



SANES BODHI TRUST
FOR SPIRITUAL EDUCATION, INC.

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The Practice of Mindfulness Meditation

According to the Visuddhimagga

A Guide to Insight Meditation (Vipassana)

The Practice of Mindfulness Meditation

According to the Visuddhimagga

SANES BODHI TRUST FOR SPIRITUAL EDUCATION, INC.

*A guide for cultivating clear awareness, steady concentration, and insight
through direct observation.*

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Introduction

This guide presents a foundational method of mindfulness meditation based on the classical teachings of the Visuddhimagga.

Through systematic observation of bodily processes, sensory experiences, and mental phenomena, practitioners cultivate insight (Vipassana) into the true nature of reality.

With consistent and sincere practice, the mind gradually develops clarity, concentration, and wisdom.

This method emphasizes direct experience - observing phenomena as they arise and pass away - without judgment, attachment, or aversion.

Establishing the Practice

Begin by sitting in a comfortable and stable posture.

Preparation

- Keep the body relaxed yet upright
- Gently close your eyes
- Allow the mind to settle naturally

Bring your attention to the abdomen and establish awareness of its natural movement.

Primary Object of Meditation

Observe the abdomen carefully for movement. When the movement becomes clear, note:

Mental Noting

- "rising" - as the abdomen expands
- "falling" - as the abdomen contracts

Maintain continuous awareness of this movement. This becomes your primary object of meditation.

Observing Sensory Experiences

When external stimuli arise, acknowledge them briefly and clearly.

Sensory Noting

- Hearing - mentally note "hearing"
- Smelling - mentally note "smelling"
- Seeing - mentally note "seeing"

Observe each experience with awareness, then gently return to the primary object: the abdomen.

Observing Thoughts

When thoughts arise, observe them clearly without engaging. Use simple mental notes such as:

Thought Noting

- "thinking"
- "planning"
- "imagining"
- "analyzing"

Allow thoughts to arise and pass naturally. Once they fade, return to observing the abdominal movement.

Observing Physical Sensations

When bodily sensations arise, observe them one by one.

Common Sensations

- Pain
- Tension
- Numbness
- Itching
- Fatigue
- Discomfort

Mentally note the experience, such as "pain," "itching," or "pressure," with steady awareness. As the sensation changes, diminishes, or disappears, gently return to the primary object.

Observing Feelings and Emotions

When emotional states arise, observe them with clarity and without judgment.

Examples

- Frustration, impatience, or anger
- Joy, sadness, calmness, or contentment

Mentally note each state and remain aware of its presence. As each feeling naturally fades, return to the movement of the abdomen.

Observing Mental States

Be mindful of changing mental conditions such as:

Mental Conditions

- Drowsiness
- Restlessness
- Boredom
- Clarity
- Focus

Acknowledge each state with awareness, noting it mentally. When it subsides, return again to the primary object.

Continuity of Practice

Practice observing all experiences:

Continuity

- One at a time
- As they arise
- Without judgment
- Without attachment or aversion

Through continuous mindfulness, insight gradually develops. The mind becomes increasingly clear, steady, and deeply aware of reality as it is.

Post-Meditation Reflection

After each session, reflect on your experience.

Reflection Questions

Session Duration

How long did you practice sitting or walking meditation?

Body Sensations

Describe the abdominal movement: rising, falling, short, long, smooth, uneven. How did these sensations change during observation?

Feelings

What physical sensations arose? Pain, tingling, numbness, discomfort. How did they change over time?

Thoughts

What types of thoughts occurred? Distracted thoughts, planning, imagining. Did they shorten, disappear, or persist?

Mental Functions

What mental states were present? Calmness, doubt, clarity, restlessness. How did they arise and pass away?

Insight and Development

With continued practice:

Development

- Awareness becomes sharper
- Concentration deepens
- Insight develops naturally

Practitioners begin to clearly observe the arising and passing of all phenomena, leading to deeper understanding and wisdom.

The Imperfections of Insight

As insight begins to develop, certain mental phenomena may arise that can be mistaken for true realization. These are known as the Imperfections of Insight (Vipassanupakkilesa), and they can become obstacles if misunderstood.

Imperfections of Insight

Ten Imperfections

- Illumination (Obhasa) - experiences of light or radiance
- Knowledge (Nana) - strong intuitive understanding
- Rapture (Piti) - intense joy or excitement
- Tranquility (Passaddhi) - deep calmness
- Bliss (Sukha) - pleasant mental comfort
- Faith (Adhimokkha) - strong conviction
- Effort (Paggaha) - heightened energy
- Mindfulness (Upatthana) - sharp awareness
- Equanimity (Upekkha) - balanced neutrality
- Attachment (Nikkanti) - subtle satisfaction or clinging

These experiences should be observed carefully, not clung to or identified as final attainment.

Closing Reflection

Mindfulness meditation is a gradual and disciplined practice.

Through patience, sincerity, and continuous observation, the practitioner develops:

Fruits of Practice

- Clear comprehension
- Deep concentration
- Insight into the nature of reality

Remain steady in practice, observing all phenomena as they arise and pass away.

Prepared By:

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