



Loving Kindness Meditation ***(mettā-bhāvanā)***

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Buddhist Philosophy: Portfolio Component 1

- Oral Presentation (15 minutes)
- Present a topic on a kind of meditation practice explaining its theory, principle, method, and effects.



Loving Kindness Meditation

- One of the Four Divine Abidings from the 40 Subjects of Meditation (*Visuddhimagga - The Path of Purification*)¹
- One of the Four Immeasurable Thoughts from the 38 Subjects of Meditation (*Vimuttimagga – The Path of Freedom*)²
- One of the Four Sublime States described by Ven. Nyanaponika (*The Four Sublime States*)³
- One of the Four Sublime Abidings described by Ven. Pa-Auk Sayadaw (*Knowing and Seeing*)⁴



Loving Kindness Meditation: References

- 1. Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga) (2011). Transl. Bhikkhu Nānamoli, 3rd Ed. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society
- 2. The Path of Freedom (Vimuttimagga) (1961). Trans. Rev. N. R. M. Ehara Soma Thera and Kheminda Thera. Ceylon: Dr. D . Roland D. Weerasuria.
- 3. Ven. Nyanponika Thera (1999). The Four Sublime States. Malaysia: Inward Path.
- 4. Ven. Pa-Auk Sayadaw.(2000) Knowing and Seeing, Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc



Four Divine Abidings

- Loving kindness (*metta*)
 - Compassion (*karuna*)
 - Gladness (Appreciative/Sympathetic Joy - *mudita*)
 - Equanimity (*upekkha*)
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The Noble Eightfold Path and The Threefold Training

MORALITY (Sila)	CONCENTRATION (Samadhi)	WISDOM (Prajna)
Right Speech	Right Effort	Right View/ Understanding
Right Action	Right Mindfulness	Right thought/intention
Right Livelihood	Right Concentration (Meditation)	



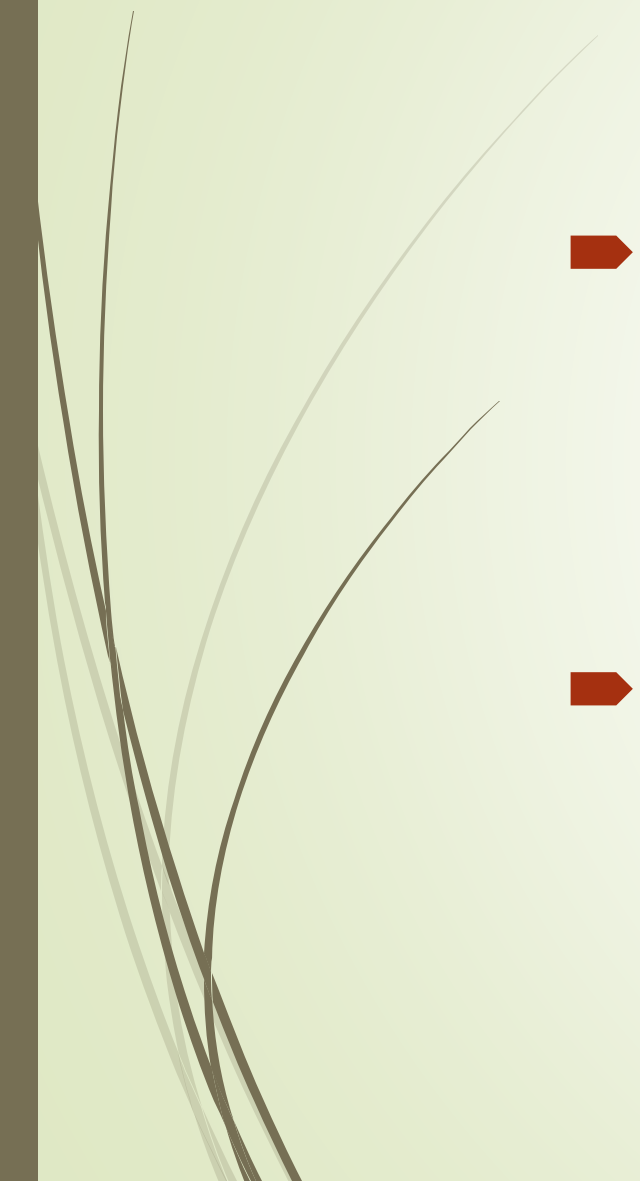
The Noble Eightfold Path (cont.)

- “...eight significant dimensions of one’s behaviour – mental, spoken and bodily – that are regarded as operating in dependence on one another and as defining a complete way (*marga/magga*) of living.”

➤ (Gethin, R.(1998). *The Foundations of Buddhism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press p.82.

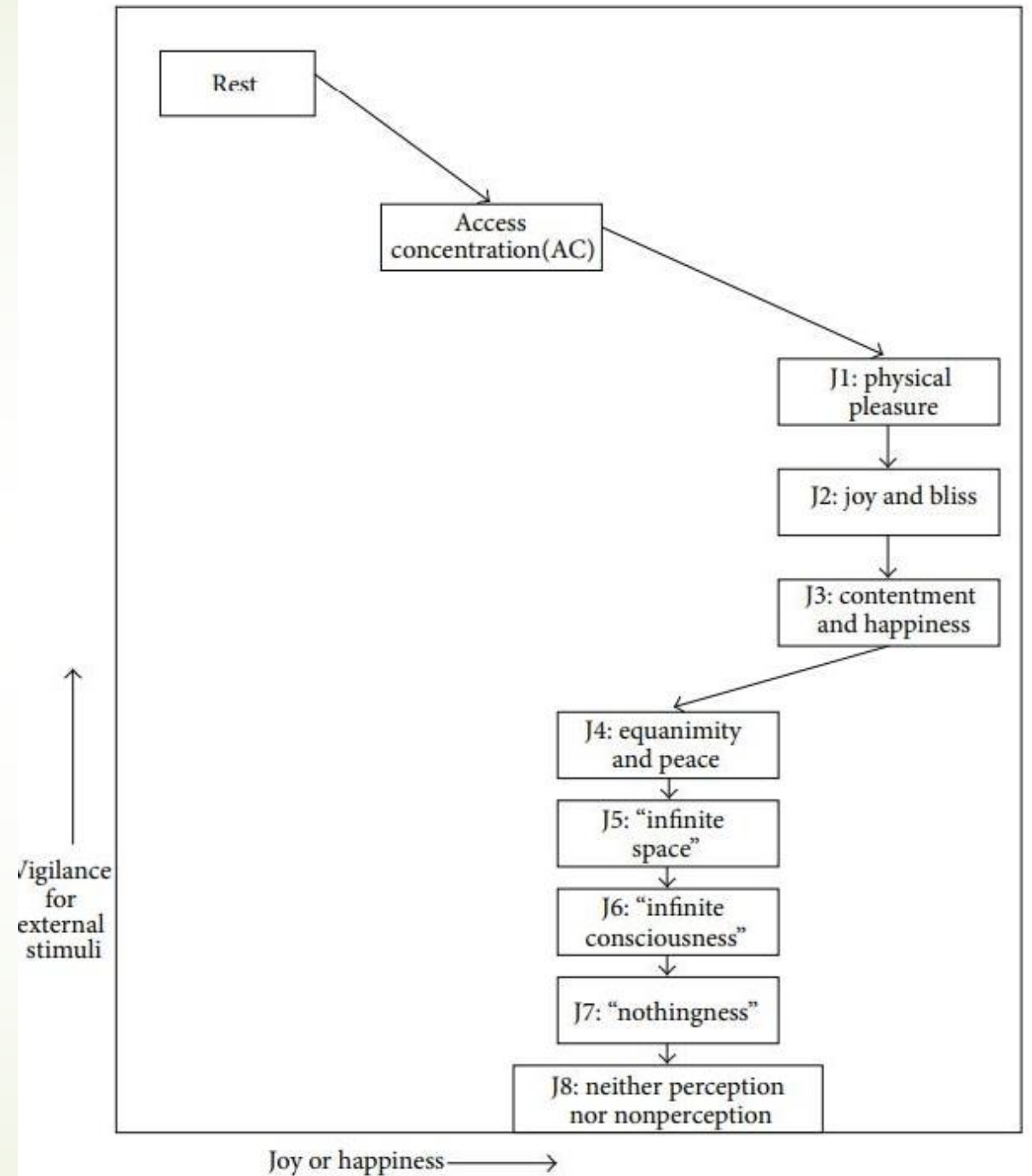


Two aspects of meditation

- Calm meditation (*samantha*) – cultivates calm, peace and tranquility; develops heart and mind leading to abandonment of attachment.
 - Insight meditation (*vipassana*)- develops wisdom leading to abandonment of spiritual ignorance.
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Levels of Meditation/ Concentration

- (i) Access concentration
- (ii) Absorption concentration
 - Jhanas 1-4 (material)
 - Jhanas 5-8 (immaterial)
- Jhana (*Pali*): to think or meditate



The Five Hindrances



Sensual Desire



Ill Will



Sloth-and-Torpor



Restlessness-and-Remorse



Doubt

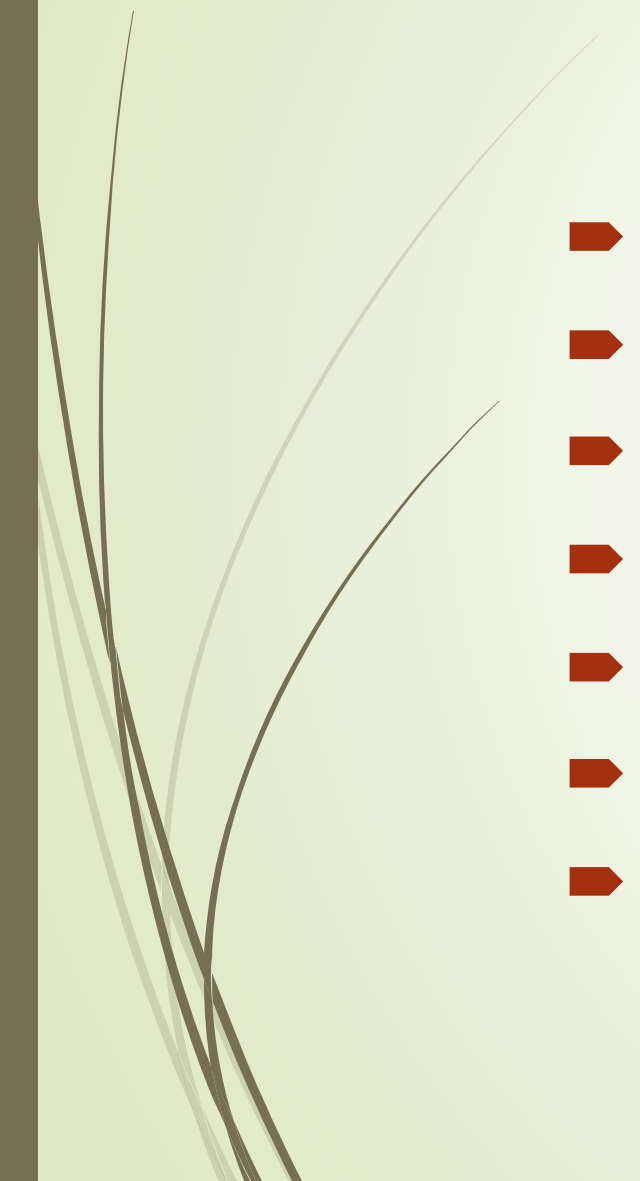
Jhana Factors and Five Hindrances

■ 2nd Jhana, ■ 3rd Jhana, ■ 4th Jhana

Jhana Factor	Description	Hindrance overcome
Initial/Applied thought	Bringing the mind	Sloth and torpor
Sustained thought	Keeping the mind	Doubt
Rapture/Joy	Finding/having interest	Aversion/Ill-will
Happiness	Being happy and content	Restlessness
One-pointedness	Unifying	Sensual desire



Six types of temperament

- greedy temperament
 - **hating temperament**
 - deluded temperament
 - faithful temperament
 - intelligent temperament
 - speculative temperament
 - (combinations)
- 



Loving Kindness Meditation: who benefits?

- Anyone/everyone?!!
- “a counteractive to ill-will.”¹
- “The four divine abidings and four colour kasinās are eight suitable for one of hating temperament.”²

- 1. Harvey, P. (2013) *An Introduction to Buddhism* 2nd Ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, p.327
- 2. Path of Purification (*Visuddhimagga*) p.109

Loving Kindness Meditation – Why?

- Cultivates calmness and patience
- Avoids bad *karma*
- “Friends, when a man hates, he is a prey to hate and his mind is obsessed by hate, he kills living things,”
- “the purpose of secluding the mind from hate seen as a danger and introducing it to patience known as an advantage.”
 - *Visuddhimagga* p.291





Loving Kindness Meditation-how?

- Quieten the mind/access concentration
- Chose the object of meditation ('Who?')
- At first avoid:
 - an antipathetic person
 - a dearly loved friend
 - a neutral person
 - a hostile person
 - a person of the opposite sex
 - a dead person (never)



Me first?

- Start with oneself as the object
- Make oneself the example
- Fosters the desire for other beings' welfare
- Will not reach absorption but 'gets things going' (access concentration)
- Conflict with texts/teaching?

Me First

➤ I visited all quarters with my mind
Nor found I any dearer than myself;
Self is likewise to every other dear;
Who loves himself will never harm another.

➤ S I 75; Ud

➤ *Visuddhimagga IX; 10 (p.293)*



Who next? Order of persons

- One who inspires respect e.g. a teacher
- A dearly loved person/friend
- A neutral person
- A hostile person



Loving Kindness thoughts/intentions

Extend loving kindness to each person thus:

- May this person be free from danger
- May this person be free from mental pain
- May this person be free from physical pain
- May this person be well and happy¹

➤ 1.Ven. Pa-Auk Sayadaw.(2000) *Knowing and Seeing*, Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc.



Directing the Thoughts/Intentions

- Apply the four thoughts/intentions to each person (several repetitions)
- Take each to the 3rd jhana
- Find 10 persons in each category and repeat
- Practice until there is no distinction between the four categories
- “Breaking down the barriers”¹

➤ 1. Ven. Pa-Auk Sayadaw.(2000) *Knowing and Seeing*, Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc. p.82



“Breaking down the barriers”

- Four categories remain:
 - Yourself
 - People you like
 - People you are indifferent to
 - People you hate
- Continue until loving-kindness “becomes balanced and without distinction or boundary.”¹
 - 1.Ven. Pa-Auk Sayadaw.(2000) Knowing and Seeing, Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc. p.81.



Extending the Practice (1)

➤ Five unspecified categories:

- All beings
- All breathing things
- All creatures
- All people
- All individuals

➤ Seven specified categories:

- All women
- All men
- All enlightened beings
- All unenlightened beings
- All devas
- All human beings
- All beings in the lower realms



Extending the Practice (2)

➤ Ten directional categories:

- To the East
- To the West
- To the North
- To the South
- To the South-East
- To the North-West
- To the North-East
- To the South-West
- Below
- Above

Extending the Practice (3)

- Apply the 4 intentions to each of the 5 unspecified and 7 specified categories = $(4 \times 5) + (4 \times 7) = \mathbf{48 \text{ ways}}$
- Gradually extend the area of consideration for each category to include the whole universe
- Continue each expanded category until reaching the 3rd jhana
- Apply the 10 directional categories to these 48 categories = $(10 \times 48) = \mathbf{480 \text{ ways}}$
- In total, $(\mathbf{48} + \mathbf{480}) = \mathbf{528 \text{ ways}}$ to extend Loving Kindness!!



Simples??

(Not a desired effect of Loving Kindness meditation!)



Why Loving Kindness Meditation?

The Benefits

- Sleep in comfort
- Wake in comfort
- Dream no evil dreams
- Dear to human beings
- Dear to non-human beings
- Guarded by devas
- Unaffected by fire, poisons and weapons
- Improved concentration
- Brighter complexion
- Die unconfused
- Reborn in Brahma World



‘Secular’ Meditation Benefits

- Health advantages of meditation - being less stressed, improved memory and concentration, enhanced willpower, better sleep, less pain, lower blood pressure, less anxiety and depression, more compassion.
 - MBSR – Mindfulness Based Stress Relief programs - for chronic pain and chronic mental health problems
 - Part of an increasingly holistic approach to Western medicine.
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