

Meditation Handbook

Tusita Hermitage



著：圓老
圖：善法行

Dhammapada Verse 110

Living a day with virtue and meditation is more worthwhile than living a hundred years without virtue and without control over one's own sense doors.*

Therefore, when we abide by the Buddha's teachings on meditation, we are fortunate and blessed. It is the start of a wholesome day, wholesome time and wholesome moment.

May we all cherish every moment of our lives, and live a more fulfilling, joyful and meaningful life through our practice of meditation.

Come! Join us in learning meditation!

* Constantly safeguard the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind so that greed, hatred and ignorance do not arise.

Namo Tassa Bhagavato
Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa

*Pay homage to the Blessed One, the
Worthy One, and the Perfectly Self-
Awakened One.*



What is cultivation?

Cultivation is also known as meditation. In Pali, it is *bhāvanā*. What is the meaning of *bhāvanā*?

It means to cultivate!

What is to be cultivated?

Virtue, concentration and wisdom!

Virtue, concentration and wisdom are also known as the Three Studies, or three types of training.

The Buddha taught us to cultivate these Three Studies:

1. Practice of **virtue** – to perfect our morality, character and conduct.
2. Practice of **concentration** – to commit to developing tranquility of the mind.
3. Practice of **wisdom** – to develop wisdom.

Benefits of meditation

Practitioners committed to meditation may achieve the perpetual bliss of Nibbana in this lifetime.

They may completely eliminate all afflictions and never again fall into the *four evil destinies in future lives.

Furthermore, through meditation, one may gain various physical and mental benefits:

- Regulates blood pressure
- Mitigates the process of aging
- Substantially mitigates asthma
- Balances the endocrine system
- Relaxes the nervous system

* Destinies of animals, hungry ghosts, hells and asuras.

- Produces long-term beneficial changes to brainwaves
- Helps with quitting smoking and drinking
- Helps with sleep, beneficial in treating insomnia
- Heightens reflex and allows one to more efficiently handle stressful matters
- Helps control one's thoughts
- Helps concentrate the mind
- Heightens creativity
- Enhances learning ability and memory
- Enhances emotional stability
- Allows one to more easily eliminate negative habits
- Heightens one's ability to resolve complex problems

- Purifies one's characters
- Develops willpower
- Allows one to deeply understand oneself and others
- Changes one's attitude toward life
- Develops one's intuition
- Through deep levels of physical relaxation, one can enhance endurance
- Increases one's capacity to accommodate others
- Allows one to live in the present and reduce afflictions

Meditation does not require any special equipment or complicated methods. It can be practiced anywhere, at anytime.

Moreover, it does not cause any negative effects.

Proper sitting postures.



Half lotus



Keep the body upright, relax the muscle in the entire body.

Full lotus

One can also adapt different sitting postures to allow all muscles to relax.



Sitting without crossing legs



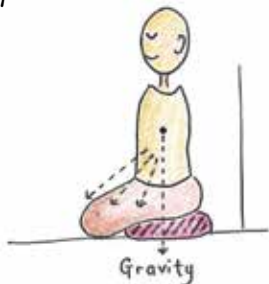
Sitting with knees bent forward



Proper cushions



The cushion should support the body in forming a triangular position with the legs and spine.



As much as possible, evenly distribute the weight of the body toward the legs as leg muscles are stronger and thicker.

X



Too high

X



Too hard

X



Too Soft



If one's legs are injured or if one suffers from illness or pain, a chair can be used. However, try to refrain from leaning against the backrest.

In between sittings, one can do standing or walking meditation.

Arms slightly open

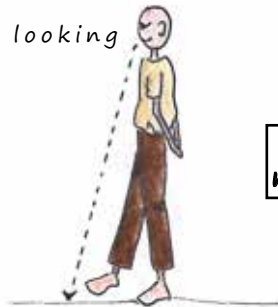
Knees slightly bent

Feet apart in shoulder-length distance



**Standing
meditation**

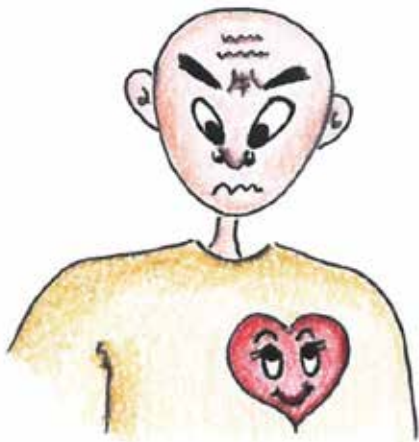
Eyes looking down



**Walking
meditation**

Be mindful of your breath.

The breath is invisible to the naked eye!



Don't be in a hurry to observe the breath immediately....



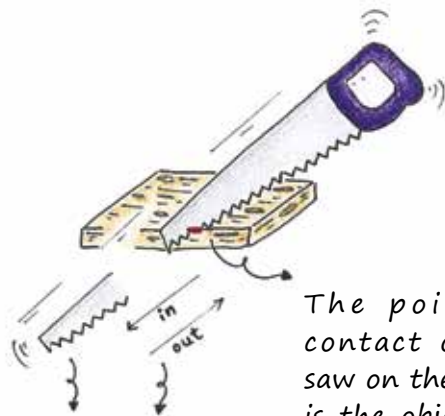
Let your mind be in a comfortable state,
as if sitting on top of a hill, seeing the
vast, boundless sky. Feel the breeze brush
against your cheeks.

The proximate cause of
concentration is joy.

When your body and mind are at ease,
peace arises. When peace arises, joy will
arise. When joy arises, happiness will
arise. When there is happiness, there is
concentration.

It is very simple!

The analogy of a saw



Air and breathing
are only our tools.

The point of
contact of the
saw on the wood
is the object [of
our meditation].

Gently place the mind at
nostril and continuously
observe the subtle
breath.



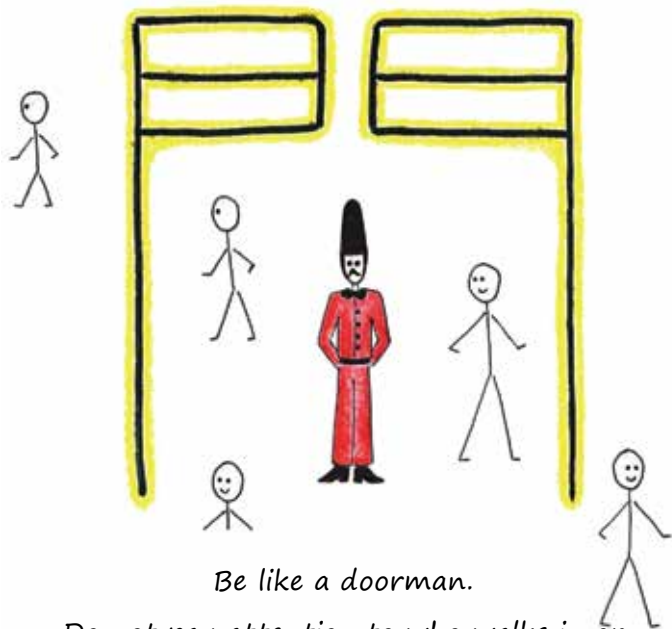
The mind should very gently and comfortably abide in the place where the breath starts.

DON 'T

- Do not follow the “in and out” of the breath.
- Do not try to analyze the breath.
- Do not try to control breathing by exerting long, short, heavy or subtle breaths.

Just be aware that you are breathing naturally.





Be like a doorman.

*Do not pay attention to who walks in or
out of the door.*

*Just be the person who stands at one's
post, watching the door.*

Let the breath come to you, do not seek it.

Live in the present moment

Do not mind if the last sitting did not go well; just pay attention to practicing correctly at this very moment.

Neither anticipate the future, nor lose faith in attaining a distant goal.

Just mindfully attend to your action at this very moment. Then you will accumulate abundant merits and virtues little by little.

A thousand-mile journey begins with the first step. By taking this first step and continuing forward, you will eventually reach your goal



Moon casts its light onto river



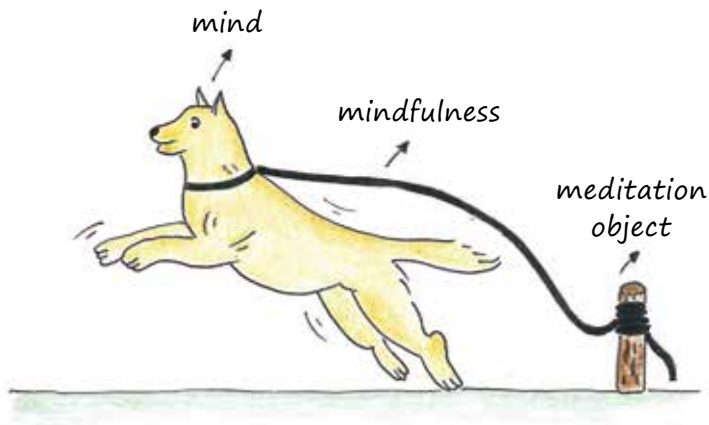
Whether the water is rapid or slow, clear or murky, or the wind is strong or slight, the moon is always unwaveringly casting its light onto the river.

This is the mindset that meditators should possess: one that is tranquil and gentle.

Let your mind become still.

Do not keep checking what the mind is doing. Furthermore, do not continuously give instructions to the mind.

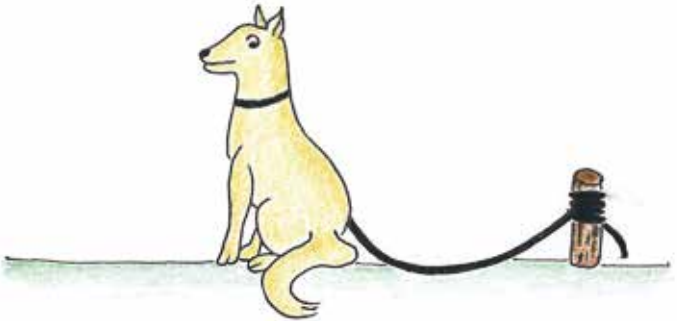
Right Mindfulness



An untamed mind is like a wild dog that is constantly running rampant outside.

However, once it is on the leash of right mindfulness, it cannot run rampant.

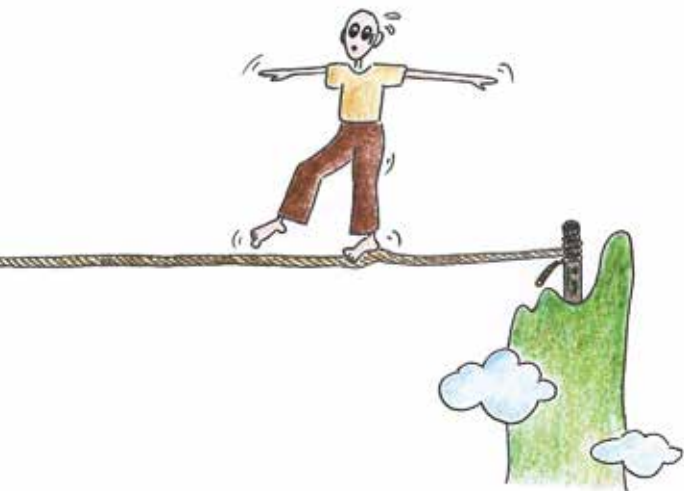
When the dog becomes weary and frustrated, it will obediently stay put.



This is how the mind works.

Achieving balance is to mindfully experience. Even at a very stable state, you must not lose right mindfulness.

Right mindfulness needs to be maintained constantly with effort.



There is no moment of completion in meditation, only constant progress.



*Right effort is putting in appropriate
strive, not forceful exertion.*

*Appropriate strive will not create
physical and mental discomfort.*

Obstacles of Concentration – the Five Hindrances

1. Safeguard your sense doors



Countermeasures:

- Have less desires and be content. Live simply and frugally.
- Safeguard your sense doors. Avoid giving rise to greed, hatred and ignorance through eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind doors.
- Contemplate the body as impure.

2. Hatred



Countermeasures:

- Contemplate on the faults of hatred
- Often send thoughts of loving kindness: may all living beings be happy and harmonious.
- Maintain a gentle mindset.

3. Sloth and torpor



Countermeasures:

- Eat and drink in moderation.
- Practice suitable aerobic exercises on a daily basis.
- Maintain a joyful mindset.

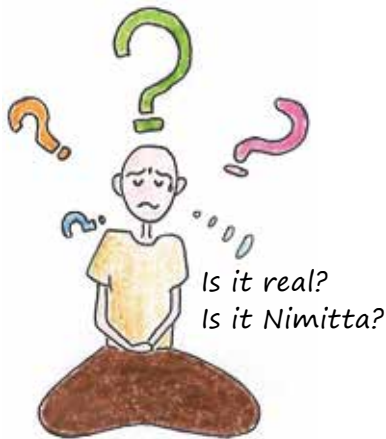
4. Restlessness and remorse



Countermeasures:

- Understand precepts.
- Study the Buddha's teachings profoundly.
- Let go and be at ease.

5. Doubt



Countermeasures:

- Draw close to virtuous friends.
- Strengthen right views.
- Reinforce faith.

A great method made simple

*During meditation, do not be attached
to any appearances or sounds*

*Let them go and focus on the object of
your meditation.*

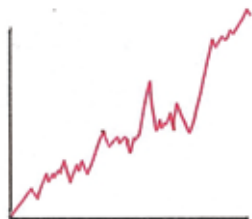


*With steadfastness, put effort in creating
the cause. Do not be attached to the
outcome, as it will manifest in time.*

Progress in meditation

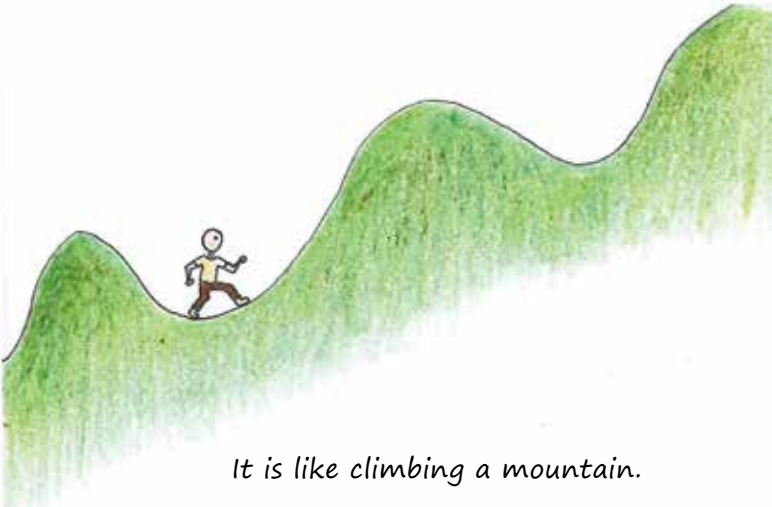


Very rare



Normal

Do not be discouraged if your sitting does not go well from time to time.



It is like climbing a mountain.

At times, there is a down slope, which will prepare you in advancing toward a higher summit.

Do not measure the state of your meditation based on one or two sittings.

Other aspects that directly affects one's achievement of Concentration

The body

- Do more exercises like Chi-gong and yoga
- Eat light and mild foods
- Live a regulated schedule
- Sleep and rise early



The mind

- *Curb desires and be content*
- *Be grateful*
- *Be kind*
- *Be generous and lenient*
- *Be happy*





Each day we should water, fertilize and maintain our causes; then it will eventually sprout and develop.



If you have generated interest in meditation, please explore it further at the Tusita Hermitage

We invite you to experience for yourself!



Please visit our website at:

<http://tusitainternational.net>

Blessing

*May sentient beings be liberated from
enmity and hatred.*

*May they be liberated from mental
afflictions and physical sufferings.*

May they happily take care of themselves.



Dedication

May the merits of this giving of Dhamma
be dedicated toward eliminating all
afflictions.

May these merits be shared with all
sentient beings.

May all beings receive these merits
equally.

Sādhu ! Sādhu ! Sādhu !

Dhammapada Verse 282

Meditation can truly lead to the rise of wisdom. Not engaging in meditation will lead to degeneration of wisdom. Knowing these concepts, one should practice enhancing one's wisdom.

Dhammapada Verse 25

Through diligence, non-indolence, upholding precepts and self-discipline, the wise becomes an island that cannot be submerged by the flood

Dhammapada Verse 181

A sage is keen in meditation, joyful in the stillness and tranquility of solitude. The one with self-awareness is loved even by all deities.

Dhammapada Verse 276

You must put in your own effort, all
Tathagatas are only the speakers.
Meditators who have entered this path
can become liberated from the bonds of
Mara.

■ *Free for distribution* ■

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