservers of the body peaceful and calm. By calming the breath, which conditions the body, then the body too becomes tranquil. The citta will feel this tranquility and will also be calmed. When the citta is calm, it is ready to perform its further duties. This is the subject matter of the kāya. It is important to note that the more you understand these facts, the more benefits this training will bring; you will become able to make this the best life possible. So we begin with learning about the kāya as the first tetrad.

THE BUDDHA’S PRĀṆĀYĀMA It is essential that we understand this profound truth: the prāṇa-body is the conditioner of the flesh-body. We ought to know that there are these two kāya or levels of kāya. We know about the first level, the flesh-body, but we hardly know the prāṇa-body at all. Therefore, it is very important to understand the prāṇa-body, as it can condition the flesh-body in beneficial ways. In India, the prāṇāyāma is considered to be the highest and most important subject for study. While different schools vary in their explanations and meanings for the prāṇa-body, all schools seek to regulate the prāṇa-body so that it conditions the flesh-body appropriately.

Buddhadasa Bikkhu, translation: Thēpwisutthimēthī, Phra . Mindfulness with Breathing: A Manual for Serious Beginners. Wisdom Publications. Kindle Edition.

[Back to top](#)

This is an excerpt from Thanissaro Bikkhu's book, "[With Each and Every Breath](#)", Pg 45, which describes the same 'map' that we are using in this class. To learn more about his recommended maps, you can consult this free book, pages 42-25. We often have free copies in the tea room, but you can also get the free pdf version of the whole book from the link listed above. online. Note that his whole method differs from what we are using in class, so don't get confused. You may want to have his book as a reference to use *after* we go through all the steps together.

From page 45

.....If one point or section seems to respond especially well to your attention, releasing tension in a refreshing way, stick with that point as long as it responds. If a point or section doesn't respond after several minutes of attention—or if you find that tension increases when you focus on it—drop it for the time being and move on to the next point. If your time for meditation is limited, you might want to limit your survey to the center points on the front of the torso—navel, solar plexus, middle of the chest—and then to the base of the throat and the middle of the head. If focusing in the head gives you a headache, avoid focusing there until you learn how to maintain focus with a minimum of pressure.

[Back to top](#)

This excerpt from Buddhadasa shows a similar way of using counting to how we use it in our practice group. However, there are differences. He tries to get the counting to come out the same each time, and recommends making the counting come out to 5 or 10. Instead, we are using the counting to measure the actual length, allowing it to be different with each natural breath. Don't get confused.

Measuring the Breath by Counting

From Anapanasati (Mindfulness of Breathing) Buddhadasa Bhikkhu 1971

The first technique, counting, serves two purposes. It is used firstly to discover the length of the breaths, and secondly to prevent the mind from wandering from the breathing. To be of use counting must coexist with the control of the mind and be in harmony with it. The meditator should count at least up to five but not beyond ten. If he prefers just to estimate the length of the breaths rather than actually counting, he may do so in the way explained, in Stages i and ii. In any case he must do it with the proper state of mind; avoiding the extremes of sluggishness and excessive effort.

Counting is an effective means of facilitating concentration, though rather coarse compared with the technique of estimating. Each time the meditator takes an in-or out-breath he counts "One, two, three, four, five," the last number coinciding with the end of the breath. Even if he counts right up to ten by saying (mentally) "One, two, three,... eight, nine, ten," he must exercise judgment so that the counting ends at the end of each in-and out-breath. And whichever number he chooses to count to, he must so arrange things that the end of the counting coincides with the end of the breath. It is best to count up to either five or ten rather than to intermediate numbers. Obviously the technique of counting is used only when the breathing is naturally or normally long and is experienced in terms of beginning, middle, and end. The reason for not counting less than five or more than ten is this: If the meditator stops short of five, the intervals in counting (between each number and the next) are long enough to give the mind a chance to wander from the object (the breathing). Counting less than five is too coarse, too slack, and is not appreciably different from merely concentrating on the breath in terms of beginning, middle, and end. If on the other hand the meditator goes beyond ten, he has to count too quickly and will become flurried. Being lost in counting, his mind will once again deviate from the object. It is undesirable to be too sluggish or too hurried, to count in intervals excessively long or short. These faults affect the mind adversely and confuse it. This is the technique of counting. The meditator should experiment with it in its various forms. This trains the mind and keeps it in trim. It also helps it to get to know itself better.

[Back to top](#)

These excerpts are taken from “Breathing Like a Buddha” by Ajahn Sucitto.

Several people have told me, and I concur, that Ajahn Sucitto’s writing style can be challenging. These short excerpts from the book may be helpful. We will include a link to download the free book in the book list you will receive later.

Breath Energy – pāna (prāṇa in Sanskrit)

I was introduced to meditation in 1975 through a systematic approach of maintaining moment-by-moment mindfulness of the sensations associated with breathing. I found that approach to be useful for discipline, but quite intense and demanding, and not conducive to joy and ease. Moreover, when I looked into the original texts, I found that they didn’t mention awareness of physical sensations, nor of mindfulness as a practice of tracking sensations a moment at a time – though these references are plausible interpretations of ‘mindfully one knows one is breathing in ... breathing out.’ But, as an exploration, I went back to the basics of noticing how I was aware of breathing, and picked up on the fluid rhythm of the life force that the physical act of breathing moves and moderates. The Pali word for this is ‘pāna’. This is the energy, rather than the sensations, associated with breathing. This aspect of the breath as an energy is commonly acknowledged in the spiritual traditions of India and China, as well as in non-mechanist cultures – so it seems reasonable to assume that it informed the meditative process that the Buddha outlined. The significant point is that this embodied energy connects the material to the mental realm. Embodied energy runs through the stirring, stress, calm and gladdening of our entire nervous system: if it’s distorted, it inflames and corrupts the mind; if it’s healthy, it clears it. Accordingly, a trained focus on the energy associated with breathing offers a means to calm, brighten, understand and clear states of mind (and heart). -pg.14

...Approached in this way, breathing provides a path to the refreshment and soothing of body. and mind; this effect encourages one to persevere with meditation without a huge amount of willpower.

This is a pragmatic approach: the vitality and ease that a settled body can bring can lift the mind out of oppressive emotional and psychological obstructions. It also brings around a greater degree of grounded stability. This has far-reaching significance: with an increase in hyperactive mentality, attention disorders, psychological breakdowns and social dysfunction, as well as a disregard for the natural world, society in general has become disembodied and groundless. This condition speaks of an urgent need to get aligned with the subtle and life-enhancing aspects of our material reality.

In the microcosm of our own bodies, ānāpānasati offers this.

The discourses describe the ongoing cultivation that leads through samādhi to liberation as being based on recollecting virtue and thereby feeling uplifted. So the ethical clarity of right view is the foundation, the guiding principle for what one should be mindful of and with what intent. This right mindfulness settles on the gladness of the heart and lets that steady to bring around bodily ease. It’s a flowing process, rather than a push to get concentrated. (See, for example, A.10:2, where the development is described as ‘one stage flows into the next.’) The stage in that process wherein mental and bodily energies settle and consolidate is called ‘samādhi’. – pg 16.

[Back to top](#)

The next page is from the Appendix of Larry Rosenberg's first book, *Breath by Breath*.

In addition to adjusting the pronouns to say "One" instead of "He", notice that he translates the Pali verb *patissamvedi* as "sensitive to" instead of "experiencing". Does a change in translation affect how you relate to the text?

This is the entire Ānāpānāsati sutta.

For now, we are interested in the sixteen steps on the third page, (202-203)

Appendix

The Anapanasati Sutra

MINDFULNESS OF BREATHING

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Savatthi in the Eastern Monastery, the palace of Migara's mother, together with many well-known elder disciples—with Ven. Sariputta, Ven. Maha Mogallana, Ven. Maha Kassapa, Ven. Maha Kaccayana, Ven. Maha Koththita, Ven. Maha Kappina, Ven. Maha Cunda, Ven. Revata, Ven. Ananda, and other well-known elder disciples. On that occasion the elder monks were teaching and instructing. Some elder monks were teaching and instructing ten monks, some were teaching and instructing twenty monks, some were teaching and instructing thirty monks, some were teaching and instructing forty monks. The new monks, being taught and instructed by the elder monks, understood that which is lofty and excellent more than ever before.

Now on that occasion—the Uposatha day of the fifteenth, the full moon night of the Pavarana ceremony—the Blessed One was seated in the open air surrounded by the community of monks. Surveying the silent community of monks, he addressed them:

“Monks. I am content with this practice. I am content at heart with this practice. So arouse even more energy for attaining the unattained, reaching the unreached, realizing the unrealized. [To encourage your efforts,] I will remain right here at Savatthi [for another month] through the White Water-Lily Month, the fourth month of the rains.”

The monks in the countryside heard, “The Blessed One, they say, will remain right there at Savatthi through the White Water-Lily Month, the fourth month of the rains.” So they left for Savatthi to see the Blessed One.

Then the elder monks taught and instructed even more intensely.

Some elder monks were teaching and instructing ten monks, some were teaching and instructing twenty monks, some were teaching and instructing thirty monks, some were teaching and instructing forty monks. The new monks, being taught and instructed by the elder monks, understood that which is lofty and excellent more than ever before.

Now on that occasion—the Uposatha day of the fifteenth, the full moon night of the White Water-Lily Month, the fourth month of the rains—the Blessed One was seated in the open air surrounded by the community of monks. Surveying the silent community of monks, he addressed them.

“Monks, this assembly is free from idle chatter, devoid of idle chatter, and is established on pure heartwood: such is this community of monks, such is this assembly. The sort of assembly that is worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect, an incomparable field of merit for the world: such is this community of monks, such is this assembly. The sort of assembly to which a small gift, when given, becomes great, and a greater gift greater: such is this community of monks, such is that assembly. The sort of assembly that is rare to see in the world: such is this community of monks, such is this assembly—the sort of assembly that it would be worth walking great distances, taking along provisions, in order to come and observe.

“In this community of monks there are monks who have already realized the fruit of arahantship,¹ destroyed every affliction, laid aside every burden, and attained right understanding and emancipation: such are the monks in this community of monks.

“In this community of monks there are monks who, with the total ending of the first set of five ropes of bondage, are due to be reborn [in the Pure Abodes], there to be totally unbound, never again to return from that world:² such are the monks in this community of monks.

1. In the Theravada tradition, arahants are those who have achieved the highest realization. They have rooted out all causes of affliction. They are no longer subject to the cycle of death and birth. They are no longer negligent in any way and have destroyed the ten fetters that shackle beings to the cycles of becoming: (1) self-identity views, (2) uncertainty about the path, (3) the superstitious use of rituals and practices, (4) lust, (5) hatred, (6) passion for fine material states, (7) passion for nonmaterial states, (8) conceit, (9) restlessness, (10) ignorance. In other words, arahants have realized perfect awakening.

2. This level of attainment is called *anagami*. Lust and hate don't arise in the

"In this community of monks there are monks who, with the total ending of [the first] three ropes of bondage, and with the attenuation of greed, aversion, and delusion, are once-returners who—on returning only one more time to this world—will make an end to suffering:³ such are the monks in this community of monks.

"In this community of monks there are monks who, with the total ending of [the first] three ropes of bondage, are stream winners, steadfast, never again destined for states of woe, headed for self-awakening:⁴ such are the monks in this community of monks.

"In this community of monks there are monks who remain devoted to the development of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness⁵ . . . , the four right exertions⁶ . . . , the four bases of success⁷ . . . , the five faculties⁸ . . . , the five strengths⁹ . . . , the seven factors of awakening¹⁰ . . . , the

mind of these meditators, and they have uprooted the five lower fetters. The remaining fetters keep them imprisoned to the conditions of living in the world. 3. This level of attainment is called *sakadagami*. These meditators have dropped the first three fetters and have weakened passion, aversion, and delusion.

4. Finally there is the *sotapanna*. These meditators have dropped the three lower fetters. They have entered the stream of awakening, which flows into the ocean of liberation in—at most—seven more lives.

5. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness—*satipatthana*—bring into focus the body, feelings, mental formations, and dhammas. They correspond to the four tetrads that compose the core of our practice with *anapanasati*.

6. In the four right exertions we arouse zeal and enthusiasm to (1) keep unskillful mental states from arising, (2) find a way to put an end to them if they have arisen, (3) cause skillful mental states to arise, (4) maintain and strengthen skillful mental states that already exist. Skillful mental states are those that benefit ourselves and others. Unskillful mental states do not; they cause suffering.

7. The four bases of success are qualities to be brought into proper balance so that meditation practice will succeed. They are (1) keen interest in doing the practice, (2) persistence in the practice, (3) intentness on the practice—wholeheartedness, (4) being discriminating in the practice, careful to see results of practice and make proper adjustments.

8. The five faculties are faith, persistence, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom.

9. The five strengths parallel the five faculties and give us the capability to overcome the opposite of each of those qualities: lack of confidence, laziness, carelessness, distraction, and delusion.

10. The seven factors of awakening are mindfulness, investigation, persistence, rapture, serenity, concentration, and equanimity.

Noble Eightfold Path:¹¹ such are the monks in this community of monks.

"In this community of monks there are monks who remain devoted to the development of loving-kindness . . . , compassion . . . , appreciative joy . . . , equanimity¹² . . . , [the perception of the] parts [of the body]¹³ . . . , the perception of impermanence: such are the monks in this community of monks.

"In this community of monks there are monks who remain devoted to mindfulness of in-and-out breathing.

"Mindfulness of in-and-out breathing, when developed and pursued, is of great fruit, of great benefit. Mindfulness of in-and-out breathing, when developed and pursued, brings the four foundations of mindfulness to perfection. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, when developed and pursued, bring the seven factors of awakening to their perfection. The seven factors of awakening, when developed and pursued, perfect clear insight and liberation."

MINDFULNESS OF IN-AND-OUT BREATHING

"Now how is mindfulness of in-and-out breathing developed and pursued so as to bring the Four Foundations of Mindfulness to their culmination?

"The meditator, having gone to the forest, to the shade of a tree, or to an empty building, sits down with legs folded crosswise, body held erect, and setting mindfulness to the fore. Always mindful, one breathes in; mindful, one breathes out."

11. The Noble Eightfold Path details the eight elements of correct practice: right understanding, right aspiration, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. Footnotes 5–11 are collectively called the Wings to Awakening and form the heart of the Buddha's teaching.

12. These four interrelated contemplations—loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity—are collectively referred to as the four *brahma viharas* or four boundless states of mind, because there is no limit to our mind when we are in these meditative states.

13. The perception of the parts of the body, sometimes referred to as reflecting on the unloveliness of the body, is used for counteracting excessive sexual lust or other attachments to the body as a self. The practice is to peer inside the body with the mind's eye, seeing the organs, the blood, phlegm, pus, urine, and so on. This practice can be a powerful antidote to the mind's tendency to glorify, romanticize, and identify with our image of the body.

THE SIXTEEN CONTEMPLATIONS

First Tetrad (Body Group)

1. While breathing in long, one knows: "I breathe in long." While breathing out long, one knows: "I breathe out long."
2. While breathing in short, one knows: "I breathe in short." While breathing out short, one knows: "I breathe out short."
3. One trains oneself:¹⁴ "Sensitive to the whole body, I breathe in. Sensitive to the whole body, I breathe out."
4. One trains oneself: "Calming the whole body, I breathe in. Calming the whole body, I breathe out."

Second Tetrad (Feelings Group)

5. One trains oneself: "Sensitive to rapture, I breathe in. Sensitive to rapture, I breathe out."
6. One trains oneself: "Sensitive to pleasure, I breathe in. Sensitive to pleasure, I breathe out."
7. One trains oneself: "Sensitive to mental processes, I breathe in. Sensitive to mental processes, I breathe out."
8. One trains oneself: "Calming mental processes, I breathe in. Calming mental processes, I breathe out."

Third Tetrad (Mind Group)

9. One trains oneself: "Sensitive to the mind, I breathe in. Sensitive to the mind, I breathe out."
10. One trains oneself: "Gladdening the mind, I breathe in. Gladdening the mind, I breathe out."
11. One trains oneself: "Steadying the mind, I breathe in. Steadying the mind, I breathe out."
12. One trains oneself: "Liberating the mind, I breathe in. Liberating the mind, I breathe out."

14. Notice that the phrase "One trains oneself" appears here for the first time and continues for the rest of the contemplations. Training oneself implies a certain will and intentionality. The meditator lends some direction to the process, taking up the theme featured in each step and maintaining undivided attention to it. If the mind wanders, the meditator brings it back to that contemplation, so that the relevant lesson can be learned.

Fourth Tetrad (Wisdom Group)

13. One trains oneself: "Focusing on impermanence, I breathe in. Focusing on impermanence, I breathe out."
14. One trains oneself: "Focusing on fading away, I breathe in. Focusing on fading away, I breathe out."
15. One trains oneself: "Focusing on cessation, I breathe in. Focusing on cessation, I breathe out."
16. One trains oneself: "Focusing on relinquishment, I breathe in. Focusing on relinquishment, I breathe out."

THE FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF MINDFULNESS¹⁵

1. Now, on whatever occasion a meditator breathing in long discerns that he is breathing in long; or breathing out long, discerns that he is breathing out long; or breathing in short, discerns that he is breathing in short; or breathing out short, discerns that he is breathing out short; trains himself to breathe in . . . and . . . out sensitive to the entire body; trains himself to breathe in . . . and . . . out calming the whole body: on that occasion the meditator remains focused on the body in and of itself—ardent, alert, and mindful—subduing greed and distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this—the in-and-out breath—is

15. My teaching of the *Anapanasati Sutra* emphasizes the sixteen contemplations to the point that, in abridging the sutra for inclusion in the text, I included only them. From a practical standpoint, the contemplations are all we need to launch the process of liberation. The sutra goes on here to discuss the four foundations of mindfulness and the seven factors of awakening. To comment on them adequately would require another book (and there are some fine books that have already done so, listed in the bibliography). But we have, in essence, already covered this material, from a slightly different angle and with somewhat different language. The most important thing to notice in the remainder of the sutra is that the Buddha is saying that both the four foundations and the seven factors develop out of the practice of anapanasati. This is in effect a ringing endorsement of the sixteen contemplations that we have gone over in so much detail.

Basically, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness are the tetrads that I discussed in the first four chapters of the book. As you move through the contemplations, you will develop the Four Foundations. That is what the Buddha is saying in this section of the sutra.

classed as a body among bodies, which is why the meditator on that occasion remains focused on the body in and of itself—ardent, alert, and mindful—putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world.

2. On whatever occasion a meditator trains himself to breathe in and out sensitive to rapture; trains himself to breathe in and out sensitive to happiness; trains himself to breathe in and out sensitive to mental processes; trains himself to breathe in and out calming mental processes: on that occasion the meditator remains focused on feelings in and of themselves—ardent, alert, and mindful—subduing greed and distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this—close attention to in- and out-breaths—is classed as a feeling among feelings, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on feelings in and of themselves—ardent, alert, and mindful—putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world.
3. On whatever occasion a meditator trains himself to breathe in and out sensitive to the mind; trains himself to breathe in and out gladdening the mind; trains himself to breathe in and out steadying the mind; trains himself to breathe in and out liberating the mind: on that occasion the meditator remains focused on the mind in and of itself—ardent, alert, and mindful—subduing greed and distress with reference to the world. I don't say that there is mindfulness of in-and-out breathing in one of confused mindfulness and no alertness, which is why the meditator on that occasion remains focused on the mind in and of itself—ardent, alert, and mindful—putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world.
4. On whatever occasion a meditator trains himself to breathe in and out focusing on impermanence; trains himself to breathe in and out focusing on fading away; trains himself to breathe in and out focusing on cessation; trains himself to breathe in and out focusing on relinquishment: on that occasion the meditator remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves—ardent, alert, and mindful—subduing greed and distress with reference to the world. He who sees clearly with discernment the abandoning of greed and distress is one who oversees with equanimity,

which is why the meditator on that occasion remains focused on mental qualities in and of themselves—ardent, alert, and mindful—putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world.

“This is how mindfulness of in-and-out breathing is developed and pursued so as to bring the four foundations of mindfulness to their perfection.

THE SEVEN FACTORS OF AWAKENING¹⁶

“And how are the Four Foundations of Mindfulness developed and pursued so as to bring the seven factors of awakening to their perfection?

1. “On whatever occasion the meditator remains focused on the body in and of itself—ardent, alert, and mindful—putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world, on that occasion his mindfulness is steady and without lapse. When his mindfulness is steady and without lapse, then mindfulness¹⁷ as a factor of awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.”
2. “Remaining mindful in this way, he examines, analyzes, and comes to a comprehension of that quality with discernment. When he remains mindful in this way, examining, analyzing, and coming to a comprehension of that quality with discernment, then investigation¹⁸ as a factor of awakening becomes aroused.

16. The seven factors of awakening can be developed using any of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness; you can go through all seven while contemplating the body, then while contemplating feelings, and so on. The approach taken here doesn't get quite that systematic, but all seven factors are developed as you move through the sixteen contemplations of the sutra. Some of the seven factors—rapture and serenity—are spoken of quite specifically in the contemplations. In any case, the seven factors are another very skillful way to talk about the process that we discussed in the first four chapters of the text.

17. Mindfulness, of course, was one of the first subjects of our text, and we dealt with it quite thoroughly there. It is being developed as we focus exclusively on the breathing, or on any of the objects of the sixteen contemplations. As we practice with it throughout the sutra, it becomes more and more precise.

18. During the entire process of anapanasati we become increasingly sensitive to cause and effect. Early on, we might see how the breath is a powerful conditioner of the mind and body. In the fourth tetrad, we see the linkage between craving, attachment, and suffering in a clear way. When the Buddha talks about investigation, he is referring to that kind of seeing.

He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development."

3. "In one who examines, analyzes, and comes to a comprehension of that quality with discernment, unflagging persistence is aroused. When unflagging persistence is aroused in one who examines, analyzes, and comes to a comprehension of that quality with discernment, then persistence¹⁹ as a factor of awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development."
4. "In one whose persistence is aroused, a rapture not-of-the-flesh arises. When a rapture not-of-the-flesh arises in one whose persistence is aroused, then rapture²⁰ as a factor of awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development."
5. "For one who is enraptured, the body grows calm and the mind grows calm. When the body and mind of an enraptured meditator grow calm, then serenity²¹ as a factor of awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development."

Anytime we scrutinize some aspect of our experience, we are engaging in this quality of investigation and strengthening it. A mature vipassana meditator loves to investigate. It becomes natural and joyful to look with keen interest at any aspect of our personal experience. For meditation to become Insight meditation, it must include this factor of investigation, because it is careful examination of our experience—not to be confused with thinking about it—that brings insight.

19. Of course, we have needed persistence from the first moment that we attended to the breathing. But as mindfulness and analysis pick up momentum, they quite naturally give rise to much more energy to practice. This persistence is not stiff and tense but smooth and steady. It is the kind of effort that we use in a marathon rather than a sprint.

20. Rapture emerges out of persistence. It brings a contentment and lightheartedness to the practice, an open quality of mind that is more willing to receive every kind of situation with interest. When rapture becomes strong, it affects our entire energy system. Rapture emerges from the mind and has a powerful impact on the body, suffusing the whole being with joy.

21. Serenity develops as the rapture of the fourth factor smooths out into a kind of tranquillity. The ancients described rapture as the feeling that a parched man has when he discovers water in the desert. Serenity is the feeling of satisfaction he has after he has drunk the water. Serenity is calm but not dull; it is highly charged with life.

6. "For one who is at ease—his body calmed—the mind becomes concentrated. When the mind of one who is at ease—his body calmed—becomes concentrated, then concentration²² as a factor of awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development."
7. "He oversees the mind thus concentrated with equanimity. When he oversees the mind thus concentrated with equanimity, equanimity²³ as a factor of awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development."

[Similarly with the other three frames of reference, feelings, mind, and mental qualities.]

"This is how the four foundations of mindfulness are developed and pursued so as to bring the seven factors of awakening to their culmination."

CLEAR KNOWING AND RELEASE

"And how are the seven factors of awakening developed and pursued so as to bring clear knowing and release to their culmination? There is the case where a meditator develops mindfulness as a factor of awakening dependent on seclusion . . . , fading away . . . , cessation, resulting in relinquishment.²⁴ He develops analysis of qualities as a factor of

22. Concentration develops out of serenity. Again, of course, we have been developing concentration throughout the practice. But it becomes much more powerful once a certain stillness is achieved.

23. Finally, when the process of anapanasati has really matured, we can contemplate everything with a clear, relaxed mind, one that can see anything that comes in front of it with unwavering attention. This is equanimity, the final factor of awakening.

24. We have been developing the Factors of Awakening from the moment we became mindful of our first breath. However, it is in contemplations fourteen through sixteen (fading away, cessation, and relinquishment) that the process gets intensified, to the point that these factors become genuine constituents of an awakening mind.

These final three contemplations are the stages where we can really come close to the mind's toxins of greed, hatred, and delusion and watch them be burned away by deeper and deeper seeing. The mind emptying itself of its poisons becomes the object of mindfulness, and all the factors of awakening are perfected. The Buddha saw this refinement of the seven factors as the last stage of practice. So whenever we refer to the fulfillment of the sixteen contempla-

awakening . . . , persistence as a factor of awakening . . . , rapture as a factor of awakening . . . , serenity as a factor of awakening . . . , concentration as a factor of awakening . . . , equanimity as a factor of awakening dependent on seclusion . . . , fading away . . . , cessation, resulting in relinquishment.

“This is how the seven factors of awakening, when developed and pursued, bring clear knowing and release to their culmination.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Glad at heart, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words.

tions of the sutra, we are referring to the Four Foundations and the Seven Factors as well.

Glossary

All terms are in Pali unless otherwise noted.

ANAPANASATI Mindfulness with breathing in and out. The meditation system taught by the Buddha in which conscious breathing is used to develop both serenity and insight. The practice of *anapanasati* is a natural progression of sixteen contemplations that fully explore the mind-body process and lead to liberation.

ANICCA Impermanence, instability, flux, inconstancy. Conditioned things are in ceaseless transformation: constantly arising, manifesting, and ending. Everything that is put together comes apart. Impermanence is the first of three aspects common to conditioned things.

ANATTA Not-self. The teaching that all things, without exception, are not self; that they lack any essence or substance that could properly be regarded as a “self.” This teaching does not deny the existence of things, but does deny that they can be owned or controlled or be an owner or controller in any but a relative and conventional sense. *Anatta* is the third of three aspects common to all conditioned things and is dependent upon **ANICCA** and **DUKKHA**.

ARAHANT A fully awakened being; a living being completely free of all attachment to anything as being “me” or “mine.” One who has uprooted all **KILESAS** and experiences no more mental suffering. *Arahants* have attained the fourth and final stage of awakening.

BHIKKHU A male monk under the Buddha and up to the present day who keeps the 227 monastic rules and lives dependent upon alms for food. The term is sometimes used for any person who attempts to develop skillful actions and abandon unskillful ones in order to realize liberation.

BUDDHO Awake, enlightened. An epithet for the Buddha, the one who knows.

CITTA Mind-heart, consciousness. That which thinks, knows, and ex-

[Back to top](#)