

Dhamma Talk on Sampajanna

The subject of today's Dhamma Talk is Kayanupassana (Sampajanna part). We shall try to explain contemplation on physical phenomenon with full awareness or clear comprehension through personal experiences.

The main feature of Satipatthana is Sati (mindfulness). But there are four divisions and four characteristics and dispelling method is four kinds.

The four divisions of mindfulness are:-

- (1) *Kayanupassana* (Contemplation of the physical body)
- (2) *Vedanupassana* (Contemplation of the feelings)
- (3) *Cittanupassana* (Contemplation of the mind)
- (4) *Dhammanupassana* (Contemplation of the mind objects)

or in other words,

- (1) Mindful noting of physical phenomenon is *Kayanupassana satipatthana*.
- (2) Mindful noting of feeling is *Vedanupassana satipatthana*.
- (3) Mindful noting of wandering and thinking minds is *Cittanupassana satipatthana*.
- (4) Mindful noting of mind objects like seeing, hearing, palpitation, pulsation, etc. is *Dhammanupassana satipatthana*.

To contemplate of four characteristics is –

- (1) *Anicca* or impermanent character
- (2) *Dukkha* or suffering character
- (3) *Anatta* or (non-self) uncontrollable character
- (4) *Asubha* or loathsomeness character

To dispel by four methods is: -

- (1) To dispel *nicca* by *anicca* character
- (2) To dispel *sukha* by *dukkha* character
- (3) To dispel *atta* by *anatta* character

(4) To dispel *subha* by *asubha* character

In *Kāyāmpassanā* Buddha divides into fourteen kinds: 1) *Ānāpāna pabba* 2) *Iriyā-patha pabba* 3) *Sampajañña pabba* 4) *Patikūla manasikāra pabba* 5) *Dhātu manasikāra pabba* 6) *Navasivathika pabba*, which has nine parts, so altogether the total is fourteen.

- (1) *Ānāpāna pabba* is contemplation of breathe-in, breathe-out
- (2) *Iriyapatha pabba* is four positions of the body-standing, waling, sitting and lying.
- (3) *Sampajañña pabba* is noting of-all physical phenomena with clarity of consciousness. [NOTE: Mahāsī meditation method is based on 2) & 3)]
- (4) *Patikula manasikāra pabba* is contemplating on the 32 parts of the body. They are (hair of head, hair of body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidney, heart, liver, membranes, spleen, lungs, intestines, mesentery, gorge, faeces, brain, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, solid fat, tears, liquid fat, saliva, mucus, synovial fluid, urine)
- (5) *Dhātu manasikāra pabba* is contemplation on the four physical elements (mahābhūta) popularly called earth, water, fire and wind.
- (6) *Navasivathika pabba* is the dead body contemplation that are called meditation subjects of impurity (loathsomeness, foulness). This category consists of nine kinds of *Asubha Kammatṭhāna* (nine kinds of loathsomeness of the dead body).

So *Kāyāmpassanā Satipaṭṭhāna* alone has fourteen chapters. Today's Dhamma talk will be on the third chapter called *Sampajañña pabba* (Clarity consciousness, clear comprehension). It is not only contemplation of four positions of the body (standing, walking, sitting and lying) but clearly conscious is he in going and coming and clearly conscious in looking forward and backward, clearly conscious in bending and stretching his body, clearly conscious in eating, drinking, chewing and tasting, clearly conscious in discharging excrement and urine, clearly conscious in walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep and awakening, clearly conscious in speaking and keeping silent. Buddha had expounded in detail how to note the movements of the body.

When moving forward or backward, a meditator has to do with clear consciousness (mindfulness). A meditator should not do forward or backward movements without knowledge (consciousness). A meditator has to note that movement he made with clear consciousness whether it is forward or backward. Normally meditators note forward movements alone, ignoring the backward movement. So note the movements as “moving forward, moving forward” and also “moving backward, moving backward”.

When looking straight ahead or sideways, please note “looking straight, looking straight”, and when looking sideways “looking sideways, looking sideways”.

When bending and stretching the body, please note “stretching, bending”. In the course of daily routine movements of drinking, eating, there will be movements of bending, stretching of hand or body and so forth. All these movements are to be noted in detail.

When monks are putting on robes, it should be done with clear consciousness. For lay persons also when engaged in wearing clothes, it should be done with clear consciousness. Meditators should not do wearing clothes while walking because two things cannot be done with clear consciousness at the same time. While doing walking meditation, if there is occasion to re-do the robes or make changes to the clothing, please stop walking and do your changes with step by step, noting each step. For monks, taking additional double robe or taking or changing position of alms-bowl, etc. should only be done after stopping the walking movement. For lay person, changes or remaking of clothing, etc. or even combing of the hair, etc. has to be done with awareness (noting) after he had stopped the walking.

When drinking, eating, chewing, tasting it should be done only with clear comprehension. At the time of eating, all the actions starting from sitting at the table, looking at the dishes, taking of the spoon, collecting of the dishes, bringing the morsel of food to the mouth, opening of the mouth, putting the food into mouth, chewing and so forth should all be noted. At the time of eating, the meditator should eat with down-cast eyes keeping steady hand and note “chewing chewing” “swallowing swallowing”.

Even in discharging excrement and urine, it should be done with clear conscious noting so that nothing should be done unnoted. At the time of bathing, it should be done with clear conscious noting of all the steps

leading to the bath, brushing of the teeth, applying of the soap to the body, splashing of water and so forth should all be noted in detail.

At the time of morning wash, all the detail steps leading to the washing and the drying of the face by towels and so forth should also be noted. Awakening, sitting, standing, walking, stopping and so forth should also be noted in detail. At the time of sleeping just do not get into the bed and sleep as a routine. Coming back to the room, opening of the lock, opening of the door, switching of the light, putting down the mosquito netting, taking out slippers, getting into bed, lying down, closing of eyes, and then rising, falling of abdomen and so forth should be noted in clear comprehension.

By noting thus if the noting is sharp, the meditator may not fall asleep but can meditate for a long time. If the noting is not sharp, the meditator may fall asleep. If the meditator awakes in the middle of the night, please note rising, falling of abdomen, or touching, lying of the body. If the mindfulness is sharp, meditator may not fall asleep but do not worry and carry on the noting. The meditator may feel fresh in the morning as if he had a sound sleep. If the meditator falls asleep then he needs not have to note, because the sleeping person has no functional consciousness.

At the time of awakening the process of noting every physical and mental phenomena is essential again. Start with the opening of the eyes, then wanting to get up and getting up, going down from the bedstead lifting the mosquito net, folding of the blankets and tidying the bed and so forth should be noted step by step.

When going to the washing room, start with the taking of towels, tooth-brush and soap and then opening of the door, walking to the toilet room, etc. should all be noted step by step. By this way, a meditator will not miss anything from the time of awakening until the time of sleeping. The meditator will become a model meditator with very sharp mindfulness. Even if meditator has to talk, do not talk absentmindedly. Try and talk with a clear comprehension and stop as soon as the required communication has been made. By these ways of mindful noting, Sampajañña is well observed.

There are four kinds of sampajañña:-

- (1) Clarity of consciousness regarding assessing the purpose is Sattaka Sampajañña. When talking or engaging in some purpose whether it is beneficial or disastrous is to be considered. If there is personal

benefit, it is acceptable. There is no personal benefit but if it is beneficial to other people such kind of task is also acceptable.

The other criteria is if it is beneficial for the present, it should be acceptable or no benefits for the present but it can be beneficial in the future then such kind of a purpose or task is acceptable and should be done. But if the task is not beneficial, neither for the present nor for the future, or if the task has no personal benefit nor beneficial to others such kind of task should be discarded.

For beginner meditator with the progress of the practice, saddhā (faith) develops and meditator desires to give dāna, to give services to the cause of religion, etc. are not beneficial for his present practice, so such thoughts should be kept in abeyance.

- (2) The second criteria is — Even if a task is right or beneficial the suitability of the task is to be considered. Some people think that if a task is right and beneficial they do not want to wait for the suitability of purpose or time. Such kind of haste is not advisable.

Even the right speech cannot be advantageous if spoken at the wrong time or to the wrong audience.

Buddha had laid down the criteria for making speech. They are six in number.

- (i) Right, beneficial and pleasing (to the audience)
- (ii) Right, beneficial but not pleasing
- (iii) Right, not beneficial but pleasing
- (iv) Right, not beneficial and not pleasing
- (v) Wrong, not beneficial but pleasing
- (vi) Wrong, not beneficial and not pleasing

Out of the six only (i) and (ii) are to be spoken. Even the second speech which is right, beneficial but not pleasing is to be spoken only at the appropriate time. Words to be used are also important. Some words which are civil in one locality can be rude in another locality. Some customs which are quite common to one nationality can be an insult to another nationality. So it is important to choose the right place, the right time and the right moment. Such kind of consideration is called *Sappāya Sampajañña*.

- (3) The third one is *Gocara Sampajañña*. It can be translated as domain. If it is one's own domain one can fight back the enemy with energy. Therefore meditators should stay in their own domain. The meditator's domain is satipaṭṭhāna field. Practising Satipaṭṭhāna all the time is living in one's own domain. If meditators go out of their domain (i.e) living without Satipaṭṭhāna mindfulness they are liable to be attacked by lobha, dosa, and moha (greed, anger and delusion).
- (4) The fourth is *Asammoha Sampajañña*. The meaning of *asammoha* is knowing the truth without wavering or (the undeluded conception of the activity concerned). Before practising *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation, persons know with delusion as I walk, I take step, I sleep, I see and so forth. When the meditator practises satipaṭṭhāna meditation by mindful noting of mental and physical phenomena, meditator comes to know. *Nāma* and *Rūpa*. Walking is *rūpa* and knowing is *nāma*. Then before walking, intention to walk is the cause and walking is the effect. The meditator comes to know cause and effect.

After that meditator discovers the dissolving and disappearing phenomena. And then meditators come to know the impermanence of all mental and physical phenomena. With the progress of the practice, meditators come to know Anicca, Dukkha, Anatta, dhammas. These practical insight knowledge is gained through Satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā meditation only and is called Asammoha Sampajañña. When meditators practise and observe the four Sampajaññas (Sathaka Sampajañña, Sappāya Sampajañña, Gocara Sampajañña, Asammoha Sampajañña) with diligent mindful practice meditators will at a reasonable time achieve magga-ñāṇa and phala-ñāṇa (knowledge of the path and knowledge of the fruition of the Path).

Therefore our meditators should try to embrace the teachings of Buddha and practise accordingly to achieve the four Sampajaññas and in due course experience the peaceful and blissful Nibbāna, the cessation of all suffering in the easiest way.

Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!