

Meditation in Buddhism: Lesson from MahāsatipatthānaSutta and Popularity in Thai Society

Prof. Dr. Phra Rajapariyattikavi
Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, MCU.

Introduction

“Kammaṭṭhāna” is translated as the place of work which its meaning is related to “Bhāvanā.” It is the term which means Dhamma practice or mind training practice and wisdom training based on Buddhist principles.

Kammaṭṭhāna or Bhāvanā in Buddhism consists of two aspects¹

1. Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna or Samatha-bhāvanā is the training or practice of mind to make it calm or it is the meditation practice.

2. Vipassanā-kammaṭṭhāna or Vipassanā-bhāvanā is the practice of wisdom to penetrate knowledge or wisdom development.

The two aspects as mentioned are included in Sikkhāttaya: *the Threefold Training*, namely (1) Sīla-sikkhā: *Training in Morality*, (2) Citta-sikkhā or Samādhi-sikkhā: *Training in Higher Mentality*, which is Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna (3) Paññā-sikkhā: *Training in Higher Wisdom*, which is Vipassanā-kammaṭṭhāna.

The main principle of Kammaṭṭhāna: *Subjects of Meditation is Training*. The term “Sikkhā” in “Citta-sikkhā” and “Paññā-sikkhā” is often used in Thai language as “Suksā” which means “Training” in English, and it is not “Study”. As for the term “Training” is related to the frame or guideline that have been clearly set for practitioners to practice. If there are some violations or disobediences they have to be forced to follow. Such frames may not be followed immediately but there must be a gradual force until all of the frames have been followed, for example, when sitting upright for 5 minutes feeling painful and tired. Actually we find the way to relieve the pain and tiredness by way of sitting in a slouching position and bending over, sitting leaning against

¹ Dī. Pā. (Thai) 11/304/256, 352/369, An. Duka. (Thai) 20/32/76, 137/127, 231/137.

the wall, sitting on armrest, and standing up for a walk or even changing to other positions. If we train ourselves, endure the pains, and can sit for more than 5 minutes it will be habitual, leading to a long sit and long sedentariness. This is the way to train and make the body strong. Actually, the mind will think of different matters all the time. If we let the mind think of different matters in the same moment habitually, we will become woolgathering, causing the lack of concentration and unsuccessful working. Kammatṭhāna is the practice and training of mind to achieve the concentration by using some methods such as concentrating on the in-breath and out-breath with mindfulness which is the trick to make the mind adhere to the breath, not any other things. The consistent practice like this will be habitual and the mind will get used to the breath. The mind will stay with one's own life and it will not be woolgathering. On the contrary, the mind will be concentrated.

Therefore, the goal of practicing Kammatṭhāna is Samādhi-kammatṭhāna in Buddhism. Even though there will be many methods of practice but there is only one goal that is mainly to create Samādhi (Concentration) because when having Samādhi it will bring about Ānisaṃsa (Merit) as follows:

1. There is Iddhipāda: *Path of Accomplishment*, which is the virtue in mind, namely Chanda: *Satisfaction in doing good deeds*, Viriya: *Attempt in doing good deeds*, Citta: *Paying attention to good deeds*, and Vimamsā: *Investigation of good deeds*. The persons who have such virtues will succeed in their work as the wise men said that the element of working to be successful as set was Kammatṭhāna as in Pali words “Kammameva visesādhikamanassa dhānandi kammatṭhānam translated as the act that is the base of magnificent achievement is called Kammatṭhāna”. From this analysis, it indicates that any working that will be successful has to mainly depend upon practicing Kammatṭhāna.

2. There will be wisdoms at different level automatically. The main wisdom for a living is Sappurisa-dhamma: *Virtues of a Gentleman* because the tranquil or concentrated mind makes people know the reason, know oneself, know how to be temperate, know the different individuals, know the society, and understand the world and life.

3. The qualified, healthy and powerful mind is the characteristic of the person who has the strong mind and maternity such the mind can endure the impact from outside environment which is satisfied and dissatisfied.

Kammaṭṭhāna based on Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta²

1. Principle and Method

While staying at the village of Kuru people called Kammasadhamma, Kuru region, the Buddha stated about Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta indicating the principle and method of Kammaṭṭhāna which consist of 4 aspects as follows:

1. Bhikkhu contemplates the body in the body, having efforts, having Sampajañña: *Clear Comprehension*, having sati: *Mindfulness*, being able to get rid of Abhijjhā: *Covetousness* and Domanassa: *Painful Mental Feeling* in the world.

The word “contemplating the body in the body” is to set mindfulness toward Kammaṭṭhāna: *Meditation*, having Sati: *Mindfulness* to know the in-out breath, having Sati: *Mindfulness* to know main postures, i.e. walking, standing, sitting, lying, and having Sati: *Mindfulness* to know sub-postures, i.e. step forward, step back, looking, chewing and drinking etc. and contemplating hair, nail, teeth and skin etc. in the body which is full of dirt, contemplating the body which is just the element of soil, water, fire, wind or contemplating the corpse in cemetery since it is in complete body until becoming the bones decaying into pieces. In conclusion, we have to contemplate Sati: *Mindfulness* that “the body existing” is just only for dwelling to develop *Meditation* (Kammaṭṭhāna). It cannot be dwelled and cannot be adhered to.

2. Bhikkhu contemplates the feelings in the *Feelings* (Vedanā), having efforts, having Sampajañña: *Clear Comprehension*, having Sati: *Mindfulness*, being able to get rid of Abhijjhā: *Covetousness* and Domanassa: *a Painful Mental Feeling* in the world.

² Concluded from Dī. Ma. (Thai) 10/372-403/301-338.

The word “contemplating the Feelings in the Feelings” is that when enjoying happiness and undergoing suffering or neither Pleasurable nor Painful Feeling (Upekkhā), we must have Sati: *Mindfulness* to contemplate it. When enjoying happiness and undergoing suffering or neither Pleasurable nor Painful Feeling (Upekkhā) that has material things we must have Sati: *Mindfulness* to contemplate it. When enjoying happiness and undergoing suffering or neither Pleasurable nor Painful Feeling (Upekkhā) that has no material things we must have Sati: *Mindfulness* to contemplate the condition of feelings, the cause of occurrence of the feelings and the cessation of feelings or both of the cause of occurrence and cessation of the feelings. In conclusion, we have to contemplate Sati: *Mindfulness* that “the feeling existing” is just only for dwelling to develop Kammatṭhāna: *Meditation*. It cannot be dwelled and cannot be adhered to.

3. Bhikkhu contemplates the mind in the mind, having efforts, *Clear Comprehension* (Sampajañña) and *Mindfulness* (Sati). He can get rid of *Covetousness* (Abhijjhā) and *Painful Mental Feeling* (Domanassa) in the world.

The word “contemplating the mind in the mind” is that the mind has perceived outside objects all the time whether or not in doing any activities when the perception of objects, i.e. *Corporeality* (Rūpa) has occurred, the mind has *Greed* (Lobha), *Hatred* (Dosa), *Delusion* (Moha) or the mind as *Non-greed* (Alobha), *Non-hatred* (Adosa), *Non-delusion* (Amoha), we have to contemplate it. We must have mindfulness to contemplate the dismal and woolgathering mind, or even though we must have mindfulness to contemplate liberated or non-liberated mind. In conclusion, we have to contemplate *Mindfulness* (Sati) that “the mind existing” is just only for dwelling to develop *Meditation* (Kammatṭhāna). It cannot be dwelled and cannot be adhered to.

4. Bhikkhu contemplates Dhammas in Dhammas, having Efforts, *Clear Comprehension* (Sampajañña) and *Mindfulness* (Sati). He can get rid of *Covetousness* (Abhijjhā) and *Painful Mental Feeling* (Domanassa) in the world.

The word “contemplating Dhammas in Dhammas” is to consider the law of nature in 5 groups of Dhamma, namely (1) *The Five*

Hindrances (Nivara), (2) *The Five Aggregates of Clinging* (Upādānakhandā), (3) *The Twelve Spheres* (Ayatana), (4). *The Seven Constituents of Enlightenment* (Bojjhanga), and (5.) *The Four Noble Truths* (Aritiyasacca).

In practice, we must have mindfulness to contemplate *the Five Hindrances* (Nivara), i.e. *Sensual Desire* (Kāmachanda), *Ill-will* (Payāpada), *Sloth and Torpor* (Thinamiddha), *Restlessness and Worry* (Uddhacckukkacca), and *Doubt* (Vikicchā) that they exist or do not exist in ourselves, we must have Sati: *Mindfulness* to contemplate the cause of occurrence, cause of abandonment (cessation) and the cause to abandon *the Five Hindrances* (Nivara), we must have Sati: *Mindfulness* to contemplate that *the Five Aggregates of Clinging* (Upādānakhandā), i.e. *Corporeality* (Rūpa) (the aggregate which is the object of clinging) have naturally arisen, existed and fallen away. It is under the law of the Three Characteristics, so we must have mindfulness to contemplate the eyes + corporeality, ears + sound, nose + smell, tongue + taste, body + tangible object, mind + mind-object and we must have mindfulness to contemplate the occurring *Fetters* (Samyojanā) because depending upon eyes + corporeality, etc. We must have mindfulness to contemplate the cause of arising, cause of abandonment (cessation) and the cause to abandon the *Fetters* (Samyojanā).

We must have mindfulness to contemplate Bojjhanga: *the Seven Enlightenment Factors*, consisting of Sati: *Mindfulness*, Dhammavicaya: *Truth Investigation*, Bayāya: *Effort*, Piti: *Rapture*, Passaddhi: *Tranquility*, Samādhi: *Concentration*, Ubekkhā: *Equanimity* whether or not they have in themselves. We must have mindfulness to contemplate the cause of arising and cause of complete prosperity of Bojjhanga: *the Seven Enlightenment Factors*.

We must have mindfulness to contemplate Ariyasacca: *the Four Noble Truths*, i.e. (1) How is Dukkha: *Suffering*? Corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formation, and consciousness are the aggregates of sufferings because depending upon Rūpa: *Corporeality*, causing the arising of birth, old age, death and grief. (2) How is Samudaya: *the*

Cause of Suffering? Piya-rūpa and Sata-rūpa (lovely and delighted conditions) cause Tanhā: *Desire*, for example, when seeing Rūpa: *Corporeality*, hearing voice, catching the smell, tasting, or touching it makes us think of the lovely and delighted things, causing Tanhā: *Desire* and Tanhā: *Desire* causes Dukkha: *Suffering*. (3) *How is Niroda: Cessation of Suffering?* Piya-rūpa and Sata-rūpa (lovely and delighted conditions) cause Tanhā: *Desire* and at the same time it can cease the Tanhā: *Desire* such as when seeing Rūpa: *Corporeality*, hearing voice, catching the smell, tasting, or touching, it makes us think of the lovely and delighted things, when Tanhā: *Desire* occurs we must have Sati: *Mindfulness* to cease the occurring Tanhā: *Desire*, when new Tanhā: *Desire* occurs, we must have Sati: *Mindfulness* to know and protect it from occurring. (4) *How is Magga: the Path?* Sammādihi: *Right Understanding* – Knowing Ariyasacca: *the Four Noble Truths*. Sammāsankappa: *Right Thought* - thinking of leaving from sensuality, no revenge, no bullying. Sammāvācā: *Right Speech* - abstaining from divisive speech, from abusive speech, and from idle chatter. Sammākammanta: *Right Action* - abstaining from killing living beings, abstaining from taking what is not given by the others and abstaining from sexual misconduct. Sammā ājīva: *Right Livelihood* - aiming at earning a living in an ethical manner without harming others. Sammāvāyāma: *Right Effort* - creating an aspiration, effort, mind controlling, preventing evil and unwholesome states, as well as preserving wholesome states. Sammāsati: *Right Mindfulness* - keeping the mind on contemplating the body in the body, the feelings in the feelings, the mind in the mind, and Dhammas in Dhammas. Sammāsamādhi: *Right Concentration* - abstaining from sensuality and unwholesome states, attaining the first absorption to the fourth absorption.

In conclusion, we have to contemplate Sati: *Mindfulness* that “Dhamma existing” is just only for dwelling to develop meditation. It cannot be dwelled and cannot be adhered to.

2. Mindfulness of Breathing (Ānāpānasati)

Foundations of Mindfulness (Satipatthāna) suggested by the Buddha³

Once upon a time, while the Buddha was staying at Kutakarasala, Mahawanaforest, Vaishali city. He told about Asubakammathna: *the Foulness Meditation* to Bhikkhus. After learning meditation, those Bhikkhus started to practice meditation. After practicing for a while, they felt uncomfortable and felt bored, leading to hate their own bodies. After that they killed themselves or told other Bhikkhus to kill one another. Some groups of Bhikkhus told a sham monk named Mikalanthika to kill. Some days, the sham monk killed up to 60 Bhikkhus, causing the death of lots of Bhikkhus.

After knowing the matter, the Buddha told Ananada Bhikkhu to convene a meeting. The Buddha stated about the virtues of Anāpānasati-*the Mindfulness of Breathing* that “Ānāpānasati: *the Mindfulness of Breathing* meditation that has been developed and repeatedly practiced is in the states of tranquility, meticulousness and cheerfulness. It is also the Dhamma that brings happiness, making unwholesome states that have occurred already disappear, bringing about calmness immediately”. After that the Buddha taught about the basic method of practice of Ānāpānasati: *the Mindfulness of Breathing* that “going to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to the empty, solitary place, sits down cross-legged, keeping his body erect, and directs his mindfulness (towards the object of mindfulness). Then only with keen mindfulness he breathes in and only with keen mindfulness he breathes out”⁴ After that the Buddha taught detailed methods of practice by way of mediating two stages of breathing-out and breathing-in and 16 sub-stages as follows:

Stage 1. Concentrating mindfulness to know the breath in general.

³ Vi. Ma. (Thai) 1/162-165/135-138.

⁴ In Ānāpānasati, it is alternately translated as “while inhaling, be mindful, while exhaling, be mindful”. And in other Suttas, it is also translated the same. See Ma. U. (Thai) 14/148//187191.

(1) When a long out-in breath is exhaled, we know that “we exhale a long out-in breath”.

(2) When a short out-in breath is exhaled, we know that “we exhale a short out-in breath”.

Stage2. Concentrating mindfulness to know the beginning, middle, and the end of the breath.

(3) Realizing that “will perceive all the out-in breath”.

(4) Realizing that “will suppress the body with out-in breath”.

(5) Realizing that “will perceive rapture in the out-in breath”.

(6) Realizing that “will perceive happiness in the out-in breath”.

(7) Realizing that “will perceive mental formation in the out-in breath”.

(8) Realizing that “will suppress mental formation in the out-in breath”.

(9) Realizing that “will perceive the mind in the out-in breath”.

(10) Realizing that “will entertain the mind in the out-in breath”.

(11) Realizing that “will make the mind stable in the out-in breath”.

(12) Realizing that “will liberate the mind in the out-in breath”.

(13) Realizing that “will contemplate the impermanence in the out-in breath”.

(14) Realizing that “will contemplate the release in the out-in breath”.

(15) Realizing that “will contemplate the cessation in the out-in breath”.

(16) Realizing that “will contemplate the throwing away in the out-in breath”.

Ānāpānasati: Mindfulness of Breathing is the base of *Satipatṭhāna: the four Foundations of Mindfulness* and it brings about the benefits that make other the groups of Dhamma complete. The

Buddha said in a part of Mindfulness of Breathing that⁵ “The Mindfulness of Breathing that Bhikkhus have developed and repeatedly practiced will bring about lots of benefits. The Mindfulness of Breathing that Bhikkhus have developed and repeatedly practiced can make the four Foundations of Mindfulness complete. The four Foundations of Mindfulness that Bhikkhus have repeatedly practiced will make Bojjhaṅga: *the Seven Enlightenment Factors* complete. And the seven Enlightenment Factors that Bhikkhus have repeatedly practiced will make Vijjhā: *the Threefold Knowledge* and Vimutti: *Deliverance* complete”. This is the reason that the Buddha suggested to pay more attention to the meditation of the mindfulness of breathing. The Arahant who always developed the Mindfulness of Breathing would know which day and what time he would pass away (die), for example, in case of Venerable Tissa Thera of Kotibanpot Vihara Temple, Venerable Tissa Thera of Kranchaniya Vihara Temple, Venerable Pinthapatikatisa Thera in Devaputta State and two relative senior monks of Chittalabanpot Vihara⁶

The way to Practice Concentration Meditation and Insight Meditation based on Foundations of Mindfulness

The Concentration Meditation and Insight Meditation are included in the Three Characteristics of Existence as mentioned earlier and they have two ways of relation as the proverb says⁷

Absorption (Jhāna) does not exist in the person who lacks wisdom.

Wisdom does not exist in the person who lacks Absorption (Jhāna).

Absorption (Jhāna) and wisdom exist in any person, that person is close to Nibbāna.

⁵ Ma. U. (Thai) 14/147/187.

⁶ Phra Buddhagosācāra Thera. Author. **Visuddhimagga** translated and compiled by Somdej Phra Buddhacāra (Art Āsabhamahathera). The 9th Edition. (Bangkok: Thana Press, 2013, p. 477.

⁷ Khu. Dha. (Thai) 25/372/149.

In this stanza, the term “Jhāna” is Citta-sikkha (Training in Mentality) which means the Concentration Meditation. The term “Paññā” is the Training in Wisdom which means Insight Meditation and it will appear as the two ways of relation as generally known that *Training in Morality* (Sila-sikkhā) is the beginning as in the content in another stanza that⁸

The concentration with based morality that the person has trained will bring lots of goodness and benefits.

The wisdom with based concentration that the person has trained will bring lots of goodness and benefits.

The mind with based wisdom that the person has trained will be consciously liberated from Āsava: *Mental Intoxications*), namely Kāmāsava: *Canker of Sense-Desire*, Bhavāsava: *Canker of Becoming*, Avijjāsava: *Canker of Ignorance*.

Also in this stanza, the term “Sila” is *the Training in Morality* (Sila-sikkhā). The term “Samādhi” is *the Training in Mentality* (Citta-sikkhā) which means the Concentration Meditation. The term “Paññā” is *the Training in Wisdom* (Paññā-sikkhā) which means Insight Meditation.

In practice, the Buddha talked about the relation between Concentration Meditation and Insight Meditation in two ways and parallel ways. So, some parts of the content that Ananda Thera Bhikkhu stated that⁹

“(1) Samatha Pubbaṅgama Vipassanā Bhāvanā - Development of Insight preceded by Concentration, (2) Vipassanā Pubbaṅgama Samatha Bhāvanā - Development of Concentration preceded by Insight, (3) Samatha Vipassanā Yuganaddha Bhāvanā - Development of Concentration Meditation and Insight Meditation concurrently”.

The result of practicing meditation based on the Threefold Learning starting from the beginning level (Sila), and then gradually

⁸ Dī. Ma. (Thai) 10/142/149.

⁹ Añ. Catukka. (Thai) 21/170/237-238.

developing up to the highest level (Nibbāna). Such a relation manifests the goal's name at different levels as the Buddha told Venerable Ananda Thera that can be concluded that¹⁰

Discipline (Vinaya) is for the sake of restraint (**Sila**).

Restraint is for the sake of freedom from remorse.

Freedom from remorse is for the sake of joy.

Joy is for the sake of rapture.

Rapture is for the sake of tranquility.

Tranquility is for the sake of concentration (**Samādi**).

Concentration is for the sake of knowledge and vision of things as they are (**Paññā**).

Knowledge and vision of things as they are are for the sake of disenchantment.

Disenchantment is for the sake of defilement release.

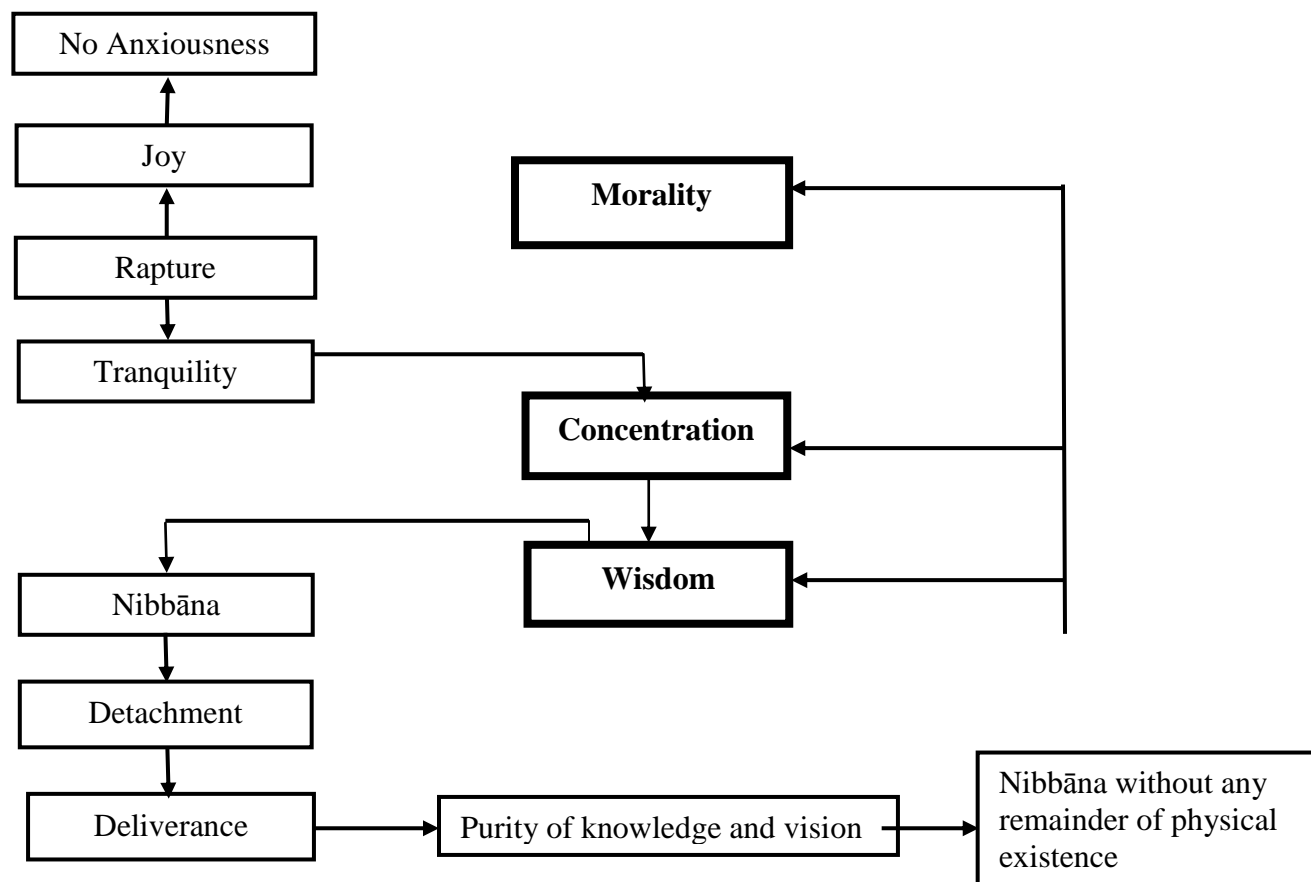
Defilement release is for the sake of release (**Vimutti**).

Release is for the sake of knowledge and vision of release.

Knowledge and vision of release is for the sake of total unbinding without clinging (**Nibbāna**).

The development from the beginning level up to the highest level under the frame of the Threefold Learning as mentioned earlier can be concluded as the name of Dhamma according to the following chart:

¹⁰ Añ. Dasaka. (Thai) 24/1/1-3, Vi. Pa. (Thai) 8/366/552, Añ. Ekādasā (Thai) 14/1/389-390.



Dhamma in the Threefold Learning has the goal at the cause and effect level in the way of practice. The goal at the cause and effect level has no ending point in itself but it seems like passing the baton onto the next persons the same as traveling to some particular goals by transiting vehicles as Venerable Punnamantaniputra spoke with Venerable Sariputra that¹¹

Sila-visuddhi (Purity of Morality) has Citta-visuddhi (Purity of Mind) as the goal (Morality has Concentration as the goal).

Citta-visuddhi (Purity of Mind) has Ditthi-visuddhi (Purity of View = Wisdom) as the goal (Concentration has wisdom as the goal).

The Concentration Meditation and Insight Meditation according to Buddhist principle have their relations as they are included in the Threefold Learning and they are the cause and effect to each other.

¹¹ Ma.Mu. (Thai) 12/259/281-283.

There are two main aspects of question as follows:

Question 1. Which principle in *the Foundation of Mindfulness* (Mahāsatiṭṭhāna Sutta) is Concentration Meditation? And which principle is Insight Meditation?

Question 2. In practicing meditation based on *the Foundation of Mindfulness* (Mahāsatiṭṭhāna Sutta), what practice is regarded as Concentration Meditation? And what practice is regarded as Insight Meditation?

With regard to question 1. There are the answers as in Pali in a part of *the Foundation of Mindfulness* (Mahāsatiṭṭhāna Sutta)¹²

Idhabhikkhavebhikkhu Kāye Kāyānupassi Vihāreti Ātāpi
Sampajāno Satimā Vineyyaloke Abhijjhādomanassa Vedanāsu
Vedanānupassi Citta Cittānupassi Dhammesu Dhammānupassi Vihāreti
Ātāpi Sampajāno Satimā Vineyya Lokeabhijjhādomanassa

Bhikkhus in this DhammaVinaya contemplates the body in the body, having efforts, having *Clear Comprehension* (Sampajañña), having *Mindfulness* (Sati), being able to get rid of *Covetousness* (Abhijjhā) and a *Painful Mental Feeling* (Domanassa) in the world, contemplating the feelings in the feelings, contemplating the mind in the mind, contemplating Dhammas in Dhammas, having efforts, having *Clear Comprehension* (Sampajañña), having *Mindfulness* (Sati), being able to get rid of *Covetousness* (Abhijjhā) and a *Painful Mental Feeling* (Domanassa) in the world.

The questions as “Which word shows Concentration Meditation? Which word shows Insight Meditation?” The word “Sampajāno” is Insight Meditation. The word “Satimā” is Concentration Meditation. This Pali manifests that every principle has the Concentration Meditation and Insight Meditation concurrently.

¹² Dī.Ma (Pali) 10/373/248, Di.Ma (Thai) 10/373/301-302.

With regard to question 2. There are the answers as in Pali in a part of *the Foundation of Mindfulness* (Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta) on the practice of *Mindfulness of Breathing* (Ānāpānasati)¹³

Kathancabhikkavebhikkhu Kāye Kāyānupassi Viharati
 Idhabhikkhavebhikkhuaranyagato Vā Rukkhamulagato Vā Suññāgārato
 Vā Nisidati Pullankanaphujittavā Ujukāyanpanidhāya Pari
 Mukhansatinupatthapetavā Sosato Va Ussasati Satopassasati Digam Vā
 Assasanto Diganassasāmiti Pajhānāti, Digam Vā Passasanto
 Diganpassasāmiti Pajhānāti

How does a Bhikkhu dwell contemplating the body in the body? That is to say, Bhikkhu in this Dhamma and Vinaya having gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to the empty, solitary place, sits down cross-legged, keeping his body erect, and directs his mindfulness (towards the object of mindfulness). Then only with keen mindfulness he breathes in and only with keen mindfulness he breathes out. Breathing in a long breath, he knows, “I breathe in a long breath”, breathing out a long breath, he knows, “I breathe out a long breath”.

The word “Sato” is Mindfulness Meditation. The word “Pajhānāti” is Insight Meditation. This Pali indicates that every method has both of Concentration Meditation and Insight Meditation concurrently.

Many parts of Pali have shown the ways to practice Concentration Meditation and Insight Meditation as the same process.¹⁴

Atthi Vedanāti Vā Panassa Sati Paccupaṭṭhitā Hoti
 Yāvadevañānamattāya Paṭissatimattāya. Anissito Ca Viharati Na Kiñci
 Loke Upādiyati.

¹³ Dī. Ma. (Pali) 10/374/248-249, Di.Ma (Thai) 10/374/302-303.

¹⁴ Dī.Ma. (Pali) 10/380/254, Dī.Ma. (Thai) 10/380/314.

Bhikkhu dwell contemplating mindfulness as “feeling existing” is just only for developing knowledge and mindfulness, it cannot be dwelled and adhered to anything in the world.

The word “ñāna” in the word “ñānamattaya” is Insight Meditation. The word “Patissati-“ in the word “Patissatimattaya” is Concentration Meditation.

The Pali that is taken as an example is seen that some parts order the words showing Concentration Meditation in the front, some order the words showing Insight Meditation in the front. This one is not important because as the matter of fact, the method of Satipatthāna: *Foundation of Mindfulness* is to make the mind to be concentrated at the beginning. When the mind is concentrated it will move to Insight Meditation by using the concentrated mind with steady objects to contemplate the Five Groups of Existence being as the Three Characteristics of Existence. When penetrating the Five Groups of Existence being as the Three Characteristics of Existence and arising, existing, and falling away according to the process of cause and effect, this phase is Insight Meditation.

Meditation based on the Foundation of Mindfulness (Mahāsatipatthāna Sutta) and the popularity in Thai society

1. Origin and Development

After the 3rd Rehearsal, Venerable Mokkalliputratisa Thera and 1,000 Arahants had sent Venerable Sona and Venerable Uttara as well as 5 Arahants to propagate Buddhism in Suvarnabhumi. They were urged to teach Insight Meditation to people. Those two senior monks had taught Insight Meditation based on *the Foundation of Mindfulness* (Mahāsatipatthāna Sutta).¹⁵ The work in inheriting the burden of contemplation in the golden land (Suvarnabhumi) had been carried on consistently. In Myanmar (formerly Burma), many senior monks had inherited the burden of contemplation such as Venerable Namorahant, Venerable Mingkultoya, Venerable Narata, especially, Venerable Narata

¹⁵ Phra Bhattanta Asabha Thera Aggamahākamatthānācariya, **Vipassanādura**. (Bangkok: C100 Design Co., LTD., 2536), pp. 51-52.

also called Venerable Mingkunchetawana Sayadaw was a well-known meditation master who had a number of followers. His well-known follower was Venerable Sobhana Mahathera, the highest great scholar or Mahasi Sayadaw.

Venerable Mingkunchetawana Sayadaw had applied the method practice of Insight Meditation from the Foundation of Mindfulness to make it easy for practice. Mahasi Sayadaw had studied and inherited this practice method from Mingkunchetawana Sayadaw. The basic concept of Mahasi Sayadaw is (1) The understanding in phenomena on mental factor and visible object that occurred in ourselves, (2) The whole body is the center of concrete object, (3) The phenomena on concrete object or mental object is the work of mind.¹⁶ In the latter era, an important follower was Venerable Bhattanata Asabhamahathera Aggamahakammattānācariya had carried on the work of Insight Meditation and the most importance is that he played an important role in teaching the Insight Meditation in Thailand. In that era, Somdej PhraBuddhacaraya (Art Asabha Mahathera), the abbot of Wat Mahadhatu, Bangkok, had sent many senior monks to study the Insight Meditation in Myanmar and later Venerable Bhattanta Āsabhamahāthera travelled to Thailand to work as a meditation master at Wat Mahadhatu.

Nowadays, the Sangha Supreme Council of Thailand, which is the highest administrative organization of the Thai Sangha, has the policy to support the meditation practice both of quality and quantity. In B.E. 2543 (2000), the regulations were issued on the establishment of provincial Dhamma practice, and it was officially established with the number of 1,510 places in 77 provinces. Except these numbers, many Dhamma practice centers were still established. With regard to the practical respect, there are 5 techniques of practice as below:

Technique 1. Development or Bhāvanā “Bud-dho”

Technique 2. Development or Bhāvanā “Falling-Rising” or “Rising-Falling”

¹⁶ Phra Bhattanta Asabha Thera Aggamahākammattānācariya, *ibid.* p. 85.

Technique 3. Development or Bhāvanā “Samma-Arahaṇ”

Technique 4. Development or Bhāvanā to concentrate the in-outbreath “Ānāpānasati”

Technique 5. Concentration or contemplation on concrete object-mental object.

Every technique is on the basis of the Foundation of Mindfulness resulting from following the lesson of essence in the Foundation of Mindfulness. Some monks may apply it a little bit, for example, technique of “Samma-araṇ” which concentrates on a crystal ball or a small Buddha image to replace the breath.

2. Technique of “Rising-Falling”¹⁷

The consistent teaching of Insight Meditation of Venerable Bhattanta Āsabhamahāthera and senior Thai monks results in the application of Insight Meditation in many techniques. The most popular technique is “Rising-Falling”. Its basic principle and the order of practice’s method are as follows:

Day 1. Meditation master gives 6 stages of meditation for practice.

(1) Walking Meditation

Yogi looks ahead about 4-5 meters, keep the mind on the movement of your heel, walk slowly, naturally, and mindfully, lift up the right foot and say in mind that “Right goes thus”, lift up the left foot and say in mind that “Left goes thus”. The foot lifting up and the mind thinking must occur the same time. The foot must lower to touch the floor the same time with the mind thinking “Thus”.

(2) Sitting Meditation

After walking meditation for sometimes, lower your body to sit and say in mind that “Sitting, Sitting” until sitting cross-legged, close your eyes mindfully, keep your mind on the movement of your stomach. When inhaling, the stomach will rise, thinking that “Rising”, when

¹⁷ Mahasi Sayadaw (Sobhanamahathera), **Vipassanajhuni: The Principle of Insight Meditation Practice** translated by Chamrun Thammada, (Bangkok: Thippavisut Press, 1997), concluded from p. 3-27.

exhaling the stomach will fall, thinking that “Falling”. The mind thinking and the stomach rising-falling must occur the same time.

(3) Contemplation of *Sensation* (Vedanā)

While sitting, the sensation arises, for example, paining, practitioner has to set aside the contemplation of “Rising-Falling”, keep your mind on the pains and say in mind that “Paining, Paining” until the sensation has gone and then turn to keep your mind on the movement of your stomach, saying in mind further that “Rising-Falling”.

(4) Contemplation of Mind

While the mind is muddling, keep the mind on the heart and say in mind that “Thinking, Thinking” until the muddling has gone and then turn to contemplate the Rising –Falling. When feeling delighted or sorry, say in mind that “Delighted-Sorry”

(5) Contemplation of Sound

While sitting, the noise disturbs, keep your mind on hearing at your ears and say in mind that “Hearing, Hearing” until the disturbing noise has gone and then turn to further contemplate the Rising –Falling.

(6) Lying Meditation

When lying, recline slowly, keep your mind on the movement of the body and say in mind that “Lying, Lying” until the lying posture has already completed and then turn to contemplate the movement of your stomach and say in mind that “Rising – Falling”. Before sleeping, observe whether you are going to sleep while the stomach is rising or falling.

Day 2. Meditation master adds one more lesson that is contemplation of want

When meditation master has investigated the progress of practitioner he will add one more lesson, i.e. contemplation of want, for example, want to get up. The way of practice is that while wanting to get up, keep your mind on the heart and say in mind that “wanting to get up, wanting to get up”. While getting up, say in mind that “getting up, getting up”. The important point in this lesson is whatever you want to do, every time you have to contemplate the want.

Day 3 – 5. Meditation master adds the contemplation of 5 more sense-doors (Dvāra)

Practitioner has to contemplate the 5 sense-doors, namely eye-door, ear-door, nose-door, tongue-door, body-door, mind-door as follows:

-Keep your mind on the eyes while seeing pictures, say in mind that “seeing, seeing”.

-Keep your mind on the ears while hearing the sound, say in mind that “hearing, hearing”.

-Keep your mind on the nose while smelling, say in mind that “smelling, smelling”.

-Keep the mind on the tongue while tasting, say in mind that “tasting, tasting”.

-Keep your mind on the body while touching something, say in mind that “touching, touching”.

Day 6. Meditation master adds the following lessons as follows:

When the practitioner contemplates the mind and matter (arising the 1st ñāna, it is Nāmarupaparicchedañāna- Knowledge of mental and physical states) and knows the current cause of arising mind and matter (arising 2nd ñāna, it is Paccayapariggahañāna - Discerning Conditionality), meditation master will add one more lesson, i.e. stage 2 of walking meditation as “Lifting, Treading”, after that adding stage 3 as “Lifting, Moving, Treading”.

If the advanced practitioner can see the mind and matter as the Threefold Learning (arising the 3rd ñāna, it is Sammasanañāna - Knowledge of the three characteristics of mental and physical processes), meditation master will add stage 4 of meditation up to stage 6 as follows:

Stage 1. Right goes Thus. Left goes Thus.

Stage 2. Lifting, Treading.

Stage 3. Lifting, Moving, Treading.

Stage 4. Heel up, Lifting, Moving, Treading.

Stage 5. Heel up, Lifting, Moving, Lowering, Touching.

Stage 6. Heel up, Lifting, Moving, Lowering, Touching, Pressing.

Practitioner should walk for each stage about 10 minutes after that sit to contemplate the state of “Rising - Falling”. At that moment, the practitioner will be added the contemplation of the “Touching” state for 6 stages, namely “Rising, Falling, Sitting, Touching the Right-Left Sagging Buttocks, Touching the Right-Left Knees, Touching the Right-Left Anklebones. If the practitioner who pays attention to practice for about 2-3 days will receive full advantages.

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University and meditation based on the Foundation of Mindfulness (Mahāsatiṭṭhāna)

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has its philosophy as “management of Buddhist education integrating with modern knowledge, development of the mind and society”, has the determination as “study the Tipitaka and advanced subjects for monks, novices and lay people”, has the vision as “the center of Buddhist education at international level in aiming to produce good, clever and capable people, managing an effective education and research, providing a striking academic services and having an efficient administration. The University has an administration that follows 4 missions as follows:¹⁸

1. To produce graduates and develop personnel to have respectable conduct, curiosity, spiritual and intellectual leadership with far-vision, problem-solving abilities, faithfulness and dedication towards Buddhism, self-sacrifice for the good of society, understanding of social changes and with a vision of the potential to further develop themselves.

2. To conduct an education and develop learning and teaching process by integrating Buddhist academics with modern knowledge

¹⁸ Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Development Plan of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University during the 10th Higher Education Development Plan (2007-2010), p. 20. http://plandiv.mcu.ac.th/?page_id=109 (21 April, 2017).

both of theory and practice through the process of education, research, and educational assurance for moving forward to an academic excellence and to produce new knowledge for developing human beings, society and environment for equally and peacefully living together.

3. To provide academic services on Buddhism to the Sangha and society, including to support the study and well-cooperation among Buddhist people at national and international level in order to preserve traditions, arts and culture related to Buddhism.

4. To develop the administration and management according to rule of law, ethics, consciousness, participation, transparency, and worthiness as well as supporting and developing an efficiency of personnel in order to move forward to the genuine learning organization.

According to the mentioned philosophy, determination, vision, and mission, the University has stipulated the identity as “providing Buddhist academic services” and stipulated the identity of organization as “managing Buddhist education integrating with modern knowledge, developing the mind and society” and stipulated the identity of graduates as “faithfulness and self-sacrifice for Buddhism”.

In order to make a management to fulfill the purpose and reflect the essence of the mentioned philosophy, the University has made the curriculum at different levels and set the learning and teaching activity by allowing students of every curriculum and every year class, including religious and secular subjects. Also, every student has to study meditation subjects and practice insight meditation.

At the level of Graduate Diploma Program in Vipassanābhāvanā, students have to study general subject as set and practice meditation for 3 months.

At the level of Bachelor’s Degree, students of every major field have to study core subjects of Buddhism for 40 credits, study 7 meditation subjects and practice Insight Meditation for 10 days per year.

In 4 years of study, students have to practice Insight Meditation totaling 40 days.

At the level of Master's Degree in Vipassanābhāvanā, students have to study general subjects as set, and practice Insight Meditation for 7 months.

At the level of Master's Degree in other major fields, students have to study general subjects as set, and practice Insight Meditation for 30 days.

At the level of Doctoral Degree in every major field, students have to study general subjects as set, and practice Insight Meditation for 45 days.

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University uses “Falling-Rising” technique in practicing Insight Meditation or follows Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta that has been inherited from the time of Somdej Phra Buddhacaraya (Art Āsabhamahāthera). Every student of every major field has been stipulated to practice Insight Meditation in order to develop their mind and their mind will be strong, healthy and efficient, not worried and not anxious when facing problems or difficulties. When their mind is concentrated, they can bring an academic knowledge to service society, that is, teaching about Buddhism both of theory and practice to other people.

The way of producing graduates as mentioned can guarantee that 5,000 graduates of every year class of the University have completed their education each year and possess an academic knowledge and life skills that are prosperous in 4 dimensions, namely body, morality, mind, and wisdom, conforming to the philosophy of the University that “managing Buddhist education integrating with modern knowledge, developing the mind and society”.

The benefit of practicing the Foundation of Mindfulness (MahāsatipaṭṭhānaSutta)

1. General benefits

The practice of meditation is the readiness preparation that will be easy in cultivating different virtues and good behaviors, knowing the

way to make the mind calm, ease the mind and relieve sufferings. For the persons who practice regularly, their mind will be concentrated and immune. In conclusion, the benefit in daily life is of the following:¹⁹

(1) Making the mind to be relaxed, be free from strain, be happy, not anxious and not worried.

(2) Being an excellent tool in working, studying and doing things because when the steady mind focusing on what is being done will bring about carefulness and effective working.

(3) Supporting the physical health and curing diseases because the body and the mind depend upon each other and influence over each other. For the person whose mind is strong (mindful), when the body falls sick, it is just only the body is sick but the mind is not sick. Furthermore, the strong mind is used to relieve the physical disease.

(2) Specific benefits

When the Buddha preached the principles and methods of meditation practice in Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta: *the Foundation of Mindfulness*, he stated about the benefit of meditation practice for 2 aspects,²⁰ (1) the duration of practice, (2) the result obtained from practice.

1. The duration of practice. The Buddha mentioned about 3 durations, (1) Year. It has been divided into the longest duration, that is 7 years to the fastest duration, that is 1 year, (2) Month. It has been divided into the longest duration, that is 7 months to the fastest duration, that is one and a half month, (3) Day. It has been set the fastest duration, that is 7 days.

2. With regard to the result to be obtained according to some periods of time of practice as mentioned earlier, the practitioner will obtain any one in two results, namely (1) attaining Aratantaship-becoming current Arahant (the Perfect One) or Anāgāmi (Non-returner).

¹⁹ Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto). **Buddhadhamma of Revision Edition**. The 39th Edition. (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Press, 2557), concluded from p. 788-789.

²⁰ Dī. Ma. (Thai) 10/404/338-340.

When asked if “In practicing, the practitioner spends different time and the result obtained is the same, why is that so? In this matter, it is the law of Kamma according to Buddhist principle. The person who has spent time for 7 years in the practice to attain an Arahantaship is because of accumulating less practice. So he has to practice more and spend a lot of times the same as the glass that has little water if we want the glass to be full of water we have to pour more water. As for the person who has spent time in practice for 7 days can attain an Arahantaship it is because he has accumulated more practices. It is common that he does not practice more but spending less time the same as the glass that has more water if we want it to be full of water we just pour little water it will be full.

The interest issue is that the Buddha used “Udesa (beginning words) to preach as “Patiniddesa (ending words) that²¹

Ekayāno Ayambhikkhavemaggo Sattanam Visuddhiyā
 Sokaparidevanam Samatikkamayā
 Dukkhadomassanamatthhangamāya Yāyassa-adhigamāya
 Nibbānassasaccikiriyāyayadidancattāro Satipatthāna

O Bhikkhus, this way is a single way. It is for the purity of living beings, for overcoming grief and lamentation, for extinguishing sufferings and sadness, for achieving the right path, and for attaining Nibbāna. This is the way of Satipatthāna: *the Foundation of Mindfulness*. The meaning of the Buddha’s words is the words “single way” which has 4 meanings as follows: (1) It is the way of the person who isolates himself to practice Dhamma. (2) It is the way that the Buddha created or made it up. (3) It is the way of practice that exists only in Buddhism. (4) It is the way to one destination that is Nibbāna. It is confirmed that Dhamma practice based on Buddhism has 2 levels (1) The general ordinary people who work for earning a living can apply Dhamma in daily life and receive the result of practice that brings about

²¹ Dī. Ma. (Pali) 10/373/248, 405/269, Dī. Ma (Thai) 10/373/301, 405/340.

happiness and prosperity, (2) The people who proceed to reach Magga (Path), Phala (Fruition), Nibbāna to follow Magga (Path) of “Satipatṭhāna” which is translated as the Foundation of Mindfulness or the practice of mindfulness as the head. Only the practice at level 2 can make the practitioner to reach Magga (Path), Phala (Fruition), Nibbāna.

Conclusion

Every nation, religion and institution all has an educational activity and training for developing personnel to have knowledge and ability. The study and training of practice have many different ways. Meditation in Buddhism is the way of mind practice to be concentrated. The concentrated mind is consisted of quality, health and efficiency that will result in making people to be efficient and successful in their working.

There are 2 types of meditation in Buddhism, i.e. Concentration Meditation and Insight Meditation. The two types of meditation are practiced around the world. Some schools emphasize Concentration Meditation and some schools emphasize Insight Meditation but they have the same goal that is the concentrated mind (qualified, healthy and efficient).

The meditation of the Foundation of Mindfulness is the practical way that is very popular in the past and present time. The main topic in practicing meditation is the Threefold Learning consisting of morality, concentration and wisdom which are the main principle. The Buddha taught the application of main principle to practice clearly in Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta: *the Foundation of Mindfulness* and sub-sutta, i.e. Ānāpānasati: *Mindfulness on Breathing*. This method has been inherited from the time of the Buddha up to the present time in many countries that embrace Buddhism such as Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand. There is a variety of applying the Foundation of Mindfulness for practice at different schools. Some schools emphasize Kāyānupassanā - the Contemplation of the Body of Iriyāpatha Pabba category (concentration on the posture), some emphasize Kāyānupassanā-the Contemplation of the Body of Ānāpāna Pabba category (concentration on in-out breath), some emphasize

Vedanānupassanā - the Contemplation of Feelings (concentration on feelings), some emphasize Cittānupassanā - the contemplation of mind (concentration on the mind). There are many ways of practicing the Foundation of Mindfulness in Thailand as well. But it is observed that the most popular method is Kāyānupassanā - the Contemplation of the Body of IriyāpathaPabba category (concentration on the posture) as the base and rotate to use the method of Vedanānupassanā, Cittānupassanā and Dhammānupassanā. The way of practice is to allow the practitioner to walk, stand and sit as the main point and they have to be mindful all the time. As for lying posture, the practitioner has to practice before going to bed. While walking, standing and sitting, if the practitioner feels painful, he has to contemplate that this is Vedanānupassanā: *the Contemplation of Feelings*. If the mind is woolgathering, the practitioner has to contemplate that this is Cittānupassanā: *the Contemplation of Mind*. At the same moment, when the mind is concentrated, the practitioner has to investigate Kilesa: *Defilement* that is Nivara: *Hindrance*, investigating Khanda: *Aggregate*, Āyatana: *the Twelve Spheres*, Bojjhaṅga: *the Enlightenment Factors* and AriyaSacca: *the Noble Truths*. This is Dhammānupassanā: *the Mindfulness of Mental Objects*. The varieties of these practices are for perceiving the nature of life that is Khanda: *the Five Aggregates* - Mind and Matter or Matter and Mind as “they arise, exist and fall away. So they arise, exist and fall away according to the conditions”. When perceiving the nature of life, the practitioner will be free from clinging. This meditation of Satipatṭhāna: *the Foundation of Mindfulness* is very fruitful, beneficial and apparent. The person who passed the practice admitted that the mind became qualified, healthy and efficient. So, it is now very popular for the practice of people around the world. It is to prove the Buddha’s words that “O Bhikkhus, this way is one way for the purity of living beings, overcoming grief and lamentation, extinction of sufferings and mental feeling, attaining the right path, and penetrating Nibbana. This is the way of Satipatṭhāna: *the four Foundation of Mindfulness*”.

Source of Information

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. Thai Tipitaka, Edition of Mahachula.

Vinayapitaka, Parivāra, Suttantapitaka Diganikāya Mahāvagga, Diganikāya Mahāvagga, Diganikāya Pātivagga, Majjhimanikāya Mulapannāsaka, Majjhimanikāya Uparipannāsaka, Unguttaranikāya Dukanipāta, Unguttaranikāya, Catukkanipāta, Unguttaranikāya Dasakanipāta, Unguttaranikāya Ekadasakanipata, Khuddakanikaya Dhammapada. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Press, 1996.

Phra Buddhagosacara Thera. Author. **Visuddhimagga Scripture** translated and compiled by Somdej Phra Buddhacara (Art Asabha Thera). The 9th Edition. Bangkok: Thana Press, 2010.

Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto). **Buddhadham of Revision Edition**. The 39th Edition. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Press, 2014.

Phra Dhammadhirarajamahamuni (Chodok Yanasitthi). **Samatha-Vipassanā Kammaṭṭhāna Practice**. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Press, 1988.

Phrakrupalad Suwatthanaphrommakun (Narong Jittasophano), Editor. **Vipassanā Kammaṭṭhāna in Buddhism**. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Press, 1997.

Phra Bhattanta Asabha Thera Aggamahākamatthānācariya. **Vipassanādura**. Bangkok: C100 Design Co., LTD., 1993.