

DISCUSSION ABOUT THE ROLE OF BUDDHIST MEDITATIVE PRACTICES ON THE PATH TOWARDS AWAKENING

***Abstract:** Meditation is the way to delightful to represents Nibbana and the end of suffering and rebirth. In this essay I concentrate on the part of meditation practices on the path to awakening as presented in the early Buddhist Pali canon. Begin by looking at the tradition of a 'path' in Buddhism (such as sila, samadhi) and focus on the practices of mindfulness (sati) to emphasis the connection between loving-kindness from oneself to all being. The process of change and development from ignorance to awake is a "path to awakening." With specific knowledge, the practice of meditation to transform oneself from thought, word, profound. The Buddha teaching of the path to awakening is affected by how this change happens. Any meditation study can attend as the central focus of insight reflection and lead to awareness. At the same time, meditation can understand Buddhist path to awakening is not only a path but also many paths.*

***Keywords:** Awakening; Buddhist meditative; Buddhist path; mindfulness.*

Introduction

In early Buddhist manuscripts, life is suffering, and the end of suffering is the path of the Buddhist way. It is a route to see the reality of nature, and the end of the rebirth cycle. Meditation is the vehicle for conveying that journey. The defined 'meditation' not only is "the cross-legged sitting" but also mean "to bring into being"¹. The mental

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training can transform a whole person - “cognitive, emotional, physical, behavioural, social”. The practices of insight meditation are the path of development of loving to all beings and mindfulness when breathing in and out. However, meditation is the only way to instructions for the practicers on the early Buddhist path in the transform and ‘awakening’. The first of meditation is calm or Samatha².

This essay will concentrate on the part of meditation practices on the path to awakening as presented in the early Buddhist Pali canon. Firstly, I will begin by looking at the tradition of a ‘path’ in Buddhism (such as sila, samadhi). Secondly, I will focus on the practices of mindfulness (sati) to emphasis the connection between loving-kindness from oneself to all being. Hence I acknowledge that my focus on meditation as “be used to develop insight or calm or both together”³.

The path to awakening

Early Buddhist practice immediately experiences reality in meditation. “As much as this principle constraints, so it offers opportunities to manipulate conditioning in a manner that accords with one's values. Early Buddhism was aware of this principle and made active use of it”⁴. It could be argued that, the Buddha describes a 'path' is the classical route as “the noble eightfold path” to revival and knowing of the four noble truths such as “suffering, its origin, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation”⁵. According to Gethin, a path is “a succession of consecutive steps.” and “collectively brought to rightness”⁶.

The factors of awakening in post-canonical literature can refer to many conditions⁷. However, on the earlier Pali literature a structured can define by discipline (or sila, including right speech, action and livelihood), samādhi “(right mindfulness and concentration) and paññā (right thought and view)”⁸. The practitioner of Buddhist meditation, also, studies to understand ever more refined components of his practice, which he performs according to the process his

tradition has guided him⁹.

Sati - Mindfulness

Sati means ‘memory’ and ‘consciousness’ ‘knowledge’ moreover in the specific context of Buddhist meditation; it means mindfulness.¹⁰ The early Sutra Satipatthana, mindfulness is the only path “leading to the purification of beings”¹¹. “Right Mindfulness is, in fact, the indispensable basis of Right Living and Right Thinking-everywhere, at any time, for everyone”¹². In the Satipatthana sutra, close concentration to present reality is the way to the final goal of mindfulness. Gethin has convincingly described as “a path which leads straight and directly all the way to the final goal”. It is generally accepted that, mindfulness and the conventional method of placing it into training are indeed issues of central relevance for anyone enthusiastic to walk the Buddha’s way to freedom. As Shulman points out, some ways “move into much more conceptual territory involving creative acts of the imagination, such as contemplating one’s body as a bloated, festering corpse”¹³.

As for the seven constituents (sapta bodhyanga) of awakening, mindfulness can change the overactive or dull of mind it is “appropriate to cultivate this in all of the above circumstances”¹⁴. Indeed, general Buddhism in particular on a tradition that has classified “mindfulness” as the “heart of Buddhist meditation”¹⁵.

“Monks, this is the one-way path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the passing away of pain and displeasure, for the achievement of the method, for the realisation of nibbana, that is, the four establishments of mindfulness. What four? Here, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body... feelings in feelings... mind in mind... phenomena in phenomena, ardent, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world. This, monks, is the one-way path for the purification of beings... for the realisation of nibbana, that is, the four establishments of mindfulness”¹⁶.

The direct way to Nibbana defined in the Satipatthana Sutra introduces a complete position of expectations that progressively expose more exact perspectives of individual practice. The reasoning for the conditions expected for this straight route of satipatthana are, according to the ‘description’ section of the discussion, a reliable and supported application of ‘purpose (atapi), the presence of clearly knowing (sampajana), and a balanced state of mind, free from desires (abhijjha) and discontent (domanassa)’¹⁷. These three characteristics turn like the three parts of “a wheel around the central reasoning quality of mindfulness”¹⁸.

Seeing reality

The early classic of the Buddhist path, repeated in volumes of Digha-nikaya, the Majjihima-nikaya about the education of ethical conduct, the four stages of consumption (jhāna), the various direct knowledge “culminating in the knowledge of the four noble truths” which constitutes ‘awakening’¹⁹. The specific part of meditation if concentrated on seeing the body as unclean and produce a realisation of the body impermanent and pain-causing nature. The strikingly negative of the body is unclean when practising meditation. This practice suggests that ‘mindfulness’ with neutral, unbiased wisdom so that it will communicate the contents of a particular Buddhist perception²⁰.

The Buddhist way is further than only a method of moralistic education. In progression to lead the journey for liberation from suffering to its end, something more is required²¹. When the mind is depressed, then it is not ‘the right time to develop tranquility, concentration and equanimity’. Of course, the right way to produce “an investigation of qualities, strength, and joy”²². Thus while mindfulness is unique in so far as it can help whether the thought is pointless or overactive, it, although, remains just one of seven elements of awakening. The nature of bodhi or awakening experience in Buddhist tradition ‘apparently bearing witness to the Buddha’s understanding of his experience’. It characterises it as including the

most profound knowledge of “the nature of suffering, its cause, its cessation, and the way leading to its cessation”²³.

Concentration: peaceful of the mind

The statement of the Satipatthana Sutra is explained establishing mindfulness and understanding of the four noble truths such as “suffering, its origin, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation”²⁴. The final awakening is “working in balance rather than as issuing from just the practice of mindfulness”. Meditative practice is to develop concentration, equanimity and stop depression of the mind²⁵. These experiences explain that, as related in the discussions, the word ‘concentration’ (samadhi) is not limited to the improvement of peace (Samatha) only, moreover, also refer to “the region of insight meditation (vipassana)”²⁶.

The ‘right’ concentration is a requirement for full awakening to “knowing things as they are”²⁷. In any case, a principle of meditative concentration not only breathing but also understand functioning in the body. The regarding next level of meditations practitioner is “understands body is disposed” of correctly when the following “is walking, standing, sitting, or lying down” with “acts in full awareness”²⁸.

According to the early Buddhist texts, concentration and calm must be practised by a meditator. Indeed, the mind tends to develop inside on their own and naturally improve and increase, and the mind will become more evident²⁹. The early Buddhist community suggest that, the awakening of all Buddhas in the history, present and eternity is the way of removing hindrances and establishing awakening factors. So far clearly, an importance of practice mindfulness by concentrated meditation³⁰. Again, early Buddhist meditation theory developing of wisdom and pure stilling of the mind by the presence of concentration. As far as we know, the early Buddhist schools were unanimous that, in a position that the mind should “wake up”, “it needs to develop both *samatha* and *vipassanci*”³¹.

Loving-kindness

Another representative praxis is the cultivation of kindness toward

all living beings. In modern sources, this cultivation is described as an understanding of impermanence, suffering, and no(n)-Self³². Critical to an insight into the natural method of viewing the breathing, a meditator can feel the breath rising and dissolving. Dalai Lama has mentioned “on the one hand, we need to develop loving-kindness toward suffering beings, and secondly, we must identify the nature of suffering”³³. The maintaining mindfulness is focusing on the infinite number of beings and wishes “all of them gain freedom from suffering and its causes” - the process by developing loving-kindness approaching beings who are in pain. Relationships between all beings always affect our happiness or suffering. It means that seeing “all beings are the same in terms of wishing to gain happiness and to be free of suffering” meditator will develop an unbiased perspective approaching all beings. Kamalashila has said “when the seed of compassion is planted in such a mind, germination will be swift, proper, and complete. Once you have irrigated the mindstream with loving-kindness, meditate on compassion”³⁴.

However, the seeds of the mind for loving-kindness is non-greed, non-hate and non-delusion³⁵. One central element of Shulman thesis is Buddhist meditation not only a form of deconstructive therapy; at the same time, Buddhist meditation “must know what to see and how to see it”³⁶. Buddhist wisdom is understanding studies and practised to correspond to reality.

Meditation as a path of Happiness

Meditative methods mostly refer to converting conscious of an essential part of one’s self. From a Buddhist perspective, beings created suffering. The processes of attention at work in meditative concentration can effort to bring such awareness into being³⁷. The beneficial impacts of satipatthana are not limited to oneself. The Buddha notified that one should support one's friends and relations also to train satipatthana. In this way, satipatthana exercise can become a vehicle for supporting others. The Buddhist perfections like ‘non-self’ and ‘impermanence’ are not somehow beyond or outside of the body, feelings, mind and mental events being observed insight.

Similarly, the Buddha taught, people, should practice stability inside oneself by increasing satipatthana. Based on building such emotional insight, the practitioner will be able to associate to outside circumstances with tolerance, non-violence, and kindness, therefore can be of to help others.

The adventure is described individually in different cultures, from the fulfilment of the No(n)-Self to succeeding one's real nature, identified "Buddha-nature"³⁸. These experiences can bring more tranquility and more reliable concentration. In meditation states, there is no progress by body or expression, only action by the mind. From a Buddhist viewpoint, liberation from suffering is rewarded at the end of the way by complete meditation. In other words, one deliberately decides to suffer from a goal to defeat suffering³⁹. Methodologically, the concept of happiness is an individual based category and not a cosmically uniform. The fideistic impact may play, causing anxiety, sorrow or pain significant function in this context. The peace when meditation does "only an alternative, an interesting and ecologically friendly endeavour, but one that is far from being universally necessary"⁴⁰.

That is to say, when the mind of meditation is tranquil, peaceful and free from the five hindrances; it is only when the mind has been delighted.

"The body of one whose mind is joyful becomes tranquil; one whose body is tranquil feels happiness; the mind of one who is happy becomes concentrated. Thus he reflects: "The purpose for which I applied my mind is accomplished in me; now let me withhold.' He withholds and has neither initial nor sustained thought. He knows: 'I am without initial and sustained thought; mindful within, I am at ease"⁴¹.

The wisdom of meditation is the right mind converts to happiness; as a consequence of this form thus grows to peace and happiness, a concentrated mind is happy.

Nivarna

The final goal of the Buddhist path on the early canonical is 'arahants'

(the Saints or ‘worthy ones’) - the people who escape from the circle of reincarnation (or left as ‘Nivarna’)⁴². Shulman points out; the four noble truths are only instruction of early meditative and “meaningful encapsulation of the Buddhist view of reality”⁴³.

The experience of meditation guides to a position that considers the end of suffering in an ordinary sense, moreover, the end of the cycle of rebirths. The practice will reach different state (station) of space infinity, consciousness, “the station of neither ideation nor non-ideation” (four stages of immaterial attainments)⁴⁴. Gethin has mentioned that ethical conduct and concentration cannot develop without wisdom “penetrates to the four truths”⁴⁵. Indeed, the practice of meditation to develop mindfulness, that constitutes the direct route to “the realisation of Nibbana, to the perfection of wisdom, to the highest possible happiness, and unsurpassable freedom”⁴⁶. The path of awakening, for Buddhists, is directing “the mind trained through such experience to seeing the nature of reality” as it is. The Buddhist core structure of a fundamental meditative vision that is knowledge non-self concerning an understanding of impermanence. Although the early Buddhist philosophical doctrines, practices, and liberating experiences “the truly detached mind that entered the profound meditative space of samādhi, awareness to Buddhist truth were enhanced.” In this state, the meditators awakened to a realization of reality⁴⁷.

Conclusion

This essay explores the reasoning and integration of early Buddhist meditation theory. From the recognition of the principal purpose of meditation, the dynamics of expectation can at every presented moment drive to each of the other satipatthana practices, and later returning to the primary purpose. The direct path from being conscious of the method of breathing, for instance, the experience might adapt to some other occasion in the region of the body, which has become notable and then reverts to the breathing. Any meditation study can attend as the central focus of insight reflection and lead to awareness. At the same time, meditation can understand “freedom for

variation and combination according to the character and level of development of the meditator”⁴⁸. Buddhist path to awakening is not only a path but also many paths. The Buddha describes “dwell as a lamp unto yourself, a refuge unto yourself, seeking no other refuge” (Mahāparinibbāna sūta). Meditation is the way to delightful to represents Nibbāna and the end of suffering and rebirth. Such as Ulrich has pointed out the meditator is the one who not ‘going’ but is stay and seeing the place in a radically new way “through a transformation of the whole being which is cultivated and sustained through meditative practice”⁴⁹. The process of change and development from ignorance to awake is a “path to awakening.” With specific knowledge, the practice of meditation to transform oneself from thought, word, profound. The Buddha teaching of the path to awakening is affected by how this change happens. The meditation is a process of transformation “which the unawakened mind can be woken up”⁵⁰./.

Notes:

- 1 Sarah Shaw and Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies, *Buddhist Meditation: An Anthology of Texts from the Pali Canon*, 2008, p. 3.
- 2 L. S Cousins, ‘The Origin of Insight Meditation’, in *Buddhist Forum*, Vol. 4, 4 (UK: The institute of Buddhist Studies, Tring, 1996), p. 37.
- 3 Cousins, *ibid*, p. 37.
- 4 Eviatar Shulman, *Rethinking the Buddha: Early Buddhist Philosophy as Meditative Perception*, 2014, p. 109.
- 5 R. M. L. Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening: A Study of the Bodhi-Pakkhiya Dhamma*, Print on Demand edition (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2001), 197.
- 6 Gethin, *ibid*, p. 212.
- 7 Gethin, *ibid*, p. 23.
- 8 Pagel Ulrich, ‘The Role of Buddhist Meditative Practices on the Path of Awakening’, (SOAS, University of London, 2019), p. 3.
- 9 Shulman, *Rethinking the Buddha*, *ibid*, p. 108.
- 10 E Shulman, ‘Mindful Wisdom: The Sati-Patthana-Sutta on Mindfulness, Memory, and Liberation’, *History of Religions* 49, No. 4 (2010), pp. 395–96.
- 11 Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, p. 59.
- 12 Cousins, ‘The Origin of Insight Meditation’, *ibid*, p. 35.
- 13 Shulman, ‘Mindful Wisdom’, *ibid*, p. 403.
- 14 Rupert Gethin, ‘On Some Definitions of Mindfulness’, *Contemporary*

- Buddhism* 12, no. 1 (2011), p. 275.
- 15 Rupert Gethin, *ibid*, p. 266.
- 16 Bhikkhu Bodhi, 'What Does Mindfulness Really Mean? A Canonical Perspective', *Contemporary Buddhism* 12, No. 1 (2011), p. 21.
- 17 Analayo, *Satipatthāna: The Direct Path to Realization* (Cambridge: Windhorse Publications, 2014), p. 263.
- 18 Analayo, *ibid*, p. 263.
- 19 Rupert Gethin, *Sayings of the Buddha: A Selection of Suttas from the Pali Nikāyas* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 6.
- 20 Shulman, *Rethinking the Buddha*, *ibid*, p. 118.
- 21 Gethin, *Sayings of the Buddha* p. xxxvii.
- 22 Rupert Gethin, 'On Some Definitions of Mindfulness', *ibid*, p. 275.
- 23 Rupert Gethin, *Foundations of Buddhism*, 2014, p. 15.
- 24 Rupert Gethin, 'On Some Definitions of Mindfulness', *ibid*, p. 275.
- 25 Rupert Gethin, *ibid*, p. 275.
- 26 Analayo, *Satipatthāna*, *ibid*, p. 70.
- 27 Analayo, *Satipatthāna*, *ibid*, p. 77.
- 28 Shulman, *Rethinking the Buddha*, *ibid*, p. 116.
- 29 Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, *ibid*, p. 345.
- 30 Analayo, *Satipatthāna*, *ibid*, p. 272.
- 31 Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, *ibid*, p. 346.
- 32 Deleanu F, 'Agnostic Meditations on Buddhist Meditation', *Zygon Zygon* 45, no. 3 (2010), p. 611.
- 33 Dalai Lama, *Stages Of Meditation: Training the Mind for Wisdom* (London: Rider, 2003), p. 51.
- 34 Dalai Lama, *Stages Of Meditation: Training the Mind for Wisdom* (London: Rider, 2003), p. 57.
- 35 Cousins, 'The Origin of Insight Meditation', *ibid*, p. 54.
- 36 Shulman, *Rethinking the Buddha*, *ibid*, p. 191.
- 37 Shulman, *ibid*, p. 114.
- 38 Deleanu F, 'Agnostic Meditations on Buddhist Meditation', *ibid*, p. 617.
- 39 Deleanu F, *ibid*, p. 618.
- 40 Deleanu F, *ibid*, p. 618.
- 41 Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, *ibid*, p. 51.
- 42 Gethin, *Sayings of the Buddha* p. xlvi.
- 43 Shulman, *Rethinking the Buddha*, *ibid*, p. 188.
- 44 Deleanu F, 'Agnostic Meditations on Buddhist Meditation', 609.
- 45 Rupert Gethin, 'On Some Definitions of Mindfulness', 346.
- 46 Analayo, *Satipatthāna*, 273.
- 47 Shulman, *Rethinking the Buddha*, *ibid*, p. 192.
- 48 Shulman, *Rethinking the Buddha*, *ibid*, p. 268.
- 49 Ulrich, 'The Role of Buddhist Meditative Practices on the Path of

Awakening', *ibid*, p. 12.

50 Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, *ibid*, p. 344.

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12. Ulrich, Pagel. 'The Role of Buddhist Meditative Practices on the Path of Awakening', SOAS, University of London, 2019.