

**THE MANUAL OF
INSIGHT MEDITATION**
Practising Clear Comprehension
In accordance with the
MAHĀ SATIPATṬHĀNA SUTTA

AS INSTRUCTED BY

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written by

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**The Buddha raising hand appeared
marvelously on a negative in India**



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An Appreciation
by
Prasert Ruangskul

HONORARY SECRETARY-GENERAL
Of
The World Fellowship of Buddhists

This Manual of Practising Insight Meditation by Ven. Phra Paññāvuddho Bhikkhu is a useful guide to meditation practitioners. Part of the book is a translation of the instructions in Thai on the subject of meditation by Ven. Ācariya Dhammadharo, who is Ven. Paññāvuddho's teacher and a master in the art of meditation; while the rest of the book comes mostly from the cassettes of the author's own instructions while teaching meditation both in Thailand and abroad.

While the meditation technique described in this book is inspired by a clear comprehension of the Satipaṭṭhānasutta or the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, there are no doubt many ideas put forth that come from experience and practice. Hence it contains many suggestions that help practitioners to solve some of the problems that they encounter in their meditation.

The book deals with the all four postures of meditation, sitting, standing, walking and lying, and it is well illustrated. The explanation of each posture is clear and succinct. As it is fundamentally based on the Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, the only way that leads to the purification of beings, the book is a dependable manual to all insight meditation practitioners.

12 October 2531 (1988)

FOREWORD

Since I started teaching this method of meditation in Malaysia, many meditators have been requesting for an explanatory manual they can read and refer to my very respected master, the Ven. Acharn DHAMMADHARO BHIKKHU, has been teaching the method for about 30 years, and there has been a Thai language manual on the subject which has gone through several reprints.

An English language manual was first published by BHIKKHU NĀGASENA, an Indian monk, in B.E. 2511 (1968). In B.E. 2525 (1982), I, as an Upāsaka then, reprinted the same book with additional details and drawings illustrating the method. These books are now out of print and difficult to find.

In order to fulfil the request of meditators who do not understand Thai, this manual is therefore the third English language version. The text is largely from recordings of my meditation instructions, and the illustrative drawings are from the Thai language text previously referred to, “The One Sole Way-ทางสายเอก”.

The present book begins with a brief history of the Ven. Acharn DHAMMADHARO BHIKKHU, recording his practice, his efforts, the benefits he obtained, and his subsequent propagation of the method. This is followed by a description of the method as well as of

some of the experiences which a meditator may expect from the practice. Sufficient information is included to help the meditator understand how to practise and to help him deal with problems he may encounter.

There are several ways to cultivate clear comprehension, But the best was one which the Buddha emphasized most often, and is the same as one which was first tried and founded in Thailand about 35 years ago by Ven. Acharn DHAMMADHARO BHIKKHU. He had practised it continuously for about 3 years, and finally realised the cessation of suffering for himself. However, he continued practising with critical reflection for another 6 years until he was confident of the method. Certain that this was the true way to the ending of rebirth and that it should be taught to others, he then went to many provinces in Thailand and taught Insight meditation from his experience. In this way, he arrived at Wat Chai Na, the crematorium yard in Nakorn Si Thammarat province which is a very quiet and shady place, He settled in this Wat and found here some meditator monks practising their own method.

Since the meditation method of the Ven. Ācharn DHAMMADHARO BHIKKHU was clearly different from others, many monks and lay people came to enquire about it. He successfully taught them his method, and from then on, Wat Chai Na became his meditation centre, with students coming from all parts of Thailand and benefitting from his instruction. Many went back to teach the method in their own temples. People from other

countries in Asia, Europe, and America then came too, and he had to instruct them using gestures as there were very few monks there who could speak English. These foreign meditators too, having realised insight, returned to teach in their home countries.

Thailand is a Buddhist country, and there are many meditation teachers, most of whom teach from theory. There are very few meditation teachers who teach from their own experience. Ven. Acharn DHAMMADHARO BHIKKHU has been accused of teaching a forest or deviant method. While he is not a highly educated monk, he has argued that all the teachings of the Buddha are, in fact, forest teachings, and all the more so as the Buddha attained Enlightenment in the forest. There have been times when other teachers have attacked his teachings, but the harder their assaults, the more successfully has the Ven. Acharn DHAMMADHARO taught. It has now been conclusively shown that his meditation method is in accordance with the section on full awareness with clear comprehension in one of the most important teachings of the Buddha, namely the SATIPATTHĀNA SUTTA or the Sutta on the Foundations of Mindfulness. His method is now one of the most well-known throughout Thailand, having spread to many provinces, as well as overseas.

The Ven. Ācharn DHAMMADHARO has since moved from Wat Chai Na. He is teaching permanently at Wat Trai-Ngarm (The Temple of Beautiful Banyan Trees), now his main training centre.

I am sure that any reader or meditator, whether Thai, Chinese, American, or other, who practises this method diligently will gain benefits as mentioned in the last part of this book. Persons who have merely read the book, have not worked carefully in accordance with the method and who have not, therefore, had the experience described, are advised not to decry the method or to discourage others by disparaging it. They should instead, try it out seriously and realize for themselves the true nature of this life through their perceptions and feelings.

Any readers who needs further clarification about the method, or who would like to discuss some problem, he has encountered, is invited to get in touch with me about it.

I try to repay the favour of the Buddha, my Ven. Master, my parents, and all people who support my life in the monkhood, by helping to propagate Buddhism as best I can.

May all of you who struggle to find the way of peace be able to gain real happiness and highest bliss—Nirvāna.

May all beings meet the real path of peace.

Ven. Paññāvuddho Bhikkhu

24/5/2531 (1988)

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THE CULTIVATION OF CLEAR COMPREHENSION

When practising group meditation, do not sit too closely together. Sit in orderly rows to avoid all bodily contact. When sitting, your back and your neck must be straight, and this posture must be maintained for the whole duration of the session.

In serious or intensive meditation practice, it is generally a good idea to start each session with a preparatory meditation on loving-kindness (mettā). When properly done, this helps clear the mind of the hindrances to meditation and gets the mind into a positive attitude which is favorable to deep concentration, in addition to its many long-term beneficial effects.

We begin by arousing the emotional feeling of Mettā towards oneself with these thoughts:

May I be free from enmity;
May I be free from mental suffering;
May I be free from bodily suffering;
May I be happy.

When one can feel distinctly the loving-kindness in these thoughts, one then arouses loving-kindness for another person. In order that the proper form of Mettā be developed and not a corrupted version, the beginner

should avoid choosing these four types of persons: one with whom you are very intimate; one who is dead; one of the opposite sex; an one whom you find unpleasant or an enemy. It is advisable that you should, instead, choose a living person, preferably of the same sex, whom you know, respect, and wish well of. You will then find it easier to arouse Mettā for that person by bringing to mind his good qualities and what he has done for you. You should think, with loving-kindness and sincerity:

May he/she be free from enmity;
 May he/she be free from mental suffering;
 May he/she be free from bodily suffering;
 May he/she be happy.

When your Mettā and concentration have been more developed, you can then progress to radiate Mettā to: (1) a very dear friend; (2) a neutral person; (3) a person you dislike; (4) an enemy; using the formula already described. The next step forward is to radiate metta to all individual beings.

There are further developments one can pursue in the cultivation of loving-kindness, but for purposes of our preliminary meditation, this will do for now. Additionally, or alternatively, you can settle in with breathing meditation.

Close your eyes gently and then observe your breathing. Breathe in slowly and naturally, and breathe

out slowly and naturally, observing both the in-breathing and the out-breathing with careful mindfulness. When breathing in a long in-breathing, out a long out-breath, you are aware of breathing out a long out-breath. When breathing in a short in-breath, you are aware of breathing, in a short in-breath, and when breathing out a short out-breath, you are aware of that also.

Practise breathing meditation like this for a while, to tranquilize the mind. When you have calmed your thoughts down, you should start to cultivate 'clear comprehension'. This is done through moving one hand (either the right or the left - it does not matter which) slowly and intermittently up and down in an arc, hinged at the elbow, the other hand resting on the lap or knee.

First, rest on the knee the hand that you intend to move. Keeping the upper arm still, and with full awareness, raise the forearm and hand off the knee and turn the hand to the handshake position, then and hold it there. Direct your concentrated awareness to the palm or fingers of that hand. You may move the fingers a little to draw your awareness to the sensations in the hand, at this point. Keep your focused awareness on the feelings there for the entire duration of the exercise.

Then raise the hand a little, simultaneously moving the fingers, and stop momentarily.

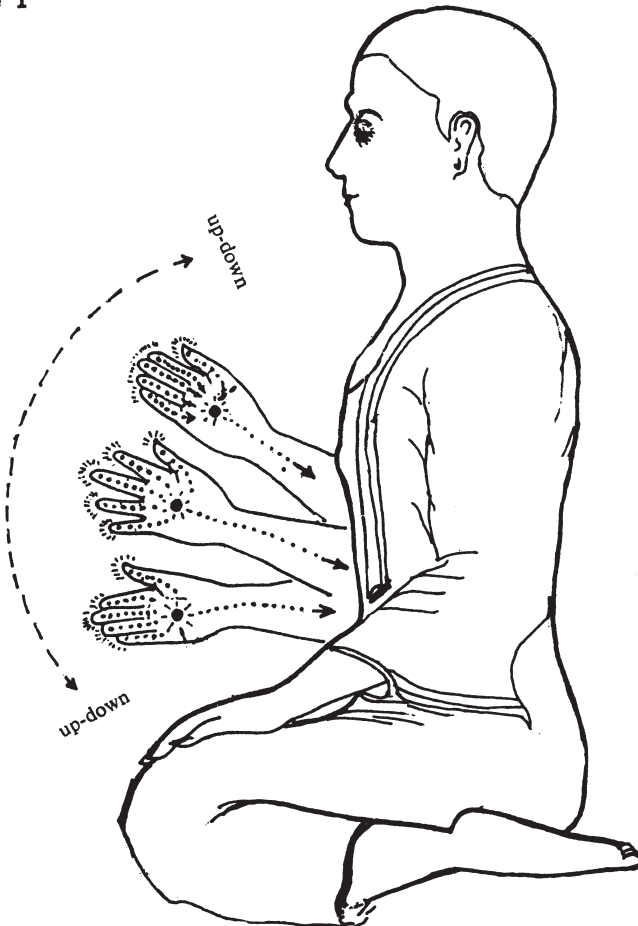
Repeat the process step by step until the hand reaches the limit of its arc near the shoulder, then move the hand intermittently downward until the hand nearly reaches the knee, then reverse direction to move intermittently upward again, and so on, again and again.

It is very important to bear in mind that while the hand and fingers are moving, and in the stops in between, your attention must be concentrated in the palm or at the fingers continuously and intensely.

How long do you keep this up? For as long as your time allows, continuously, until you perceive a strong and clear sensation of prickling in the centre of the chest. Until this happens, even if you feel tired, you must be patient. As long as this prickling sensation in the centre of the chest does not arise, do not stop the practice. Even if a prickling feeling does arise, but is not clear or strong enough, do not stop. Only when you can realise the prickling sensation very clearly and strongly at the centre of the chest should you stop moving the hand and rest it on your lap or knee.

THE WAY TO FIX MINDFULNESS WHILE BENDING AND STRETCHING THE ARM

Figure 1



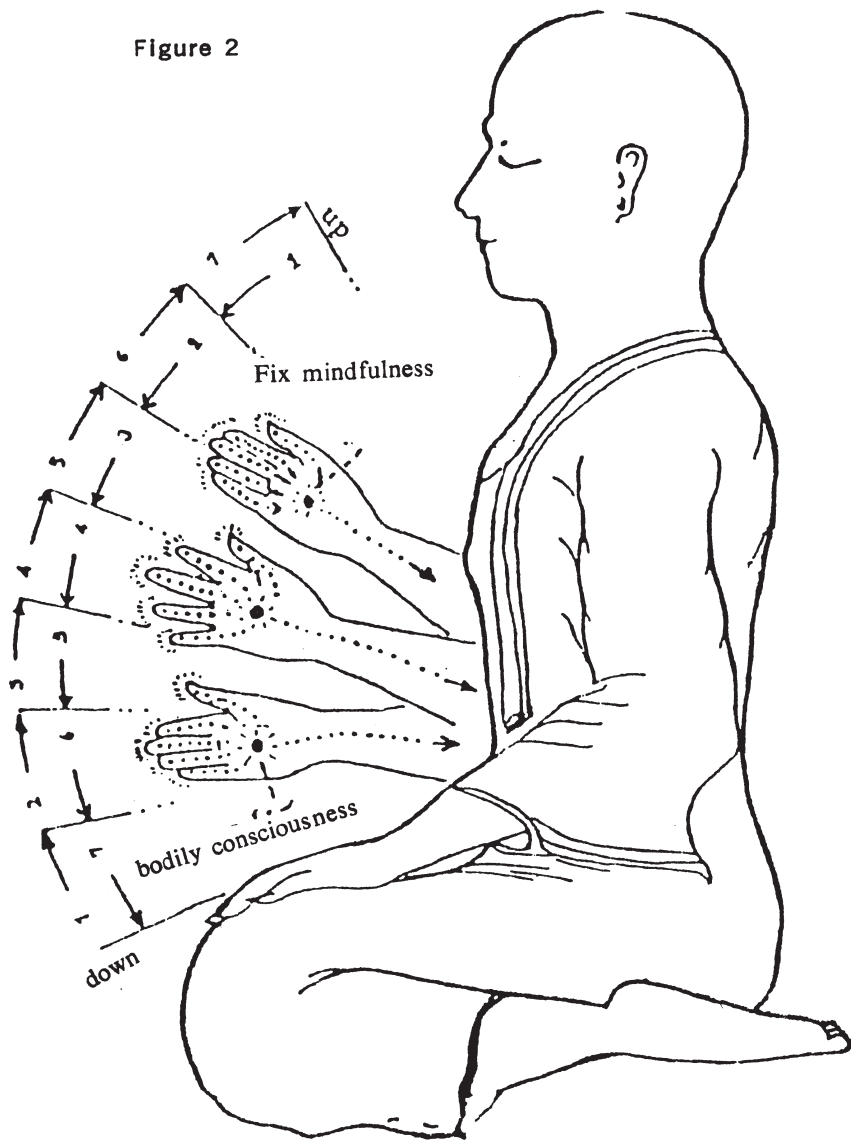
Move the hand up (and down) in steps, with momentary stops in between. While moving the hand, move the fingers also, spreading them slightly apart and then bringing them close together again. Realise the feeling arising and ceasing at the tips of the fingers or at the centre of the palm. There is no need to recite any mantra — this would, in fact, prevent the realising of feeling.

When beginning the practice, fix your awareness and concentrate it in the palm or at the fingertips. Initially, you may not be aware of any feeling there, but after continuing the practice a while, sensations will be felt such as a feeling of warmth in the palm or fingers, or a vague thrill like an electric flux in the fingers, palm, or arm. Any such feeling arises and ceases from moment to moment. When you become aware of such feeling, you should then concentrate your mind continuously on the feeling. The more intensely you concentrate, the stronger will the feeling become.

The feeling will then gradually extend along the arm towards the chest. When it does reach the chest, you may note various other kinds of sensation arising: the chest may feel tight or stiff, or you may feel a headache or dizziness. The prickling sensation in the chest may feel like something pricking in and out very rapidly in the centre of the chest. Concentrate on this feeling. Even if you feel that it hurts, try to comprehend it—do not stop. The more you concentrate on it, the stronger will the feeling become.

The prickling sensation in the chest will subsequently be felt to pierce straight through to the back, and from there, to move upward like a blowing wind to the back of the head, the top of the head, the forehead, the eyebrows, to emerge from there. When these sensations are observed, you may also feel pain in the head. Do not, however, stop concentrating.

Figure 2



Fix mindfulness at the centre of the palm or at the fingertips while moving forearm up and down intermittently.

Figure 3

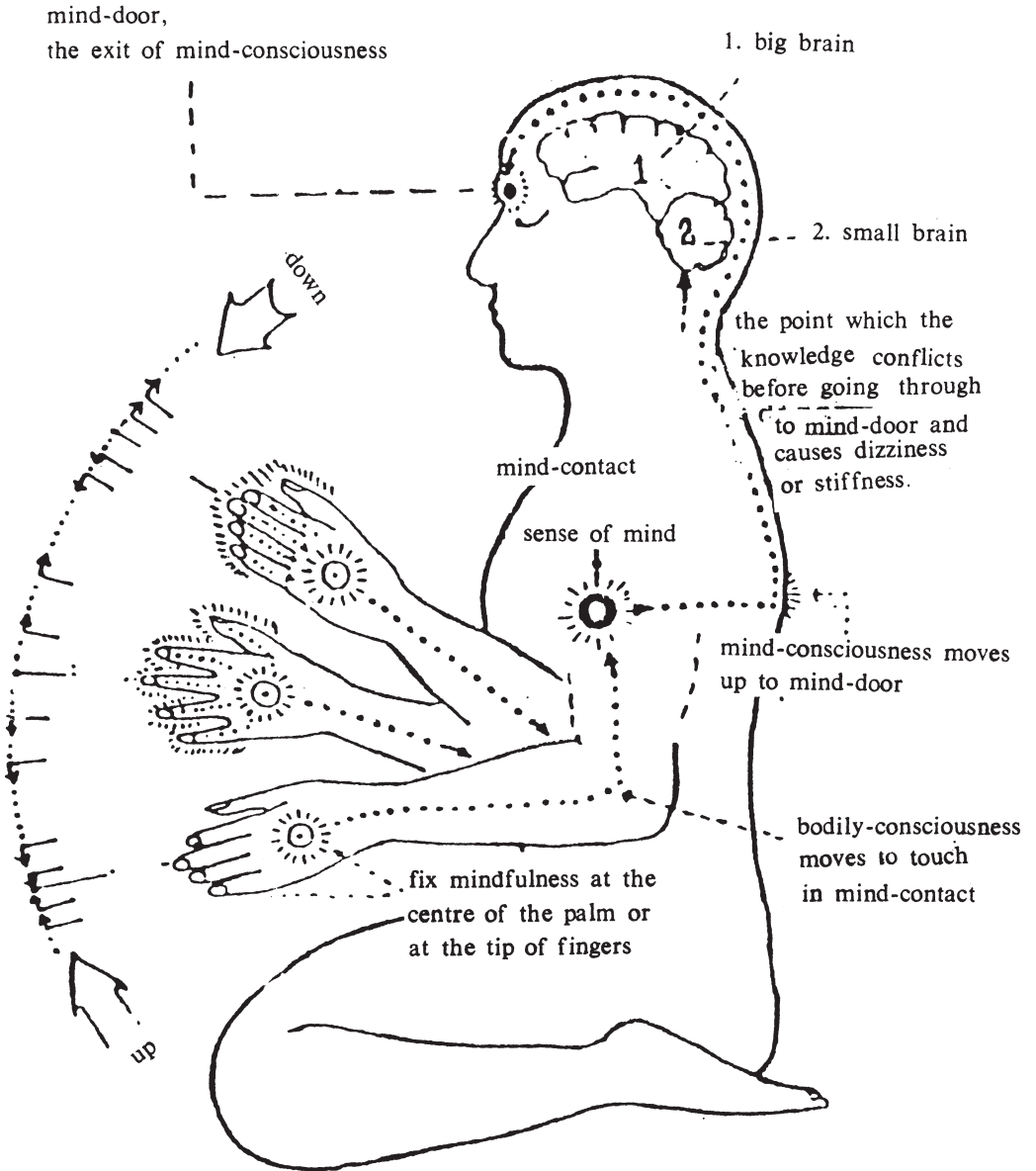
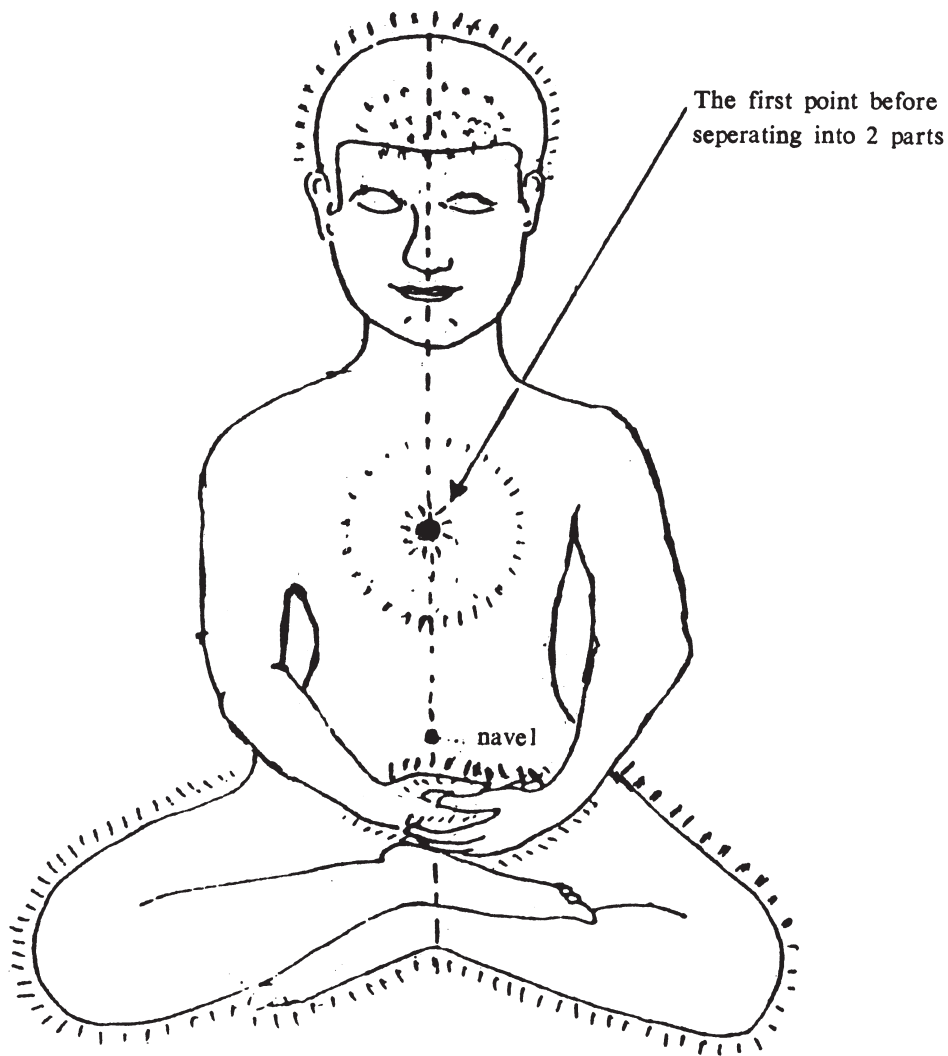


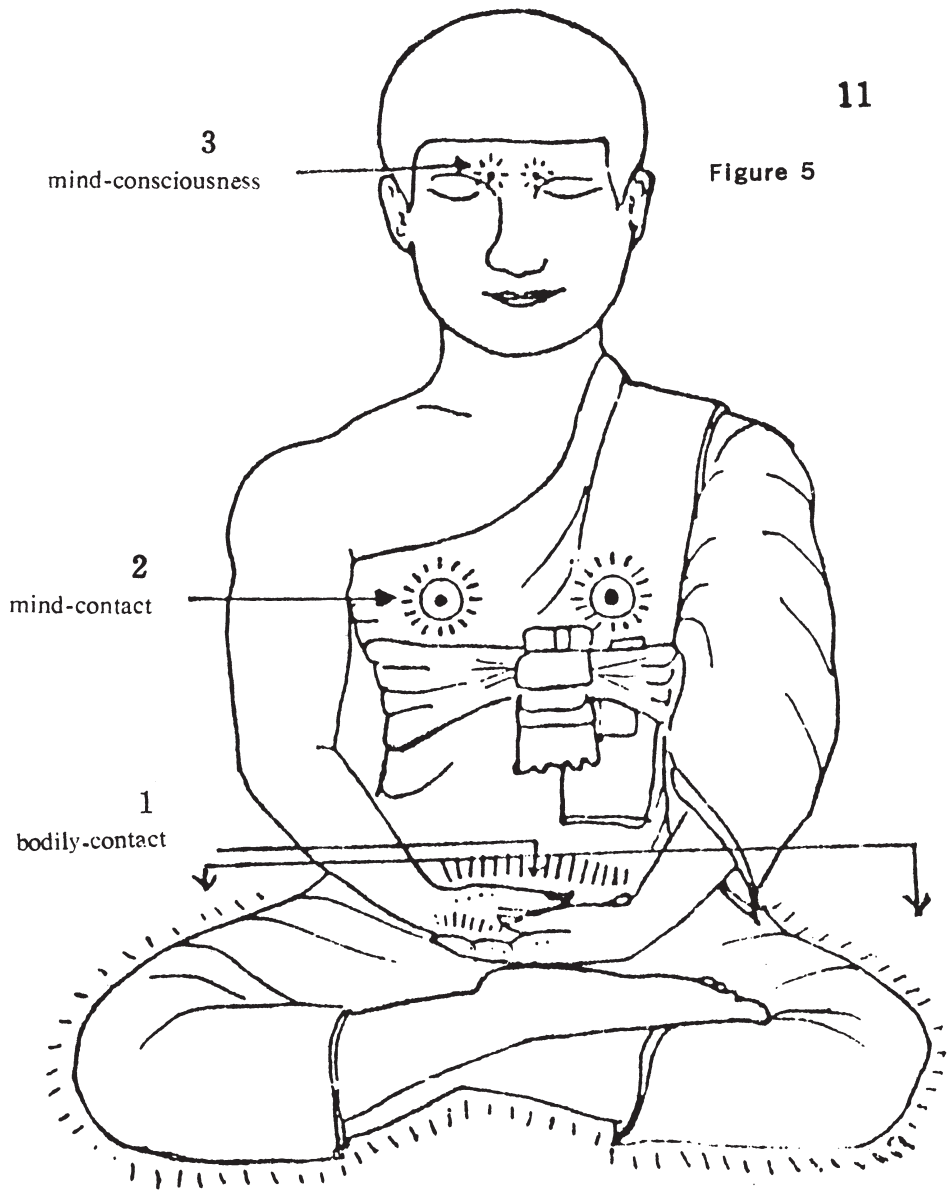
Figure 4



Some meditators practising other meditation methods may have experienced sensations similar to those I have described, including the prickling sensation in the centre of the chest and acute pain from concentrated awareness of it. Not understanding what is happening, they may give abandoned their practice session. To such meditators, I would suggest that they are indeed very fortunate to have encountered the experience. They should not be afraid of it, but should, instead, continue concentrating in it.

The results from concentrating on the prickling feeling in the centre of the chest from other meditation methods are the same as those from the present method of moving the hand. Whichever method you practise, they bring you to the same point. It depends on your right understanding. The moving hand method, however, is a short cut to clear comprehension.

While in the sitting posture, practise in this way systematically and thoroughly. Whatever feelings you may have right now, at this very moment, just know and be aware of them. You should be detached, clinging to nothing in the world. Do not allow your mind to dwell on past events, or to speculate on what the future holds: the past has been left behind, and the future is as yet unreached. But right in the present moment, the meditator must concentratedly observe every phenomenon he is experiencing, without wavering, until insight penetrates.

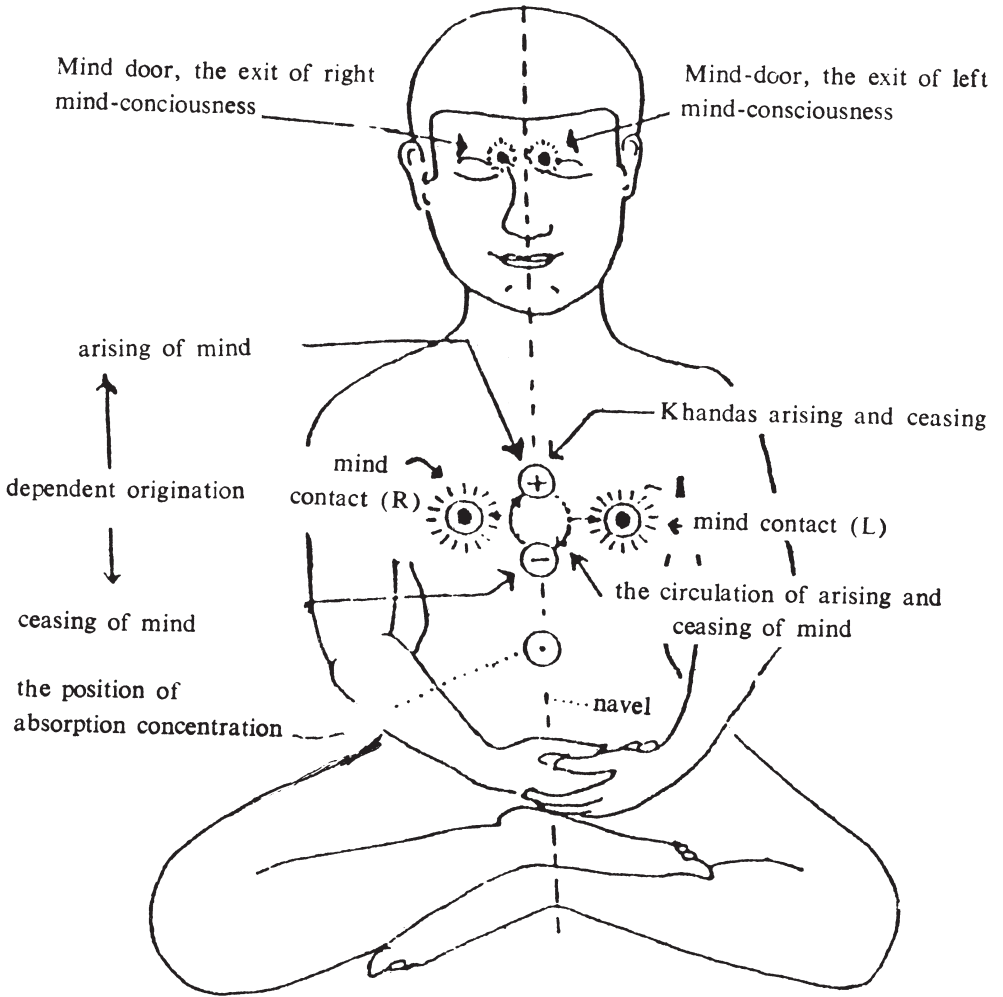


1. Observing the bodily-contact, realize the arising and ceasing of bodily-consciousness at the touching part
2. Observing the mind-contact, realize the arising and ceasing of mind at the mind-contact
3. The realization of the arising and ceasing of mind-consciousness

***Only point 1 & 2 can be observed

Figure 6

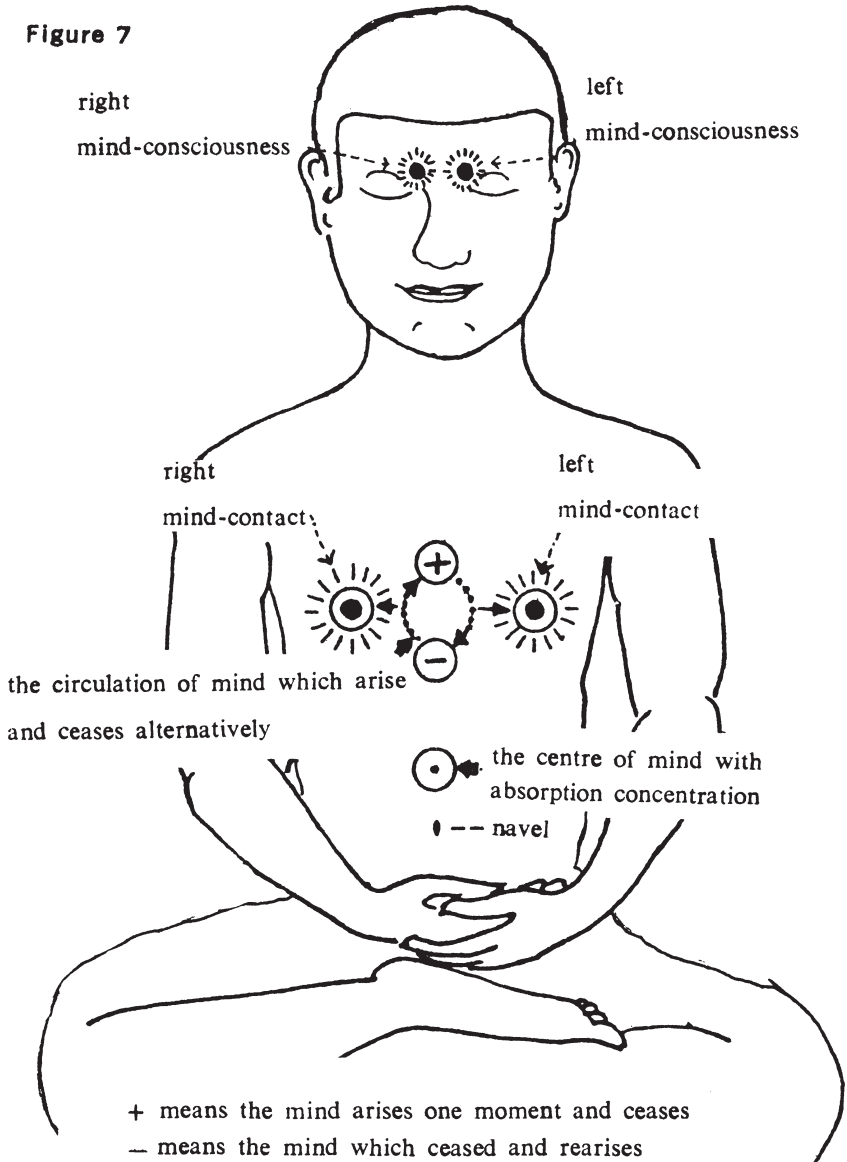
The picture showing the inner senses are seperated into 2 parts



Keep practising in this way, again and again. The prickling feeling in the centre of the chest is very important. When you can feel it clearly and concentrate on it continuously; it will become even more distinct, and you will be more sensitive and receptive to insight.

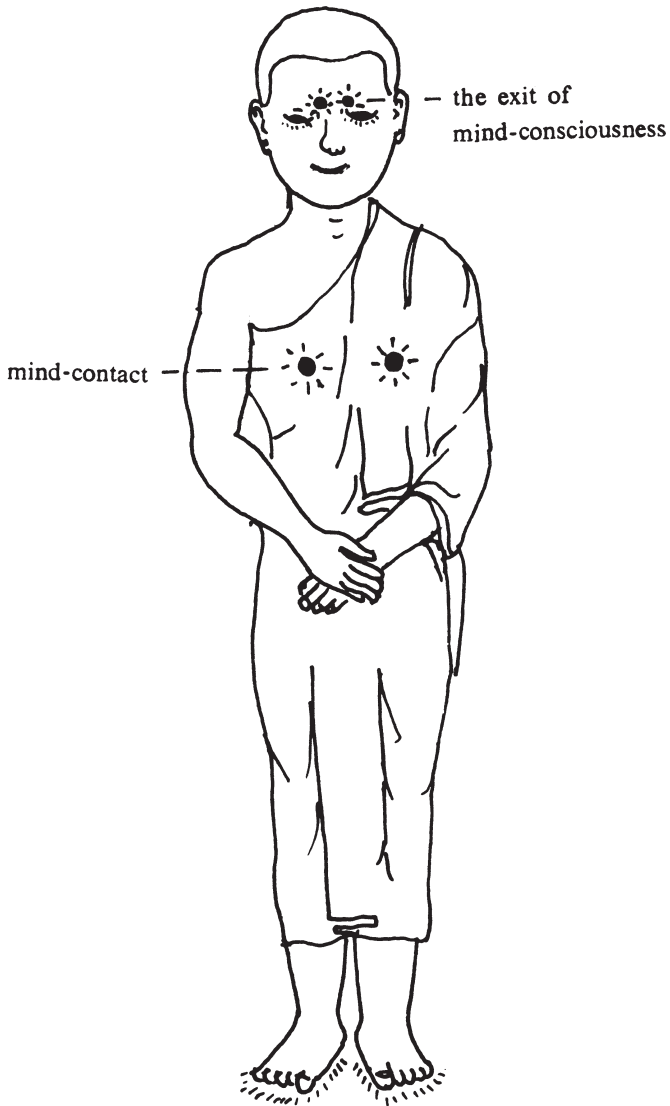
While sitting in meditation, one may sometimes experience pain at the pressure points of the buttocks, or numbness or other kinds of sensations there. When this happens, concentrate attentively on the feeling in the buttocks. Try to observe the feeling as intently as possible: Whether it is numb, warm, prickling, painful, or whatever. The harder you concentrate, the stronger the feeling becomes, and then, after a while, the feeling fades little by little until it ceases. The feeling then resumes again and ceases again, alternately, until it gradually extends upward to the chest. The chest may feel stiff or tight, but just go on observing this feeling without being afraid. A slowly strengthening and clearer prickling feeling in the centre of the chest will gradually develop and you yourself will at the same time become more sensitive and clearly comprehending—i.e., being clearly and sharply aware of whatever sensation you are feeling or whatever action you are performing at that very moment—and therefore receptive to meditative understanding. Again, the feelings in the chest which arise from concentration on the buttocks are similar to those developing from the hand-moving meditation. The meditator should then continue concentrating on the feeling in the chest, as previously described.

Figure 7



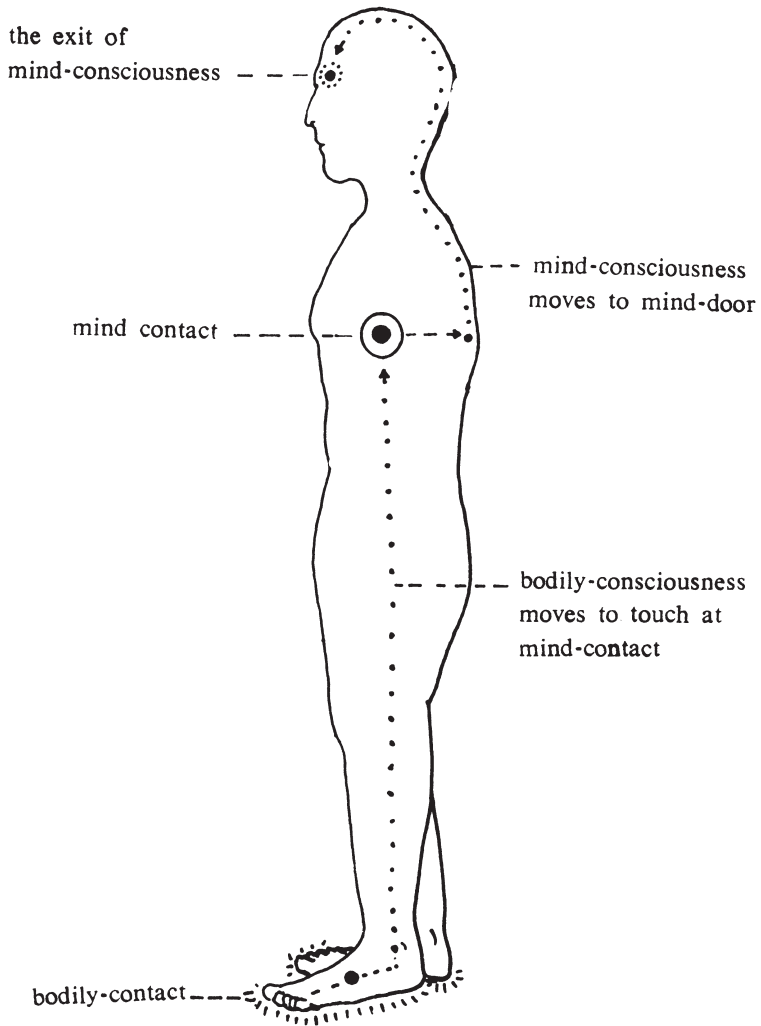
*Though one should live a hundred years
 Not seeing rise and fall.
 Yet better is life for a single day
 Seeing rise and fall*

Figure 8



observing the feeling
under the soles

Figure 9



standing meditation observe the feeling under the soles and realize the arising and ceasing of feeling at the soles touching the floor. After that realization for sometimes, the arising and ceasing of mind-contact can be realized at the same moment.

Apart from the sitting, one can practise meditation in other postures. One can practise meditation standing, walking, lying down, and even while performing miscellaneous other minor movements of the body.

STANDING POSTURE

Stand bare-footed so that your soles touch the floor. Keep the body still and do not move your hands. Your feet should be slightly apart to keep the body steady.

In this posture, the practice procedure is similar to that of the sitting posture. You can practise through moving your hand, breathing mindfulness, the prickling feeling in the centre of the chest, or concentrating on the feeling in the soles of the feet. The only difference is that when you are sitting, you can observe the feelings caused by pressure on the buttocks, whereas when you stand, the pressure is on the soles of the feet. If you concentrate on the feeling in the soles, you will distinguish such sensations there as warmth, tightness, stiffness, heaviness, numbness, or prickling, the sensation gradually extending upward to the legs and trunk, and you may also feel a wavering offbalance, dizziness, headache, etc. Do not be afraid of any such sensations but just continue concentrating. The results of concentrating like this are similar to those in the sitting posture. Older persons may, however, prefer to hold on to a table to guard against falling.

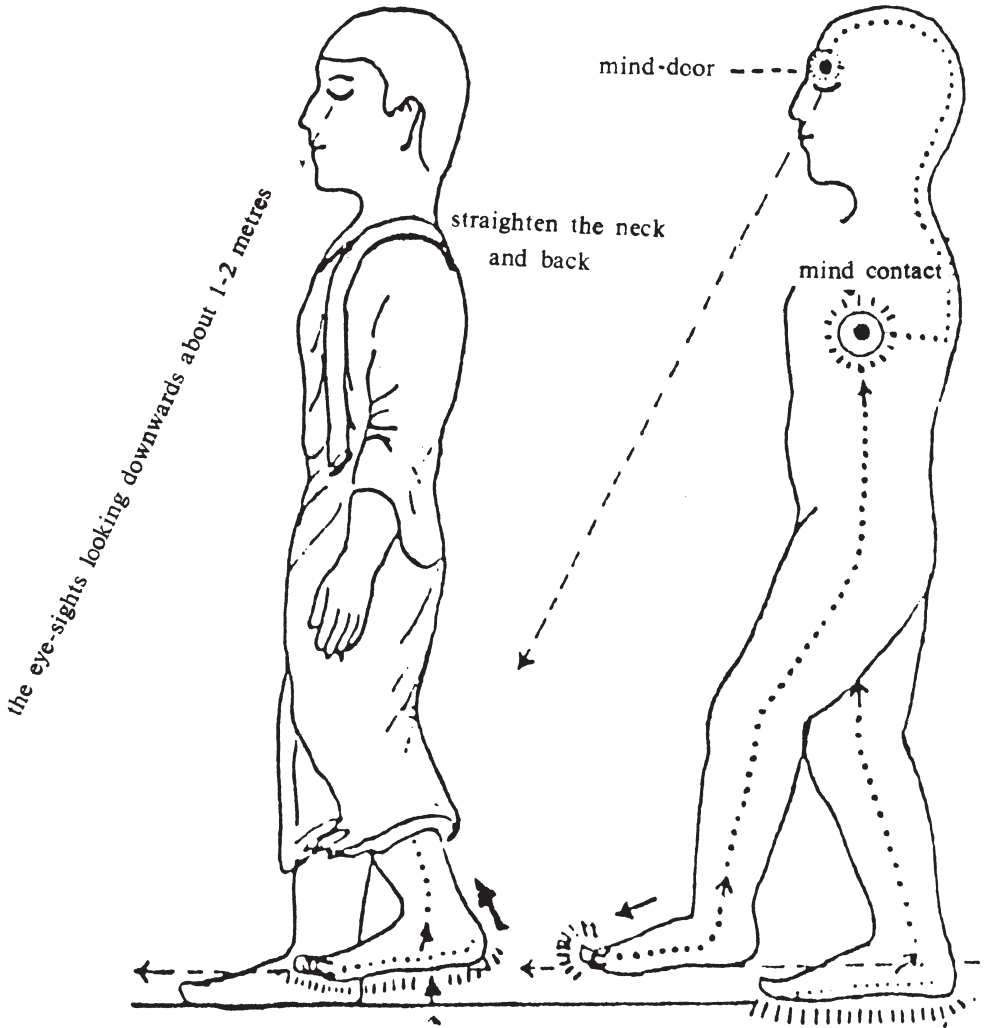
WALKING POSTURE

While you are walking, your neck and your back should be straight, and your soles should move parallel to the floor, the eyes looking at the ground about 2 metres ahead. Observe the feeling under the sole at each step. Do not conceptualize in terms of moving the right or left legs, do not conceptualize lifting, moving or touching, but just observe the feeling at the sole (which you keep parallel to the floor at each step) or at the toes. After walking for a while, you will pick up the feeling. As you lift the sole from the floor, be aware of the slightly sticky feeling. Try to be mindful. Do not scatter your awareness around on other things in the environment, but concentrate your awareness on your soles and keep your vision strictly on the path. In this way, you will realise a lot of feeling, in your soles, rising to the legs, knees, trunk, and even to the head. Try to concentrate and observe the feeling which arises in each step.

In walking meditation, observe the feeling while lifting the foot, moving the foot forward and stepping down onto the floor realizing the arising and ceasing of bodily-contact. When the knowledge is deeper and clearer, the meditator can realize mind-contact and other effects--(see figure 10).

Many people mistakenly think that sitting is the only way to practise meditation. If they practise walking meditation, their sitting meditation will, in fact, improve, and they will also become healthier. To practise

Figure 10



walking meditation with more successful results, one should try to keep the sole parallel to the floor while walking, and to carefully observe the feeling in the sole continuously, including when it is being lifted and lowered. When [one learns and understands well, then walking meditation will be found to be very useful.

Should you wish to practise in isolation in a house, you may walk around in a room, but it is generally better to have a place set aside as a meditation walkway. Sandy ground is better for health than a cement floor. A wooden floor, however, is also a good substitute.

Figure 11

The walk of one of covetous or lustful temperament

11.1



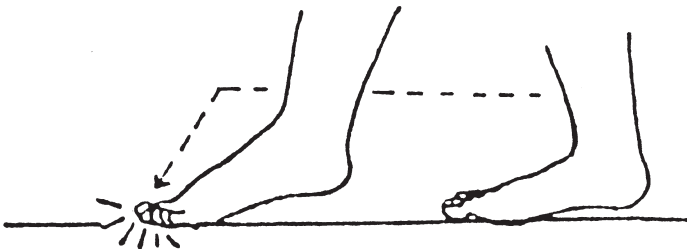
1. While lifting the foot, the heel will be lifted first, and the toes after.

11.2



2. While moving forward, the toes are downward.

11.3

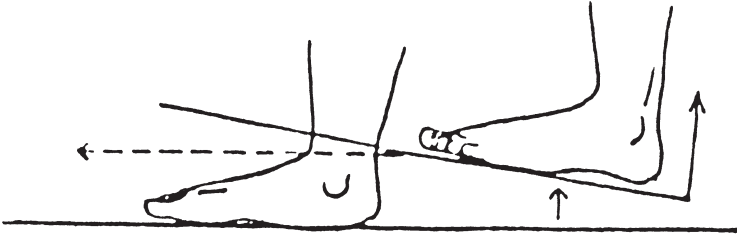


3. While stepping down, the toes will touch the floor first, and the heel after.

Figure 12

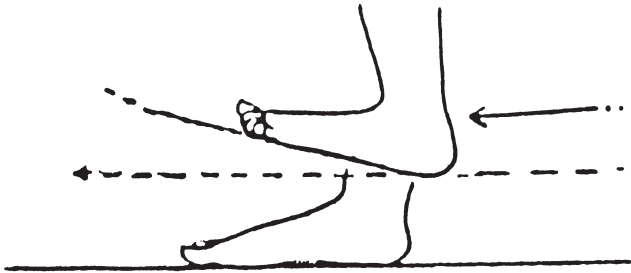
The walk of one of hating temperament.

12.1



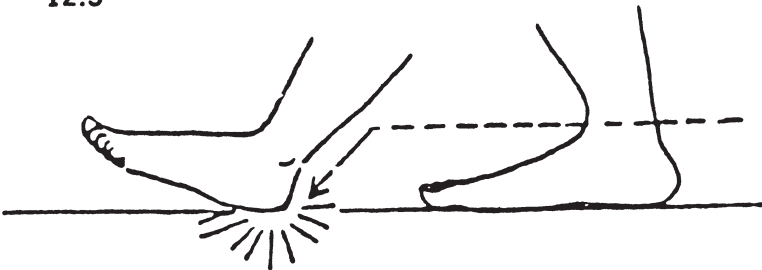
1. While moving the sole up, the toes will be lifted first and the heel after.

12.2



2. While moving forwards, the heel is downwards.

12.3



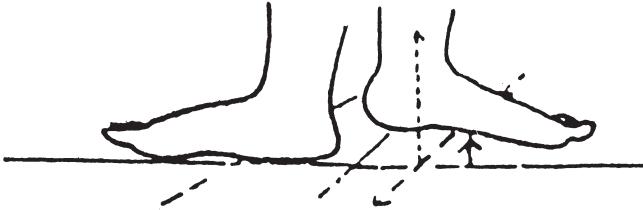
3. While stepping down, the heel will touch the floor first, but the toe after.

Figure 13

The walk of one of deluded temperament.

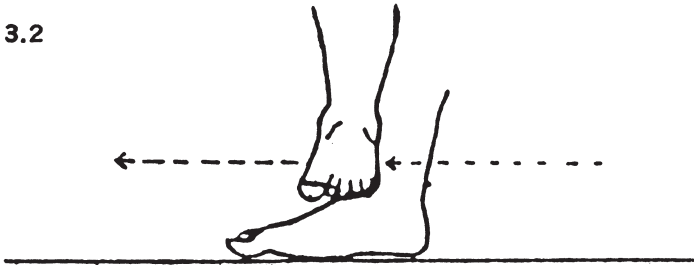
The heels are close together and the feet pointing in opposite directions.

13.1



1. Standing with the feet splayed widely apart. While lifting the foot up to step forwards, the toes still point off to one side.

13.2



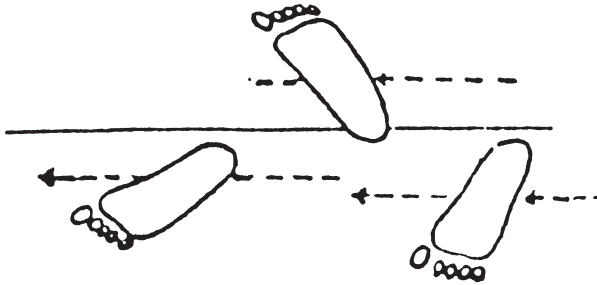
2. While moving forwards, the feet are carried slantwise to one side.

13.3



3. While stepping down, the foot is still pointing to one side. The outer edge of the foot strikes the ground first.

13.4



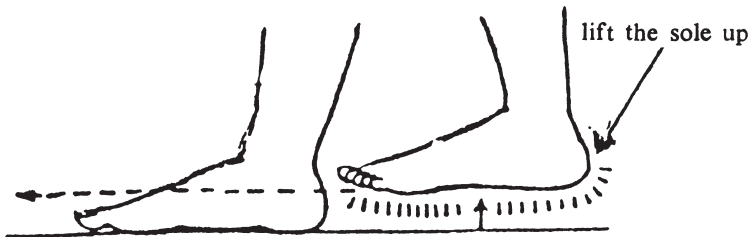
The footprint of one of deluded temperament:

- the heels point inward.
- the toes point outward.

The proper way to do walking meditation.

Lift the foot straight up with the sole parallel to the floor, lifting heel and toes at the same time. Move the foot with the toes pointing directly in the direction of movement, and not outwards, Plant the foot down with the heel and the toes reaching the ground simultaneously.

Figure 14.1



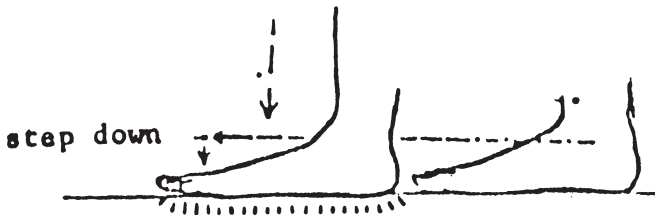
1. While lifting the sole up, observe the feeling under the sole.

14.2



2. While moving forwards, observe the feeling at the toes.

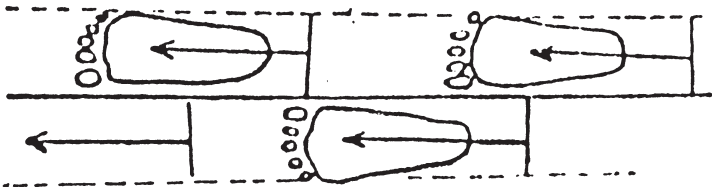
14.3



3. While stepping down, observe the feeling under the sole.

The heel and the toes should touch the floor at the same time.

14.4



4. The footprints of the correct way of walking meditation.

With practice, the following feelings may be observed: tingling in the soles while moving, numbness or warmth in the soles leading upwards into the legs, stiffness and tightness in the chest, tension in the head, or dizziness. Do not worry over any feeling that arises

as this will disappear by itself. The ideal in walking meditation would be that the feeling should reach the centre of the chest so that the meditator should later on realize the prickling feeling there. In such a case, the meditator should stop and stand still, to concentrate on that feeling continuously and intensely. At this point, the meditator will have heightened sensitivity and will be on the threshold of developing clear comprehension towards his whole body, being clearly and sharply aware of whatever sensation he is feeling or whatever action he is performing at that very moment. The Buddha taught that in walking meditation, one must have clear comprehension at every step.

Five benefits are derived from walking meditation:

1. Being more patient and not so easily tired when walking long distances.
2. Being more patient in the performance of any kind of task, for that was what the Buddha emphasized especially in practising meditation. A beginning meditator will have difficulty sitting, standing, or walking in meditation for long periods, and he is advised to begin with walking meditation, during which he develops patience in practising meditation.
3. Improvement in health. During walking meditation, you will feel as if all the nerves of your body are working, and all parts of your body warming up, with profuse sweating.

This counter acts unbalanced activities of the body which may otherwise cause illness.

4. Good digestion, This is why walking meditation can alleviate gastric problems.
5. The results that one attains from walking meditation are long-lasting.

LYING POSTURE

When practising meditation lying down, the meditator should do so in accordance with the Buddha's instructions as follows; *“In the middle watch of the night, lying on his right side, he takes up the posture of a lion, resting one foot on the other ; thus collected and composed, he fixes his thought on rising up again.”*

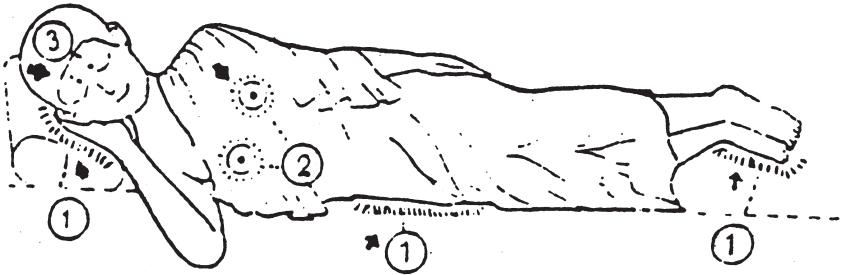
To be clearly comprehending while lying down, the meditator can concentrate on observing, carefully and mindfully, either the feeling at the temple in contact with the pillow, at the buttock or side of the hip in contact with the bed, or on the breathing in and out, until he is clearly aware of some such feeling as prickling or tingling in the area observed, arising and ceasing from moment to moment.

He then keeps on observing that feeling and also objectively notices the thoughts arising in his mind. While some kinds of thoughts aid and support meditation practice, others are disruptive of the practice. When aware of any thought that might distract and disrupt meditation, he must immediately let go of that thought by returning to concentrating on his meditation object,

and not follow after the distracting thought or allow such thoughts to proliferate, because *“Whatever harm a foe may do to a foe. or hater unto one he hates, the ill-directed mind indeed can do one greater harm”* and *“What neither mother nor father too, nor any other relative can do, the well-directed mind indeed can do one greater good.”*

A meditator who has difficulty lying on his right side may lie in a position which suits his convenience, but must be mindful and develop clear comprehension as already described.

Figure 15.1



Point 1 Observe the feeling in any part of the body marked 1 touching the bed or floor. Fix mindfulness at only one of these parts.

Point 2 Observe the mind contact. The meditator must be able to realize the body-contact (point 1) first. As long as one is unable to realize the bodily contact, one will be unable to realize the feeling of arising and ceasing of mind-contact as well.

Point 3 The mind-door, the exit of mind-consciousness, can be realized by fixing mindfulness at the mind-contact in the chest area.

15.2



As instructed by the Buddha, we should at all times *be mindful and clearly comprehending in going forth and in returning, in looking in front and in looking behind, in bending or in stretching the limbs, in wearing the robes and bearing the bowl (for monks), in eating, drinking, chewing and tasting, in easing oneself, in walking, standing, sitting, lying down, falling asleep, waking, in speaking, and in keeping silence.*

How to cultivate clear comprehension in sitting, standing, walking, bending and stretching the limbs, and lying down has already been explained. We shall now discuss the cultivation of clear comprehension in other activities.

To develop clear comprehension in eating, chewing, drinking and tasting, the meditator should observe the feeling at the contact of tongue with food

or water, and then observe the feeling of the movement of mouth or tongue.

Concerning eating, the Buddha instructed:

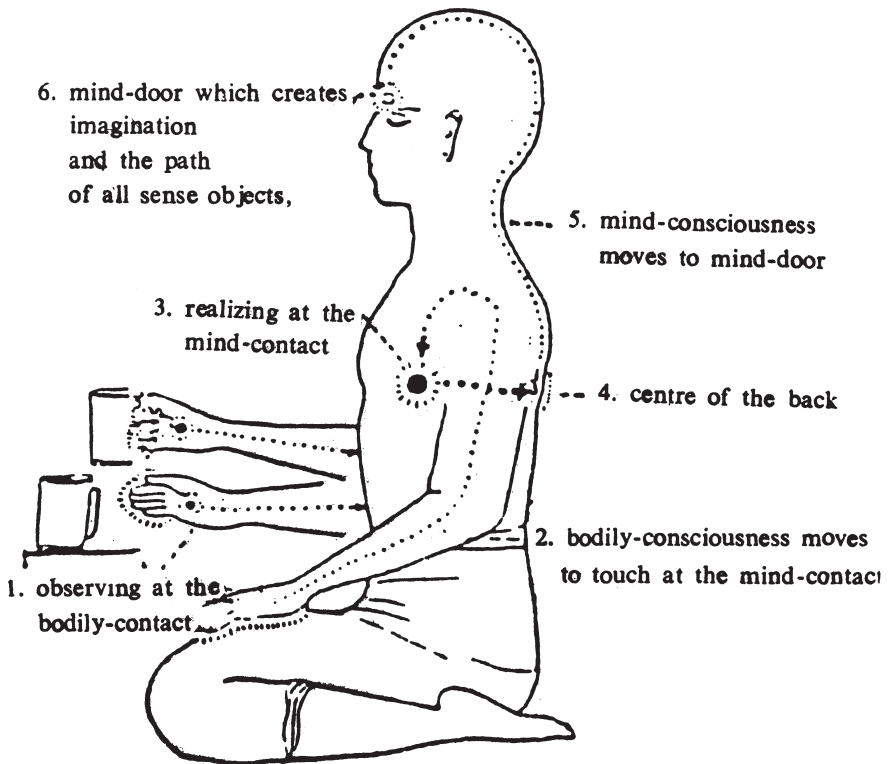
“Taking food thoughtfully and prudently, not for sport, not for indulgence, not for personal charm and adornment, but sufficient for the support and upkeep of body, to allay its pains, to help the practice of the righteous life, with the thought: My former feeling I check, and set on foot no new feeling. So shall I keep going, be blameless and live at ease. Just as a man dressing a wound just for the healing of it, or just as he oils an axle enough for carrying the load, even so thoughtfully and prudently does a brother take his food, not for sport . . . with the thought; So shall I live at ease.

In looking in front and looking behind, observe the feeling at the eye or the head turning and also be aware of the feeling from the mind.

Although the Buddha’s instruction to be mindful and clearly comprehending in wearing the robes and bearing the bowl was meant for monks, lay persons can apply the instruction while putting on clothes, carrying things or doing other chores in daily life by doing everything mindfully and with clear comprehension,

**Fixing mindfulness in miscellenous postures
(For example, touching the glass of water)**

Figure 16



While moving the hand to touch the glass, observe the feeling at the fingertips; when touching or holding the glass, observe the sensation, and realize the arising and ceasing of feeling and bodily consciousness

All actions previously done, whether through body, speech or mind. will have been recorded in the mind or the sub-conscious. When one practises insight meditation, these previously performed actions surface to manifest as sensations, pleasant or unpleasant, in various parts of the body. These are the results of past deeds. Whatever unpleasant feeling arises during your practice of insight meditation comes from the fruition of past bad action. You have to bear with it until that unpleasant feeling has been worked through and does not appear ever again. The fruition of other past bad deeds, however, will still manifest. But those that you have already borne through, you do not have to suffer again. It is somewhat like a man who has borrowed money from others—he has to repay his creditors one by one until all his debts are settled. Or again, it is like those who break the law—some will be sentenced to long imprisonment terms and some to shorter terms, according to the seriousness of the crime. A person convicted of multiple offences will have to bear the consequences of the most serious ones first and the lesser ones later.

People are always willing to accept the consequences of past good actions, but not those of previous bad actions. Whenever they expect the appearance of the consequences of past bad actions, they generally feel unhappy and try to escape, like someone trying to evade his creditors.

To persons practising insight meditation, these comparisons are realistic. The objective of insight

meditation is to release the mind from rebirth or from the fruition of previous actions. Before the realization of the ending of rebirth, one must bear the fruition of previous actions unless the insight meditation is more forceful than the fruition of some previous deeds.

People who suffer during the practice of insight meditation and are afraid to confront the suffering will stop practising insight meditation. They are like those who do not want to repay their creditors, or like murderers trying to escape justice.

In the Four Noble Truths which the Buddha expounded in his first sermon, it should be remembered that the first thing which must be comprehended is suffering. There are many levels of suffering, but in order to successfully deal with any level whatever, one must first comprehend it. Only after having successfully dealt with suffering can one experiences real happiness,

*Impermanent all that is couditioned;
When with wisdom one sees this,
then one tires of suffering—
this is the path of purity.*

*Suffering, all that is conditioned;
when with wisdom one sees this,
then one tires of suffering—
this is the path of purity.*

*All the phenomena, not not one's self;
when with wisdom one sees this
then one tires of suffering—
this is the path of purity*

The experience derived from the cultivation of clear comprehension by the already explained method that was developed by the Ven. Acharn Dhammadharo Bhikkhu, is directly and fully in accordance with the words of the Buddha in the Greater Four Foundations of Mindfulness:

“This brethren, is the sole way that leads to the purification of beings, to the utter passing beyond sorrow and grief, to the destruction of woe and lamentation, to the winning of the right path and the realization of NIBBANA, this way is the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, What are the Four?”

“Herein, a bhikkhu dwells as regards body contemplating body (as transient), by having restrained the dejection in the world (body) arising from coveting...”

“He dwells, as regards feelings, contemplating feelings (as transient), by having restrained the dejection in the world (feeling) arising from coveting...”

“He dwells as regards mind, contemplating mind (as transient), by having restrained the dejection in the world (mind) arising from coveting.....”

“He dwells, as regards mind-states, contemplating mind-states (as transient), ardent, composed and mindful, by having restrained the dejection in the world (mind-states) arising from coveting.”

“And how does the disciple dwell contemplation of the body?..... feeling?..... mind..... mind-states?”

Thus he dwells in contemplation of the body..... feeling..... mind,..... mind-states, either with regard to it internally, externally, or internally and externally. He beholds bow phenomena within the body..... feelings..... mind..... mind-states arise, beholds how they cease, beholds the arising and ceasing of phenomena; or his mindfulness is established with the thought: The body.... feelings..... mind...mind-states exist, to the extent necessary just for knowledge and mindfulness, and he lives detached and clings to nothingness in the world. Thus the disciple dwells in contemplation of the body.....feeling.....mind.....mind-states''

Those who practise insight meditation according to the method already described can realize the body in the body, feeling in feeling, mind in mind and mind-states in mind-states. In this way, one comes to realize:

how eye-consciousness works and how it relates to the mind:

how ear-consciousness works and how it relates to the mind:

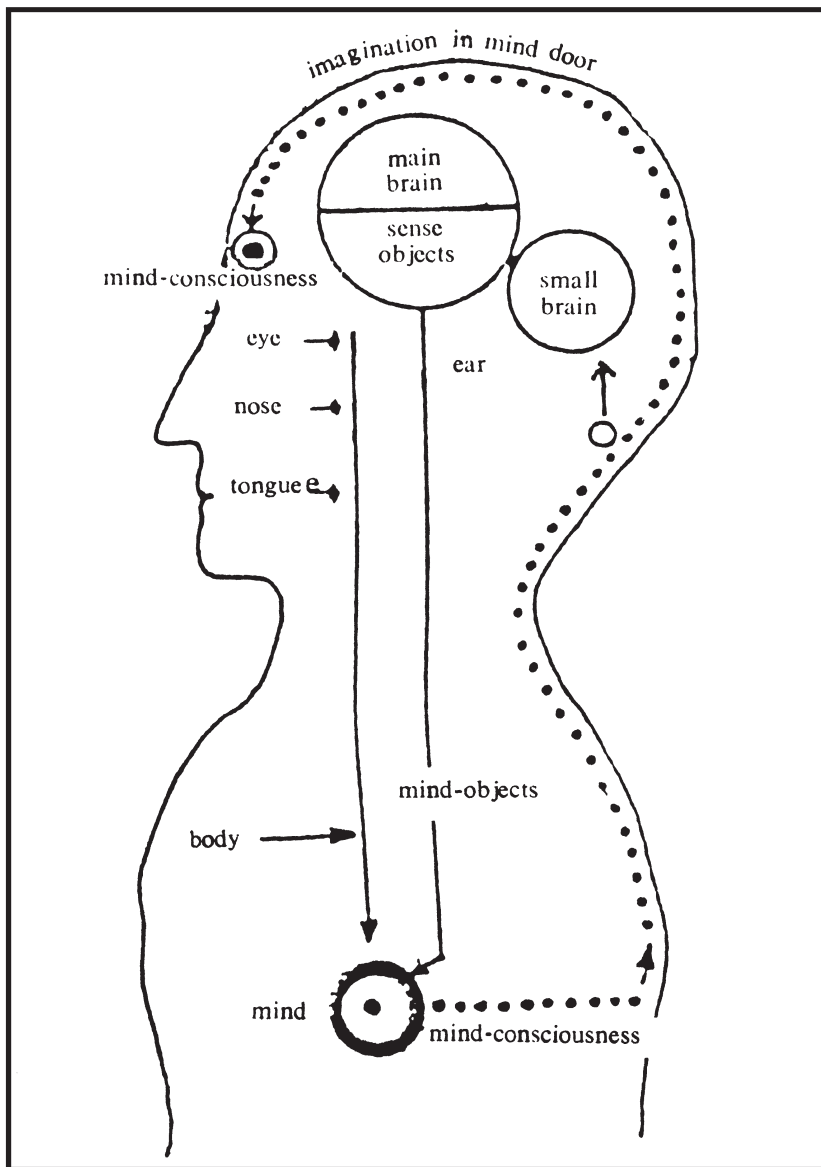
how nose-consciousness works and how it relates to the mind:

how tongue-consciousness works and how it relates to the mind:

how body-consciousness works and how it relates to the mind: and how the mind relates to the other senses.

Figure 17

**THE CIRCULATION OF SENSE-OBJECTS
MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS**



With this realization, one can know feeling, whether pleasant, unpleasant, or neither pleasant nor unpleasant, for what they really are, and thus eventually detach the mind from craving and desire.

*Why this laughter, why this joy,
when this is ever blazing?
Shrouded all about by gloom
will you not look for light?*

This way is to be seen for oneself; timeless, inviting inspection; worthy of realizing; directly experiential by the wise.

*This is the path, no other's there
for purity of insight;
you indeed should enter it
for this is the Tempter's bewilderment.*

Dear readers, may all of you undertake to observe the precept to abstain from taking life, the precept to abstain from taking what is not given, the precept to abstain from sexual misconduct, the precept to abstain from false speech, and the precept to abstain from intoxicants causing carelessness. Furthermore, do not conduct yourself with the six causes of ruin, namely:

1. addiction to intoxicants;
2. roaming the streets at unseemly hours;
3. frequenting shows;
4. indulgence in gambling;
5. associating with bad companions; and
6. the habit of idleness.

*Heedfulness—the path to the Deathless,
heedlessness—the path to death;
the heedful do not die,
the heedless are likened to the dead.*

*Whoso was heedless formerly
but later lives with heedfulness,
illuminates this world
as the moon freed from clouds.*

*If one knows oneself as dear,
well-guarded, one should guard oneself;
then in each of the watches
the wise man should watch himself.*

*Oneself is refuge of oneself—
what else indeed could refuge be?
By the good training of oneself
one gains a refuge hard to gain.*

*By oneself doing evil
does one defile oneself;
by oneself not doing evil
does one purify oneself;
purity, impurity depend upon oneself,
no one can purify another.*

Furthermore, there are five ideas to be constantly reviewed:

*I am subject to decay and I cannot escape it.
I am subject to disease and I cannot escape it.
I am subject to death and I cannot escape it.
There will be division and separation from
all that are beloved and dear to me,*

*I am owner of my deeds; whatever deed I do,
whether good or bad, I shall become heir to it.*

Dear reader, may these words be constantly in your mind, and may you look within yourself, practising this method of meditation, because—

*This world is blind—become —
here are few who see within;
as birds escaping from a net
few go into heaven.*

These are some of the benefits of practising insight meditation by clear comprehension:

1. Having a relaxed, stress-dissolving attitude in daily life.
2. Improvement to hypertension and other psychosomatic disorders.
3. Having a feeling of better health and strength.
4. Having both physical and mental “lightness”, or agility.
5. Sleeping restfully and awakening brightly.
6. Rapid recovery from illness.
7. Being more patient under duress, in health or at work.
8. Not being easily angered.
9. Being more diligent.
10. Not being affected by black magic or unwholesome powers.
11. Early recovery if already affected by black magic.
12. Personal reliability and well-liked behaviour.

13. Having genuine loving-kindness towards others.
14. Being more mindful and clearly comprehending in working or learning.
15. Acquisition of true knowledge and insight.
16. Improved memory.
17. Not being deluded when aging.
18. Not being deluded at the moment of death.
19. Being more careful whatever one does.
20. Being afraid of bad conduct.
21. Safeguarding the mind from the 4 unhappy planes of loss and woe: hell, the animal state, the ghost-sphere and the state of demons.
22. Gradual destruction of the cankers.
23. Developing and accumulating the perfections even if the cankers are not destroyed in this present life.
24. With fulfilled perfections, complete destruction of the cankers in this present life.
25. Being highly esteemed anywhere, in any nation.

SHARING THE MERIT DONE,

Whatever wholesome deed,
the action done by me
by body, speech and by mind –
done for going happily to the heaven of the Thirty-
three-whatever beings there are, having perception,
and whatever beings there are, without perception,
in the fruition of my merit which has been done –
the fruition of merit given by me:
but to those who do not know about that,
may the heavenly beings announce it.
All those beings in the world
who live by means of (any of the four kinds of nutriment-
may they all receive
this delightful food of my mind.

Additional information

The disciples of Ven. Phra Acharn Dhammadhara Bhikkhu are presently teaching a similar method in various provinces.

Any one outside Thailand can come to stay and learn meditation at Wat Trai-ngarm and its branch temples. Food and lodging are provided free of charge, any monetary donation is voluntary. All are welcome.

If you decide to come to learn meditation in Thailand, please write to the author of this book.

So that he can suggest to you some of the first necessary information i.e. visa application etc.

ON BECOMING A MONK

In recent years the number of westerners to ordain in Thailand has increased greatly. At the date of this writing there have been well over fifty men who have come from other countries to live as monks. The requirements for ordination are surprisingly simple, the three main ones being that the applicant must be over twenty years old, free of debt and have permission from his immediate family. There is no contract to sign, no guarantee of spending so much time in robes is necessary—the only real commitment must be made by the individual. It is traditional for Thai males to spend time during their lives in a monastery. Usually the period before marriage and after school is completed is chosen, and the young Thai ordains with great ceremony for a three month period. During this time, he learns to chant some suttras, studies some Abhidhamma and occasionally does some meditation. At the end of three months he disrobes and re-enters society with a somewhat deeper understanding of his country's religious beliefs. Some Thai's ordain young and spend their entire lives in robes, but these are unusual and often held in great esteem especially in the rural areas. The Thais feel quite pleased to see foreigners wishing to experience what they honour as a very important aspect of their lives. Thais generally have great respect for monks. They believe that one who is ordained has given up the ambitions and desires of the material world in and effort to purify themselves and

gain wisdom. To wear robes means to place yourself as a symbol of the Buddha's teaching. The Thais are very supportive to monks and needless to say, they sometimes have rather strong ideas as to what is the proper way for a 'Phra' to behave. Thus it is very desirable to spend some time as a temple boy or Upāsaka in order to familiarize yourself with the social aspect of a monk's life. Some of the temples require this type of preparation before they will accept a westerner for ordination. Perhaps the best way to absorb this knowledge is by staying in Wat Trai-ngarm or it's branch temples. There are two sects of monks, the Dhammaute and the Mahanikyaa. The Dhammaute is smaller. Western monks are fairly evenly divided between them. It is best to find out more about these two sects through personal inquiry.

Most people have found it advantageous to stay in one Wat before and after ordination for orientation purposes. When the time comes to travel around to other wats and teachers after having gained some proficiency in Thai social procedures it is enjoyable to discover how easily travel can be arranged. Don't forget to obtain a monk's card at your wat with which you can arrange to have a 40% discount on bus and train fares. You will also need this to register when you go to stay at another temple.

When you are at a wat, ordained and into the living routine you may well discover that Bindabat is fun. There are many daily occurrences in the life of a monk which provide unique and perhaps even enlightening experiences the opportunity to come your way. As a

monk, it is not usually necessary to apply for permission to stay at a wat before you go, and unless the temple is overcrowded (which sometimes happens during rainy season) permission is usually easily granted. One of the joys and also the main difficulties of being a foreign monk is that often the best quarters and food are pressed upon one. Although, as before mentioned, there is no binding agreement as to time spent at any given place one should be aware of the danger of loving flashes. As with drugs, meditation can produce highs which do not necessarily denote progress, but western people may tend to value these experiences more than the humdrum daily grind. It may be helpful to remember that the tradition of training is to stay with the teacher one feels is suitable for five years. The path requires some constant effort and there are always periods of discouragement to be waded through. Try to keep a balanced view of your emotional changes and there should be no problem. For those outside of Thailand feel free to write to the author of this book or the abbot of Wat Trai-ngarm for more information about ordination. But remember too, it is not at all necessary to be in robes to follow the Way of the Buddha.

ON BECOMING A NUN

The same rules generally apply, however those with ideas of women's liberation will find plenty of fuel for the fire as a Thai Maechee. The Maechee is given the least lovely dwelling, food and treatment at a Thai wat. As a foreigner this treatment is softened a great deal but there will be times when the painful truth will blatantly manifest itself. Patience, understanding of the Thai culture and a sense of either anatta (selflessness) or humour should see you through. Generally the greatest difficulty is the pressure of all those eyes. There have been perhaps a half dozen to a dozen foreign women ordained in Thailand in the last fifty years, so often you are presenting an image which is totally incongruous to the Thai national. The ordination is formally called that of Upāsika, and one undertakes eight precepts. Life in a wat is conducive to the practice of meditation and study. The simplification of habit makes a great space in one's mind which can be most profitably utilized. Wearing white has its drawbacks, but the value gained by daily contemplating soapy water washing those white robes can do a lot to show down an over-active mind. Thailand holds forth a unique opportunity for women to experience and live the contemplative life, and that is rare in today's world.

Nuns are not allowed reduction on train fares but occasionally buses will give lower prices. Where is a movement to establish a nun's card but so far it has not gained great impetus. Often nuns eat after monks and do most of the temple work. As a foreigner you will be allowed greater freedom than Thai Maechee's receive. Please use it to good advantage.

NECESSITIES TO TAKE WITH YOU (LAY PEOPLE)

For most of the temples, especially those outside of Bangkok, the following items are suggested as useful to take:

- Clothes :** Loose fitting, easily cared for. Specially recommended are Chinese pyjamas sold all over for 80-100 baht. Also simple sandals and some loose fitting tops, perhaps T-shirts. An umbrella can be useful in the rainy season. In the cold season a sweater or two would be practical. Also a blanket.
- Medicine :** Pills for diaharena and constipation, mosquito repellent and coils, tiger balm or other ointment for bites. Some kind of anti-biotic or disinfectant for cuts, bandaids, minor first aid stuff. Eye wash can be very useful. Anti-malaria preventatives.
- Food items :** Thermos, coffee, tea, sugar, milk, ovaltine, hot plate, cup and kettle. Not necessary, but could be extremely useful.

- Toilet articles :** Toilet paper, soap, mirror, all toilet articles. Helpful to have a small scrub brush for laundry.
- Tips :** Behave carefully, dress conservatively, have much patience, be prepared to laugh at yourself a lot. Most wats have mosquito nets, pillows etc. available if you ask.
- Food :** It is often possible to make special arrangements for special food if you ask.

CLIMATE OF THAILAND

The climate of Thailand varies according to which section of the country you are in. There are three basic weather/climatic regions; the North-northeast, Central, and South. For Central and North-northeast each year has three seasons. November to February is the cold season, March to June is the hot season and July to October is the rainy season. Variations are that the cold season in the North and Northeast is colder than elsewhere, getting down to the low 40's F. at times. Central Thailand is not so cold. Hot season is hottest (90+5) in the Northeast and Central Thailand. The North is more temperate. Rainy season is moderate climate all over.

Southern Thailand has a more even climate than the other sections, not too hot or too cool. Rainy season is much longer lasting, usually until January.

Although someone may say there is Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, etc., When he has penetrated to the essential nature of his religion, he will regard all religions as being the same.

Venerable Buddhādāsa's

NO RELIGION

January 1967

KNOW THYSELF

“Know yourself ! ” — now, these words mean :

That in yourself a gem is found.

Why look without ? — all is in vain,

Within a lotus blossoming !

Within the lotus — best of gem,

That which a man should find and know :

“Enlightenment or Knowledge here

All comes from knowing in yourself.”

from the wall of the “Spiritual Theatre”

Suan Mokkhapalarama, Chaiya.

**Taking Refuge with a mind of Bodhichitta
In the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha,
I shall always take refuge
Until the attainment of full awakening.**

**Through the merit of practicing generosity
and other perfections,
May I swiftly accomplish Buddhahood,
And benefit of all sentient beings.**

**The Prayers of the Bodhisattvas
With a wish to awaken all beings,
I shall always go for refuge
To the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha,
Until I attain full enlightenment.**

**Possessing compassion and wisdom,
Today, in the Buddha's presence,
I sincerely generate
the supreme mind of Bodhichitta
For the benefit of all sentient beings.**

**"As long as space endures,
As long as sentient beings dwell,
Until then, may I too remain
To dispel the miseries of all sentient beings."**

DEDICATION OF MERIT

May the merit and virtue
accrued from this work
adorn Amitabha Buddha's Pure Land,
repay the four great kindnesses above,
and relieve the suffering of
those on the three paths below.

May those who see or hear of these efforts
generate Bodhi-mind,
spend their lives devoted to the Buddha Dharma,
and finally be reborn together in
the Land of Ultimate Bliss.
Homage to Amita Buddha!

NAMO AMITABHA

南無阿彌陀佛

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