

Curriculum and Standard Program for the Educational Course on the

DEVELOPMENT OF MINDFULNESS

Course reference: SIB-008
Course title: Development of Mindfulness
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OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

Provide an opportunity for participants to practise meditation
Present a scheme to learn various aspects of meditation
Provide an understanding of the discourse on 'Establishment of Mindfulness'
Enable good health, success and happiness in day to day living
Set out a pathway to enlightenment

OUTCOMES EXPECTED (ASSESSED BY SELF)

A reduction in desires, hatred and ignorance
An enhancement of the four sublime states of mind
An enhancement in peace of mind

Marked improvement in the ability to relate to others
Marked improvement in the ability to solve day to day problems
Shortened recovery period after a disturbing episode
Improved ability to let go of poor experiences

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

Occasional guidance from recognised teachers
Regular exchange of ideas among participants
Reading

GENERAL REWARDS OF PRATISING MEDITATION

The rewards vary with the type of meditation. As an example, in respect of walking meditation the following can be mentioned:

Ability to walk distances
High energy level
Reduction in illnesses
Effective digestion of food

Attaining concentration quickly

Success in management, research, science and technology, medicine can in large part be attributed to mindfulness

The alleviation and partial cure of some illnesses is also promoted by mindfulness (for example Parkinson's disease), supported by Buddha Dhamma. There is scientific support for this.

Success and happiness at work and in relationships, can be attributed to developed mindfulness supported by Buddha Dhamma. This is an empirical observation.

GENERAL PITFALLS IN THE PRACTICE OF MEDITATION

Assuming that meditation is the only type of Buddhist practice

Expectations set too high

Misinterpretation of attainments

PART (1) SUROUNDING INFORMATION

- 1 Suitability of the meditation environment
- 2 Distinctive features of the environment
- 3 Choice of postures
- 4 Importance of stability of the body posture
- 5 General aim of mindfulness
- 6 Usefulness of mindfulness
- 7 The relevance of a focus and the choice of a focus
- 8 Connections among the types of meditation

PART (2) TYPES OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION

- 1 Contemplation meditation
- 2 Concentration meditation

- 3 Insight meditation
- 4 Protective meditation

[Parts 3 to 7 are based on the Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness-Satipatthana Sutta in Theravada Buddhism][Majjhima Nikaya 10]

PART (3) CONTEMPLATION MEDITATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINDFULNESS

- 1 Contemplation of the body
- 2 Contemplation of feeling
- 3 Contemplation of Citta (consciousness)
- 4 Contemplation of Mental States

PART (4) CONTEMPLATION OF THE BODY

1 SUMMARY OF CONTEMPLATION OF THE BODY (Kayanupassana)

This is focussing attention on Organs, Constituents, Productions and Functions of the body. There are six groups covering 14 topics.

- 1 Breathing (Anapana Sati)
- 2 Postures (Iriyapatha)
- 3 Four kinds of clear comprehension (Catu Sampajanna)
- 4 Repulsiveness of the body (Patikkula Manasikara)
- 5 Material elements (Dhatu Manasikara)
- 6 to 14 Nine cemetery contemplations (Nava Sivatika)

1.1 Mindfulness of Breathing (Anapana Sati)

Suggested environmental factors are serene environment, like a forest, foot of a tree, or suitable empty place. Apt body posture such as cross-legged erect sitting is recommended.

Breathing is not forced. It is natural. It is not a breathing exercise as in Yoga. The nature of the breath is observed without interference; long/short, inward/outward, and effect on the body calmness, tranquillity and deepening of the breath.

1.2 Mindfulness of Bodily posture (Iriyapatha)

It enables awareness of body behaviour, and its impersonal nature. One contemplates on standing, sitting, walking or reclining, as the case may be, at a given time.

1.3 Four kinds of clear comprehension (Catu Sampajanna)

Every physical activity such as walking bending etc, dressing, toilet etc must be known clearly and intensively in every way. The four types are:

Sathaka	Sampajanna	Investigation of activity
Sappaya	Sampajanna	Investigation of suitability of objects
Gocara	Sampajanna	Vigilance as to possible disturbance
Asammoha	Sampajanna	Undeluded attention
(non-delusion)		

This contemplation is not mere attention but has a directing influence on activities.

1.4 Repulsiveness of the Body (Patikkula Manasikara)

The body is seen as a collection of 32 parts such as hair, nails etc. This way we reduce our idea of one-ness of the self. It is a fabrication of parts. There is little that is nice to see and deserving of attachment. It shows decay and impermanence.

1.5 Contemplation of the material elements(Dhatu Manasikara)

Looking at the ultimate components of the body such as earth, water fire and air helps in clearing the view that the body is one; it is a conglomeration of parts also common to inanimate objects such as trees. In this view, there is no place for an ego or a soul.

1.6-14 Nine cemetery contemplations(Nava Sivatika)

Here the object of meditation is the gradually decomposing carcass from the third day after death onwards until it joins the earth as a powder. It can be done in a cemetery or by visualization.

It helps to understand decay and impermanence, and, the disgusting nature of the body.

PART (5) CONTEMPLATION OF FEELING (Vedananupassana)

Here one contemplates one's current feeling and its nature. It can belong to one of nine types:

- | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|---------------------|---|-----------------|
| 1 | Pleasant, | 2 | Painful, | 3 | Neutral |
| 4 | Worldly pleasant, | 5 | Worldly painful | 6 | Worldly neutral |
| 7 | Spiritually pleasant | 8 | Spiritually painful | | |
| 9 | Spiritually neutral | | | | |

The chain of dependent origination, contact leads to feeling, feeling leads to craving, craving leads to clinging and so on can be contemplated. Contemplation of feeling can lead to softening the chain and breaking it.

PART (6) CONTEMPLATION OF CITTA (CONSCIOUSNESS) (Cittanupassana)

Here one contemplates the current state of mind. Clear comprehension is applied. Sixteen such states of the mind (there is something or there is not) are mentioned in the discourse:

- | | | |
|---|-------------|------------------|
| 1 | With Lust | Free from lust |
| 2 | With Hatred | Free from hatred |

3	With Ignorance	Free from ignorance
4	With Torpor	With Distraction
5	Developed Citta with Jhana	Citta Without a Jhana
6	Sensuous level	Above the sensuous level
7	Concentrated	Not concentrated
8	Released	Not released

Number 4 is not a pair and all others are pairs. The meditation (Bhavana) is **bare attention** and is not an activity in that sense. It is more effective than a review.

PART (7) CONTEMPLATION OF MENTAL OBJECTS (Dhammanupassana)

This contemplation is about all things one has in the mind. There are five doctrines from the Dhamma that are recommended in the discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness for contemplation.

1 Five Hindrances

Desire for sense pleasure

Hatred towards objects that are unpleasant or disagreeable

Sloth and torpor

Worry and restlessness

Doubt about the Triple Gem

The meditator reflects on whether any hindrance is present or not present in the mind, how these arose, how they vanish and how to avoid future arising.

2 Five aggregates of clinging

These are the five aggregates of clinging to Matter, Feelings, Perceptions, Mental Formations and Consciousness (citta). The meditator attempts to see their appearance and disappearance avoiding clinging to any of these.

3 Seven Factors of Awakening (or Enlightenment)

Mindfulness

Investigating the laws of Dhamma

Effort or energy

Rapture or joy

Tranquillity

Concentration

Equanimity

The meditator contemplates with clear comprehension whether any factor is present or absent, how the arisen factors came to be existing.

4 Four Noble Truths

The meditator contemplates the true nature of the Truth of suffering, the cause of suffering, the end of suffering and the Path to the end of suffering.

PART (8) OBJECTS OF MEDITATION

Forty (40) objects of meditation are suggested in the Visuddhi Magga (path of purification). Some of these may lead to absorptions (Jhana). The calmness and concentrative power may indirectly help in developing mindfulness and insight. The forty objects are:

Devices (Kasina)	10
Foulness (Asubha)	10
Recollections	10
Sublime States of mind	04
Immaterial States of mind	04
Repulsiveness of Nutriment	01
Analysis of four Elements	01

The ten devices are:

Earth Kasina

Water kasina

Fire kasina

Air kasina
Blue kasina
Yellow kasina
Red kasina
White kasina
Space (Akasa) kasina
Light kasina

The ten foulness objects are these stages of the dead body:

Bloated
Livid, patchy and discoloured
Festering
Opened up in the middle
Partly disfigured by animals
Parts scattered
Hacked
Bleeding
Infested with worms
Remaining skeleton

The ten recollections are in set (2) under Recollections.

The four sublime states are:

Metta (loving kindness)
Karuna (compassion)
Mudita (appreciative joy)
Upekkha (equanimity)

The four immaterial states of mind are:

Space (akasa)
Consciousness (citta)
Nothingness (sunyata)
Neither perception nor non-perception (nevasanna nasanna)

PART (9) INSIGHT MEDITATION

In Theravada Buddhism this is most important in that it leads to enlightenment. Some of the possible objects of insight meditation are listed below:

Cause and Effect
Name and Form

Impermanence
Suffering
Emptiness of self
Rise and fall of Phenomena
Elements of Matter (Dhatu)

It is sometimes suggested that insight is a consequence of constant meditation and genuine practice of the Dhamma. Prior knowledge of the Dhamma might be very useful in this case.

However, others suggest that insight comes through delving into certain issues of significance such as the above. In this view insight is a contemplation of a Dhamma teaching.

PART (10) RECOLLECTIONS AND PROTECTION MEDITATION

Six types of recollections (anussati) are recommended in the Anussatitthana Sutta (discourse on recollections)(Anguttara Nikaya/Cakka Nipata/06), for repetitive application when necessary. These are:

Set (1):

- 1 Buddha
- 2 Dhamma
- 3 Sangha
- 4 Metta
- 5 Repulsive nature of the body
- 6 Death

Items 4, 5 and 6 need to be used with care under the advice of a teacher who has some understanding of the practitioner.

When the meditator struggles to get the mind to settle down, it is sometimes recommended that the recollections 1, 4, 5 and 6 in the first set be applied until there is reasonable calm. Meditators refer to this set as protections. The protection can be applied at the start of meditation or when the meditation falls apart.

Set (2)

In another presentation the following ten recollections are mentioned:

1,2 and 3 as above.

- 4 Virtues (Sila)
- 5 Celestial beings (Deva)
- 6 Liberality (Caga)
- 7 Peace in Nibbana
- 8 Death
- 9 Foulness of the body
- 10 Breath

PART (11) COMMON BARRIERS TO BE CLEARED IN DISCUSSIONS

In Sitting Meditation

- 1 In Breathing meditation the reason why one needs to sort out the in and out breaths as they occur
- 2 Observation of features about the breath that help in meditation
- 3 Dealing with distractions due to thoughts coming in?
- 4 Importance of calming the body
- 5 The technique of labelling
- 6 The special significance of breath, walking and daily activities as meditation objects
- 7 Dealing with nodding or falling asleep during meditation
- 8 The advice given by the Buddha to Venerable Moggallana
- 9 How are sloth and torpor reduced?

These suggestions are available:

Avoiding over-eating
Changing posture
Paying attention to the idea of light
Open air
Noble friendship
Suitable conversation

Recollection of death (MN 113)
Thinking of suffering in impermanence (AN 7, 46)
Appreciative joy (MN 62)

In Walking Meditation

- 1 Where should the hands be? What about the eyes?
- 2 How fast a walk is ideal?
- 3 Should walking come before sitting? Why?
- 4 How do I keep other objects out?
- 5 What do I focus on in walking meditation?
- 6 What observations help in keeping the mind on the object?

In Establishing Mindfulness in Daily Activities

- 1 In what activities can we develop mindfulness?
- 2 Essentially what is it? What does it improve?
- 3 What are the benefits? Any bearing on organising, happiness, effectiveness etc?
- 4 Does it last for a long time?
- 5 What is the level of intensity of the meditation?
- 6 What is the SMS formula in relation to daily activities recommended by Venerable Dhammajeewa?

THE END OF PARTS 1 TO 11

STANDARD PROGRAM FOR A SESSION OF PRACTICE

- A Day of the week: a Sunday

Once a month avoiding precepts days at the venue suggested

B Hours: 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm or less

C Time allocation plan:

Worship, Five precepts, commitment	05 m
Clearance of significant difficulties	10 m
Explanation of day's activities	05 m
Physically active practice	30 m
Reminders where necessary	10 m
Sedentary practice	30 m
Concluding discussion	30 m

Total time 2.0 hours. This can be reduced by the group as necessary for the day.

D Choice of the day's activities and program organisation:

The activities can be built up using the curriculum set out above. The choice would be such that over a period of say one year, the meditators will reach a level of mindfulness clearly higher than where they started and also have an overall idea of meditation.

Development of mindfulness is the main aim of the program. However, other forms of mental development such as Metta Meditation, Insight Meditation, Concentration meditation, protection meditations should be practised by saving time in the concluding discussions or in other areas. The different types of meditation are not entirely independent.

E Participants to take turns in Group leadership:

The regular participants can play the role of group leader when an arranged leader is not available. Ultimate responsibility rests with the Siddhartha Institute of Buddhism, the educational division of the Queensland Sangha Association Inc for operating the program.

The chief resident monk of the venue-temple needs to be consulted when setting dates, hours and location, so that other activities of the temple can go on without hindrance. Whenever possible a monk or nun needs to be invited to the program.

JOINT SPONSORSHIP

This program is jointly sponsored by:

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CONTACT PERSONS

Chief Resident Monk of the Sri Lanka Buddhist Monastery (Brisbane) Venerable
I.G.Nanda (07-3879-3244)

Dr. Sanka Wasalthilake
Head of the Department of Pali and Buddhism
Siddhartha Institute of Buddhism, QSA
infoqsa@gmail.com

AUTHOR OF CURRICULUM STRUCTURE AND STANDARD PROGRAM

[Dhamma sections are taken from the scriptures and commentaries]

This curriculum and standard program document drafted by:

Mr. Rahubadde Sarath-Chandra
Registrar and Tutor
Siddhartha Institute of Buddhism, QSA

infoqsa@gmail.com, 07-3278-9021

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THE END