



**HOW TO ESTABLISH THE CITTA IN THE STILLNESS THAT IS
SAMĀDHI**

By
Luang Ta Maha Boowa

Published by Upekka Pty Ltd

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Dedication

This series of translations is dedicated to Jane Browne. Jane is a long time follower of Luang Ta Maha Boowa and Ajahn Pannavaddhe. It was through her assistance that I was able ordain in Thailand many years ago. I hope that these translations go some way to showing my gratitude.

Translator's Introduction

This series of translations is based on talks given by Lunga Ta Maha Boowa over a number of years. These talks were recorded and then transcribed into Thai script and it was from a combination of this script and the original recordings that these translations were made.

All the talks were selected by Ajahn Martin Piyadhammo, Wat Pa Baan Taad, and I am extremely grateful and honoured that he asked me complete this work.

In this series of translations I have attempted to not only convey the meaning of Luang Ta Maha Boowa's words but also the manner in which the words were spoken. In other words, I have attempted to give the reader some insight into Luang Ta's personality. I'd like to think that, if he were able to speak English, these would have been the words he would have used. As such, this is not scholarly work with perfect English but a pure transcription of the oral expression used to convey the Dhamma.

Many Thai words have their origin in the Pali language but, over time, the meaning has deviated from or increased upon the original. In this text original Pali words have mostly been retained and a Glossary for these terms has been provided. Where the meaning of a word in context is more closely aligned with the Thai meaning, the word has been translated into English.

In some cases, to maintain an easy reading flow, Pali words have been anglicized into the plural where no such plural word exists in the Pali. For example, the Pali word Khandha meaning "aggregate" sometimes appears as Khandhas. In some cases the Pali can be singular or plural, depending on context.

All words in parenthesis () have been added by the translator in order to help clarify the meaning.

All footnotes have been added by the translator.

Finally, I would like to thank those who have assisted me with this translation: Khun Miskaman Rujavichai who checked my translation and provided additional insight into Luang Ta's idioms and idiosyncrasies and my wife Susan who provided the proof reading service.

With Metta

Steven Towler

A Dhamma desana instructing the monks at Wat Pa Barn Tard

Given on 6th October Buddhist Era 2544

How to establish the Citta in the stillness that is Samādhi

It won't be long before this place will be really crowded. As soon as we are out of pansa¹ I am going to be flat out but I put up with it. I'll be rushed of my feet helping the country and I am getting more and more involved, doing all sorts of things². And me a person who used to live a quite life.

These days the world is not what it used to be. It is not the world we used to know; it's all changed.

I don't spend as much time teaching you monks as I used to do. You could say this is reducing my duties to match the amount of energy that I have. It's been like this since I turned eighty years of age. This slow down just seemed to occur naturally; on its own. This is something new for me. It's what happens when your physical constitution starts to become decrepit. You reach a stage where doing things becomes really difficult, painful or troublesome. In this period in my life, I seem to be swimming against the tide.

I am very concerned about us monks, specifically the Kammatthāna monks. This is very important you know! We are the focus of interest for the laypeople. We offer hope. In this day and age, people get a sense of security and comfort from the monks through our practice³.

I am also concerned about our standard of practice. Standards are inconsistent, at sixes and sevens, and steadily declining. The Kilesa, on the other hand, are enjoying a steady rise and are stuffing the hearts of us monks. These days, everything is becoming about how the Kilesa can influence the heart. What we think, what we read, what we say, what we do is all going the way of the Kilesa. It seems as if the light of Dhamma is slowly becoming extinguished by the power of the Kilesa. They influence every aspect of life.

I can see this quite clearly here at Wat Pa Barn Tard. Just look for yourselves at the work and various other influences that have crept into what we do here.

It's not the way of world to differentiate between what is the Kilesa and what is Dhamma. However, my Citta is entirely Dhamma. This is what I am telling you. The second anything disguised enters, I know it immediately. There's no question of indifference.

¹ Pansa is the three month rains retreat observed by monks since the time of the Buddha.

² In his later years, Luangta Maha Boowa was very active in assisting Thailand reduce its foreign debt. He also conducted many charitable activities.

³ Practice here refers to the practice of Dhamma.

The Citta has reached a level of knowledge where it sees the extensive spread of the Kilesa in everyday life. Creature comforts and conveniences are nothing but handmaidens of the Kilesa that lead worldlings by the nose. And worldlings know no better.

I'll give you an example. Every day, do you see it? Wherever you go you see mobile telephones stuck to peoples' ears while they babble on. Oh! I can't bear to look. It saddens me. I feel sorry for them. Have you seen them? Standing around or sitting around wherever, jabbering away. I pity them. And all for the sake of convenience; so they say.

Fever pitched, hustle and bustle makes the Citta dull and causes constant anxiety. These days, such devices (of convenience) only add to the problem.

This is what I was saying about the "world of convenience". It is the convenience of the Kilesa but it is the enemy of Dhamma at every level. Do you monks understand this?

There have been mobile telephones in monasteries since their widespread use in the towns and villages. Just look at what has happened since there have been motor vehicles. Just look. This is no different. I urge you to consider what impact motor vehicles have had on Kammatthāna practice. We have embraced them for the sake of convenience but in reality it's the convenience of the Kilesa and not the convenience of Dhamma. Examine this intensely, from every angle.

We are not too familiar with these things but if you think about this you'll see it for yourself. When I come in contact with these things, I'm aware of them instantly; like flames jabbing at me. When the Kilesa come and jab at Dhamma, I know immediately. When the punches⁴ are thrown, I know them at once. It's the same as the flames lashing out at me and the Kilesa jabbing at the Dhamma.

With Sati and Paññā stationed in the heart why wouldn't right and wrong be known? When something⁵ passes through (the heart/mind) this is what I mean by jabbing and it is known immediately.

Ordinarily, there is no awareness. It does not matter whether it's you or anyone else, ordinarily we are unaware (of what passes through the heart/mind). However, the intrinsic nature of the Citta is to know, constantly, which is why I say this is something alien to us. But, (with Sati and Paññā in the heart) whatever passes through (the heart/mind) is known clearly. It is seen for what it is.

Determination alone won't give you this knowledge, nor should you try to avoid experiences. When sensory contact is made you will know immediately what is true and what is false. This is the quintessential nature of the Citta. To put it another way, it is like the Citta is entirely infused with the truth so, whenever something false tries to worm its way in, you are aware of it in a flash.

⁴ Metaphorical punches of the Kilesa.

⁵ There is no noun in the original Thai text. The translator has therefore used the general word "something" in this sentence instead of a more specific term such as 'sense object' to help expand on what is "passing through".

If you've ever thought or read about what I am discussing here, don't intellectualise it. I myself don't intellectualise about this. When I use the term "know" I mean that, when things get to this level, those who have this experience "know" the same thing. They don't need anyone to confirm this for them. They know exactly the same thing. This truth is prominent within them. They will see clearly that the Dhamma is the most subtle and refined thing there is.

The Kilesa, no matter how subtle and clever they are, are still grubby and foul. They are coarse and clash with the Dhamma all the time. When the Citta is without Dhamma the Kilesa enter in. Then the Citta and the Kilesa become indistinguishable and you do not know right from wrong. The Citta becomes as dark as a black bear's back. The entire Citta becomes pitch black. There's not even enough contrast to understand which points in the Citta are black and which are white. This is how it is. The Citta is completely dark. When every nook and cranny of the Citta has been filled and this becomes its natural state.

This is the same as when we speak about Dhamma being at the highest level in the Citta. Dhamma and the Citta become one and the same; they become inseparable. When you reach this level, you will know all there is to know.

Even the best regarded of Kilesa are really gross by nature. You could say they affect us in the same way as the flames of an inferno that leap out at us. The more sophisticated the fire, the deeper the pain and hurt. So, the Kilesa at every level are like leaping flames, stabbing at the Dhamma. Sati and Paññā look after us and are constantly aware of the Citta's nature.

I used to teach meditation to those close to me so as to improve the standard of their work. Their desultory approach to their work meant that they lacked a method for making their hearts' calm and collected. They were not genuine about the work they were doing. If they had been, then there is no doubt that they could have found a way to peacefulness, such as the training in meditation that I gave them.

A Parikamma⁶ is a means to control the Citta in order to gradually establish it in a state of tranquillity. You can do this using a Parikamma. If you simply take a casual approach to focusing the mind, you won't get the desired results. Realisation occurs when the heart is firmly established. The moment you let your guard down and the mind wanders, you have drifted back into the realm of the Kilesa but if you force the mind to re-establish attention on the Parikamma and have Sati in control all the time, then it is absolutely certain that the Citta will reach a state of tranquillity. It is simply not possible for it to be any other way. This is what I am telling you.

I can say this because I have already trained this way myself. There was a time when I had real insight. I was doing some serious practise and my Citta made good progress then it all fell apart. It was like this for over one year so I decided to investigate the new condition that had beset me.

⁶ Parikamma is a word, such as "Buddho" recited in repetition by meditators to help concentrate the mind on the meditation subject.

No matter how much I tried, I made progress for two or three days and then it would all fall away before my eyes. After fourteen or fifteen days, things would improve. Make no mistake though, these were fourteen or fifteen days of really strenuous and exhausting effort during which I struggled with severe pain and discomfort. This effort was sufficient to allow my heart to reach peace and calm occasionally but just for a two or three day period, then this serenity would evaporate.

This is what my practice was like for more than a year. My Citta deteriorated in this way from November that year, passed November the next year, until the following April. Was this a long time or what? It was like hell on earth.

I focused on the Citta in a casual manner and this is what I experienced; which gave rise to doubt. Maybe this is because at the time I was concentrating on the Citta in this casual way Sati was associated with the Citta but at some point wandered away.

At such times we must fix our focus on the Parikamma, making this our standard practice. We must have Sati latch onto the Parikamma ceaselessly. This way, if the mind wanders, we should be aware of its movements. This makes perfect sense. So, here and now, make a sincere and genuine resolution that your Parikamma will be an important foundation for your meditation.

If you truly and honestly make such a resolution you become really serious about what you do. When you establish this sincerity and truthfulness it is like a stone breaking off a large rock; the stone will still be solid no matter where it is taken. You must be as genuine as this!

So, at this stage, if you take “Buddho” (as your Parikamma) you won’t be heedless; how could you be? From the time you get up until the time you fall asleep you should not yield one iota to heedless inattentiveness. Wherever you go whatever you do you must have Sati stuck like glue to your Parikamma relentlessly. This is the level you have to get too. This is the level you have to establish.

When you get to this level, the old story of progress then deterioration will be a thing of the past.

It’s because of our desire for our practice not to slide backwards that in fact it slips away before our very eyes. It’s our desire for progress that sees us make none. These desires ensure that neither wish is fulfilled.

Having established this, the only thing we should wish for is to keep focused on the Parikamma Buddho. If the Citta regresses, then so be it. If the Citta progresses, then so be it. There should be no greater consideration than one’s Parikamma. When you do this, there will be no regression. There’ll be no fading away of Sati when it is established as strong as this.

Okay, now we have relinquished the worry of whether the Citta will progress or regress and all we have left is the Parikamma, which we won’t let slip. We will just stick with Buddho, Buddho.

Umm! It's truly evident you know! That is, if we are really serious about not giving in to inattentiveness.

When we go on pindapada (alms round) we are not conscious of who does or doesn't put what food in our bowl. We just have Sati closely knitted to Buddho. When we are eating or moving around we do not relinquish Buddho. This is what is like hell on earth⁷; when you have to force the Citta to stay with Buddho, when you have to force yourself to be extremely mindful. This is very difficult. You cannot drift off subject at all. If (the heart/mind) does want to drift, Sati prevents it.

It doesn't take long before Sati sticking closely to its task becomes second nature. This is when you see clearly that you have completely let go of (the notion of) progress and regression. What you have not let go of is Buddho and Sati being constantly bound together. Apart from this you let go of everything. Wherever you go Buddho is always front and centre.

This practice enables you to experience the subtlety of the Citta. As time passes by the Parikamma Buddho and the Citta gradually become more and more refined until they become one and the same. When this happens there is no longer the thought of the word Buddho. All that remains is the most subtle awareness. No matter how we may try to think of the Parikamma it does not manifest.

This state lasts until the meditator becomes confused and doubt arises saying, "Hey, what should I be doing?" At this time we have to again rely on Buddho as our anchor. But we have stopped reciting Buddho so how do we make it reappear?

At this time a notion arises, "Oh, even if the word Buddho is not here anymore the Citta that "knows" is still here. That has not disappeared. If anything it's even more refined."

You must now focus your Sati on the "knowingness⁸". So, if you cannot grasp hold of the Parikamma Buddho, then use Sati to latch onto this basic, knowing nature. Refocus here and firmly re-establish Sati also. Do this until everything is harmonious. The Citta that I said could not establish the Parikamma will gradually retreat from this state. This is as if the Citta makes itself calm and then gradually withdraws.

As soon as the Citta withdraws you can re-focus on Buddho and start the process again. After you have done this you will know how to practice (meditation).

When the Citta is truly refined there really is no thought of Buddho. There absolutely isn't until the meditator becomes confused. You can try thinking about it as much as

⁷ Translator's Note: This is referring to the extremely strenuous effort of mind and body that is required in order to maintain this level of mindfulness.

⁸ Translator's Note: In its basic state the Citta is just awareness or a "knowing state" and devoid of contact with sense objects. The focus here is on that state of knowing sometimes called "Poo Roo (the one who knows)" by many Thai teachers. The term "Knowingness" has been introduced here to avoid the connotation that the word awareness brings ie, if there is awareness then there has to be an object that you are aware of. As the object is awareness itself it seems like a circular argument. Knowingness is therefore meant to represent the quality of knowing or the capacity to know rather than "knowing" any particular object.

you like but nothing will manifest. All that remains is pure “knowingness”. Consequently, you have to fix Sati on this “knowingness” instead of Buddho, Buddho. At this stage you can be absolutely certain that the Citta is peaceful.

If your exertion is as genuine and sincere as this, I am telling you, there can be no other outcome.

The Citta will now really start to develop and you’ll get back to the level you used to when you had two or three good days before regression set in. However, this time when you reach that level you won’t see it through rose coloured spectacles and you will let go of all longing.

You will take the approach, “Well if my practice is going to deteriorate, so be it.”

When you reach that point where your practice started to regress, if you try and force the issue your practice will dissolve before your eyes. However, this time you’re going to let it deteriorate if that is what it wants to do. What you won’t do is surrender your attention on the Parikamma . You are going to stick to that Parikamma steadfastly.

As soon as you have this attitude that if your practice regresses, so what, or I’ll let go of every feeling⁹ but I am I going to stick like glue to my Parikamma , you’ll make progress there and then.

Right! At this point do you think things will deteriorate? No, at last your practice won’t fall apart. Now, your practice will not slip backwards when you get to the stage when it was normal for things to be good for two or three days before the wheels fell off. Your hold on Buddho will get tighter and tighter until Buddho becomes really prominent. At this stage, you will not have lost sight of the Parikamma . It needs to be like this until the state of “knowingness” that I mentioned becomes very pronounced. After that, it does not matter if you use the Parikamma or not.

This “knowingness” is conspicuous by its nature. It is a target for the Citta to concentrate on and when Sati latches onto this point (the Citta) will come to rest there again. The Parikamma has now become superfluous. But, in letting go of the Parikamma we must grasp the “knowingness”, which is distinct and clear, and then gradually tighten our grip in it.

So, I advised my companions that they should understand that being genuine and wholehearted is an essential prerequisite for establishing the Citta (on the right path). If they did as I have just explained, they were sure to achieve stillness (of the Citta). There is no doubt about it because I pioneered the way.

⁹ Translator’s Note: The word “arom” in Thai comes from the Pali word “ārammana”. In common speech “arom” means mood or disposition. The Pali word “ārammana” means object, particularly the objects experienced through the sense doors. In Dhamma talks the word “arom” could have either meaning or, in some cases, both meanings. This makes translating the word into English difficult. The translation here as “feeling” but a translation out of left field of this phrase in question could be, “let go of everything that comes into your mind”.

After this I went from strength to strength and never slipped backwards because I was not afraid of my Citta deteriorating. No matter how wholehearted I was the wheels never fell off.

This is how to establish the Citta so that it is your true foundation for meditation. These are the real guiding principles for the heart. So don't fiddle with your practice. Get on and be wholehearted and committed as I have explained. You will then see within yourself the principles that govern the heart. Peace and serenity will emerge. Calmness and quietude will gradually get stronger and stronger until the Citta achieves Samādhi.

Peacefulness or calmness is not the same as Samādhi. In meditation terms, peacefulness refers to the Citta that has gradually sunk into calmness or has become absorbed on one occasion and has then withdrawn from this state. This is called occasional peacefulness when the Citta sinks down to absorption and then retracts from this state. This is what we refer to as peacefulness. When the Citta has sunk down, been absorbed and then withdrawn many times, it builds a firm foundation for itself. By continually becoming calm the firm foundation is gradually transformed into a Citta that is solid and unwavering through the accumulated power of this peacefulness.

By consistently stringing together these peaceful experiences, the peacefulness is transformed into Samādhi; Samādhi that is resolute and unwavering. This is what is referred to as the Citta being in Samādhi.

When the Citta becomes calm and then withdraws from this state, this is referred to as the Citta being peaceful or absorbed. When the Citta reaches the level of Samādhi, whether it withdraws or does not withdraw, that's irrelevant, the unshakeable foundation of stillness is always there. This is what the Lord Buddha called the Citta being in Samādhi.

You will have clear perception that, "Oh yes, Samādhi and peacefulness are different." We differentiate it as Samādhi for the sake of correctness. As we progress smoothly and the Citta reaches Samādhi it has stillness. It is completely full of this feeling (of stillness). There are no misgivings about missing out on what you could think or what you imagine about the body or sounds or smells or flavours, etc.. You are satisfied with the stillness in your heart. This is the Citta in Samādhi. This is the Citta captivated. Or, put another way, you don't want to think of anything else. You dwell in blissful stillness. The strength of Samādhi is the domicile of the heart.

When the Citta at this level is quiet and has lots of energy, the same thoughts, ideas and imaginings that it once hungered for now irritate it. It cannot bear to think or imagine anything. It pretends that it wants to think or wants to imagine things.

As soon as the Citta reaches a level where it is at one with the stillness in a resolute and unwavering manner, it has reached the full extent of Samādhi. It does not want to think. Thinking is a disturbance. The only conspicuous thing inside the Citta that is fully concentrated is "knowingness". This is like being completely at ease and blissful. Nothing troubles the heart.

It's for this very reason that those who attain Samādhi are likely to become addicted to it. Or they become addicted because it is an experience that really, really soothes the heart. Until you get to a stage where Paññā will have more influence, you can become addicted (to Samādhi).

The Citta that is resolute and unwavering is completely filled with this feeling (of stillness). When it is completely filled with this feeling you should lead it out and down the path of Paññā. If the Citta is not yet completely satisfied and still hankers for other experiences, when you try and lead it down the path of Paññā all you will get is Saññā. It reckons this and that which transforms the experience into a cause of suffering¹⁰ and thus this is not Paññā. Because of this the Lord Buddha taught us to develop the path of Samādhi before setting off on the path of Paññā.

He said, **Samādhiparibhāvita Paññā Mahāpphala Hoti Mahānisamsa**

Which means, when Samādhi is resolute and unwavering, when Samādhi is fully developed, then it can support Paññā.

Investigating in the way of Paññā requires skill and flexibility if it is to be real Paññā and not Saññā. So, being completely satisfied, (the Citta) can go out and investigate with Paññā. It can raise the subject of the elements, or the five Khandha. It can investigate hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinew, bones until it has swept through every part, every component of the body. Let it be like fuel for a fire. The fuel is the body, every part of it; the fire is Sati/Paññā. Tapa¹¹ Dhamma

Encourage Sati/Paññā to penetrate the body, penetrate through investigation. It doesn't matter which bodily organ you relate to, just pick one that you are comfortable with. Examine it and it will slowly break apart and scatter in front of you until you see it as loathsome¹². Loathsome means it is not pretty and it is not attractive; it is foul and disgusting by its nature.

Our body is like a dead man walking. By its very nature it is like a living toilet and it would be that except for the thin layer of skin that covers it up a little and spins a web of deception over our whole body and the body of others. This thin membrane of skin is something that fools the whole world. But what have you got when you peel it all away? What you have got is nothing but foul loathsomeness. A dead man walking, from head to toe. Investigating with Paññā is investigating like this.

When you do a detailed analysis of the skin you find that it is full of dirt, sweat and scurf. So where is it clean? As you penetrate below the skin you see that the hide clings to the flesh. It does not matter where inside you look the more you look the more you find that it is dirty and impure.

For the time being, when Paññā goes exploring, this is as much as it sees. Later, when it investigates it becomes more and more ingenious. Its initiative gradually becomes

¹⁰ Samudaya, the second Noble Truth.

¹¹ Tapa is the ascetic's fire that is said to burn out the Kilesa.

¹² Asubha in Pali

more polished and it broadens its scope of investigation. As a result it realises that the entire body is loathsome.

Paññā that is exercised in this way will have an acute deftness and little by little will, by itself, cause us to withdraw (from our attachment to the body). Love, hatred, lust and craving will be progressively rooted out.

Examine all the things I am talking about until you can see them really clearly. Consequentially, lust (Rāga Tanhā) will be eliminated. The fact that we are lustful is because we are misguided about the body. We understand it to be beautiful and attractive. We love it. It pleases us. It brings us joy. It makes us happy. When you realise that the body is a dead man walking, what is there to be pleased about? When bodies are piled up in a cemetery, who finds that joyful and pleasing? This body is our cemetery and it is no different. When you see things as clearly as this you can extricate yourself (from this delusion).

When you are skilled in Asubha meditation, it is as if there is no lust. It is as if lust is completely exhausted. In fact, it is actually the opposite to lust, the mind is tranquil. But lust is not completely expunged you know; it just appears that way. This is because the power of the practice of Asubha knocks it on the head. Because of this you can consider expanding your investigation to the outside world. When you do this you will see that the outside world is the same as your body. A look at the body is like looking at the outside world.

So, look at your own body and see it plainly. When you can do this with some expertise then envision yourself as a loathsome corpse laid out in front of you. For example, see laid out in front of you a heap of your own loathsomeness or, you could make it someone else and their pile of loathsomeness, in doesn't matter. You will see things really clearly if you do this.

Finally, whether it is your heap of loathsomeness or someone else's, conjure it up and see where it really comes from. When you are getting to the truth of the matter, your concentration on this heap of loathsomeness that you have established has to be clear and sharp. Look at it. What is it? Where does this loathsome image come from? When we do this we become aware of (the loathsome image's) actions. We can erase this anytime we like. It arises for a split second and is then extinguished, severed instantly through the speed and agility of Paññā.

Now, we shall prove conclusively where this loathsome object comes from. Even though we have established (this loathsome object) what have we established it from? What makes this loathsome object arise in front of us? Focus on this. Look at this loathsome body. Wherever it moves whether it goes inside or steps outside or hovers in the sky, focus strongly on that spot. Having reached this stage you will be able to decide (where it comes from) yourself. Focus on that spot.

If you have not quite reached the level where you can decide for yourself, then try looking at things from another angle. When you do reach the stage where you can decide for yourself and you have focused for some time on the loathsome image that you have placed in front of yourself, the Citta will become steadily absorbed in the

loathsomeness that is so prominent in front of you. This prominence impinges on the “knowingness” that is the heart. It constantly seeps in.

Finally, the loathsome object will become one and the same as the heart that deceives itself.

Establish Asubha every time you focus on the basic nature of reality. The image of loathsomeness will turn around and come full circle by meeting the heart that designed it in the first place. It has become the Citta of the one who designed it¹³.

Whatever was beautiful and attractive on one hand or loathsome and foul on the other is not really a person. This is a deception perpetrated by the Citta on both counts. When you understand this, you will know what is real. You’ll know that it’s yourself who is the illusionist. It is ourselves who are nasty or nice. The image that was in front of us that we focused on, is neither pleasant nor loathsome. It is yourself who is the deceiver, the trickster who paints this picture for you to see. When you have examined this fact, (the truth) sinks into the deceiver. As soon as you see this you reject both the pleasant and the loathsome.

Whether it is loathsomeness that is internal, external or anywhere for that matter, I do not believe there is a greater dilemma than that of Subha¹⁴/Asubha and this self deception created by our Citta. Through establishing Asubha we come to know that it is ourselves who deceives us. This knowledge seeps into us and we see with great clarity that it’s only ourselves who paint the picture of pleasant and unpleasant.

External loathsomeness has transformed into loathsomeness inside the heart. This is when you let go of lust. This is the first thing you let go of. At this point you definitely can make the decision about where the loathsomeness comes from, even if you have not completed the job one hundred percent like some on the fast track¹⁵, you still pass the test. You can’t really do much more. It’s now irreversible. You cannot slip backwards and have lust the way it used to be. You are absolutely certain about yourself.

Now you have to continue your training. You have to drill yourself by establishing your investigation into loathsomeness in the way you did before, as I have just detailed. As soon you fix on this subject it will continue to be absorbed by you. You have to do this and let the understanding of loathsomeness soak into yourself. You set your attention like this again and again and again! This is what it means to train.

You have to become proficient at this level. At the level when lust had you conscripted it trained you and made you very proficient. When your attention is set on loathsomeness and you keep fixing your attention there it will gradually turn around and come visiting your heart, that is “the one who knows¹⁶”. It will be completely absorbed. Then, you do the same set up again.

¹³ This does not mean that the Citta is loathsome in the way the body is. It means that the Citta’s outlook is now to see things as loathsome.

¹⁴ Subha is the opposite of Asubha.

¹⁵ Kippabhinna - rapid development related to two of the four types of practice

¹⁶ “The one who knows” or knowingness or the pure capacity to know.

This is what is called training the Citta. This is a level at which there is foundation in Subha/Asubha and, in relation to lust, that will be gone. However, the work is not finished yet. The major part of the work may be completed and there may be no possibility of a relapse but there is a small component left. What component is that? Well, it is like a small blemish or a spot of rust that is still stuck to us.

At this stage you get a test score of fifty percent. That is you passed the lust test and for that you get fifty percent. From here on you'll train to get sixty to seventy percent by using your skills and fixing on loathsomeness non-stop.

From this point onward the speed at which the image of loathsomeness turns back towards the heart will gradually increase but it will continually disappear. That is to say, it reaches the heart and then fades in the heart. It reaches the heart and then just as quickly disappears. No matter how fast it enters the heart it fades just as fast. This is what is referred to as training at the level of sensual desire. You pass this examination in order to have the skills that will take you to the end of sensual desire completely.

Anyway, there is no slipping backwards if you have reached the fifty percent level. This is called being detached. You cannot slip backwards beyond this point except (progress) may slow down.

If you train yourself on your own, you will know what is right and you won't need anyone to confirm it for you. You will know for yourself and you will practise constantly in order to become proficient. Later, when you truly get to the end of the path, at the time you fix your attention on any image that pops up, you will see that it no sooner arises than it disappears. Whether it enters the heart or not, you are fully aware that it disappears in a flash. At this point there is no specific training but you have to constantly rely on these images as a means for practise. No matter how experienced you are you have to practise this way. The Citta will gradually progress by itself.

After this you have some room to move so you can now pursue the groups of Vedanā, Saññā, Sankhāra and Viññāna. When your investigation has resolved the dilemma of the body, turn your attention to the groups of Vedanā, Saññā, Sankhāra and Viññāna, which are Nāma Dhamma.

When you have resolved the dilemma of the body, the Citta will refuse to continue to investigate in the way it did before; even if you want it to. It already knows all about the body. It's as if it is satisfied with what it has done with Kāma Kilesa and the body and can leave them behind. The case of investigating the body in relation to Kāma Kilesa is now completed. It's the end of that problem. So much so that the image that I have been referring to vanishes completely. Kāma Kilesa disappears in the same manner.

From here on in you are free to explore the aggregates of Saññā and Sankhāra, especially Sankhāra because this is really important. Wherever its imaginings reveal themselves, that's where they disappear. This is referred to as investigating Nāma Dhamma. If left to their own devices most people who investigate Saññā, Sankhāra

and Viññāna tend to concentrate on Sankhāra. They observe imagination and thoughts.

Happiness and sorrow that are Saññā Ārammana are of two types, Saññā and Sankhāra. These occur inside the Citta, they accompany each other as they enter.

The dilemma of the body has been resolved. What remains is Nāma Dhamma which emanates from the Citta then re-enters and passes away in Citta. Following the entry into the Citta is also a mode of training to be done constantly. In regard to the Citta thinking and imagining, whatever thoughts occur, pass away in tandem. Good thoughts disappear. Evil thoughts disappear.

After training yourself in this way you will you will make progress and get to the Head Honcho, Avijjā. Remember, I am giving you the shortened version. This is a summary. If I put it in terms of the real practice, well, it's like heaven and earth collapsing. The investigation takes a long, long time. I don't know how many days and nights you would struggle like this. However, I have given this summary of the investigation into Dhammas so that you can progressively see them with greater and greater clarity.

So how is Kāma Kilesa eliminated? It is eliminated in the way that I have explained.

As soon as the point is reached where the image in front of us that we are concentrating on turns back on itself and becomes one with the heart and is absorbed of its own accord, this is called having a firm foundation. Any problems with the external image are then over. The heart realizes that it deludes itself, contrary to previous misconceptions. When fixation on an attractive object arises it's oneself that hoodwinks oneself. It doesn't matter whether it is Subha or Asubha; it's all self delusion.

When this truth is still not realised, the path that I have explained is the appropriate path to follow. When this truth has been realized, the burden placed on oneself and the Citta is understood. It's known that the Citta is the deceiver. This is the stage reached.

In the period prior to this realization, the path that I have explained is right, proper and elegant. From here you go on and arrive at that point which is the big one.

Speaking about Avijjā, when you reach Nāma Dhamma you have arrived at this point, no matter what anyone may say. This is because there is nothing else there but Avijjā. That is all there is. It does not want to investigate anything that you may want to turn your attention to. There is just Saññā and Sankhāra, which are Nāma Dhamma.

When you have examined Nāma Dhamma extensively, you reach the Citta. When you have done this many, many times it is possible to cause it to collapse.

What I have explained are the fundamentals of investigative meditation.

You must make up your mind and avow to practise in this way. You have to be committed and steadfast. You have to give it all you have got.

If you are repeating a Parikamma, then do it with real sincerity and you will achieve tranquillity. After the state of tranquillity you will reach Samādhi. After achieving Samādhi, you should set off down the path of Paññā. These are the stages and the sequence to follow.

When the time comes for your meditation to turn to the path of Paññā, this is a real change. So much so, there is no time to rest, day or night. You feel exhausted and weary all the time when the Citta that has reached the stage where it has well and truly turned down this path. This is because of Sankhāra. Paññā takes out and uses Sankhāra, which is the one that imagines and concocts things. However, these are now thought processes that are in favour of Magga. They are not the same as those that belong to the Kilesa. Those are thought processes that are in favour of Samudaya.

When you do a lot of this work you are bound to be exhausted and fatigued. To rest you should go into Samādhi, go into the stillness. Don't get too busy with anything at that time. Force yourself to enter into Samādhi. The Citta will become absorbed. When the Citta is at the stage of Paññā, it will be reluctant to enter and rest in Samādhi. It regards Samādhi as a lazy sort of inert state. Paññā on the other hand is the destroyer of the Kilesa. But, in destroying the Kilesa, you don't know how much effort is going to be required so this is also Samudaya. You just don't know how much this is. Therefore, when it is time to rest, make sure you rest. Rest in the stillness of the Citta.

If you genuinely cannot rest, then, as I have explained previously, focusing on the Parikamma Buddho can be used as an alternative. I had to resort to this. If the Citta refuses to rest and turns solely down the Kilesa killing path of Paññā, even though you are absolutely physically exhausted, then you have to force it to dwell on Buddho. Sati must be established firmly to prevent the Citta from shooting off in the way of Paññā.

After a short while the Citta will go straight into a state of peacefulness. Do you see what I am saying? Ah! As soon as the Citta enters this peace and tranquillity, it is like pulling out a splinter or a thorn. When you're off down the path of Paññā it's like everything revs up and shoots off all over the place. You can compare this to boxers getting into the ring together.

At this point, entering into Samādhi is like extracting a prickle or a splinter. Because this rests and relaxes the Citta you must force yourself to do it. If you don't do this the Citta will be off on its way again because the energy of Paññā is stronger than that of Samādhi.

I don't want to say what would happen if one was careless at this stage. I can say what happens if one slows down as this is not an act of carelessness. As soon as one slackens off and slows down, even for a tiny amount, the Citta will rush off down the path of Paññā. It is because of this that one must force the Citta to dwell resolutely in Samādhi until such time as it drinks its fill. When one's strength has been restored through Samādhi, one can gradually withdraw. After one withdraws, like a shot, the Citta is off down the path of Paññā again.

Those who are serious about practice should always go about their work in this way. Don't over play the hand of Paññā, thinking it is great, it destroys the Kilesa; so much so that you go helter skelter after Paññā. To do so is one form of Samudaya that infiltrates the heart through not understanding how to balance one's practice. This translates into a misunderstanding of Sankhāra when pursuing Paññā. In such instances Paññā's view of Sankhāra has changed to be Samudaya. This is all because we fail to understand how to balance our practice.

When you do investigate, then do so with all your might. There is no need to make a fuss about it because when you get to this level of Paññā, it will evolve itself. When it's time to rest, you must rest your full measure. This is the right way to practise.

When you are at this level of Paññā you won't want to rest. Your mind will be churning in the way of Paññā. This is because it is absorbed in the act of destroying the Kilesa. Changing pace and entering Samādhi is called taking a rest to build up your strength; just as we do normally when we go to sleep. Eating food gives you energy even though you waste some of your rest time. Whether we stop to eat because of the food or not does not matter; we stop to eat because we are going to get terrific results further down the track. That is to say we get energy to do our job.

Now, it seems a waste of time to rest the Citta in Samādhi but Samādhi gives you a huge amount of energy and vitality which supports and nourishes Paññā. It makes Paññā's job easier. It makes Paññā agile and nimble.

This is how it should be. This is how to investigate.

Practitioners need to grasp really well this concept that I have imparted. I have not taught this from tenderness. I have taught according to the facts that I have encountered. Don't prevaricate or be half-hearted with your meditation. You have to be committed and earnest. There's no question of this when it comes to Magga Phala and Nibbāna. I want you to progress in this way as the road to Magga Phala and Nibbāna lies nowhere else. I implore you to progress in this manner and you must do so properly! If you do this, you need have no reservations, you will reach Magga Phala and Nibbāna.

It is important that any person who gives advice on meditation understands this. If they don't, they can give the wrong guidance.

I am giving this advice with complete certainty. I can do this because I have been down this road and know it well. I have absolutely no doubt about any of the guidance that I give my companions. Not in regard to Samatha; not in regard to Samādhi; not in regard to Paññā. Not in regard to Paññā at any level, from Sati and Paññā being switched on to automatic, until Mahā Sati and Mahā Paññā completely occupy the heart and it has deftness and courage prominent in it the whole time. This being the case, how could I have any doubt about Sati and Paññā being on automatic or even Mahā Sati and Mahā Paññā? They occupy my heart! Remember this well. You must aim to practice in the best possible way.

These days, the Buddhist religion is continually falling apart. The monks that can take the high ground and arrest this decline are we Kammatthāna monks. Apart from this

group, all the others are in complete disarray. Their yellow robes cover their shaven heads; that's the way they are. Their thoughts, feelings and behaviour are continually turned into followers of the Kilesa. Nowadays, there are none of them that turn their attention to the real Dhamma. That's the way it is.

This being the case I want all of us to turn our attention in the direction of the real Dhamma. Swim against the tide of Kilesa that increases in strength daily. Make this happen. If we are weak and submit to the Kilesa, we will surely sink.

The world is pitiful. Wherever it seems there is happiness and contentment, when you take a good look at it, all you see is an inferno that scorches all the being of the world. Their external appearance, fresh, pretty and attractive, is a means of deception. It's a trick. It is an adornment, a cosmetic, a decoration of the Kilesa designed to fool worldly beings into struggling after them. On the inside there is only a fire that burns incessantly.

This is where the small pile of firewood is. The majority of it is bold and adventurous and has been known to burn until its owner has become unconscious. There's only suffering that emanates from the Kilesa. That's all there is and we are deluded about this; so what are we chasing after? Investigate and see for yourself.

Dhamma, at whatever level of tranquillity, is very calming, very relaxing and increases the opportunity for the Citta to be set free from the Kilesa; every last one of them.

There is nothing in this world that can penetrate this heart. Not one stone or grain of sand. Nothing at all. I have already stated that only the Kilesa are the enemies of the heart. The subtler Kilesa penetrate in subtle ways, just like a splinter or a sliver. The crude ones are like a mountain pressing down on you. As they become more refined they become like a sharp spearhead. When they are even more refined, they are like a splinter pricking the heart. They are like a speck of grit in our eye. Whether we have many or only a few Kilesa they are like having grit in the eye. The really subtle ones are like grit in the eye.

As soon as these things are completely eliminated, there is none of this irritation. This is what the Lord Buddha referred to as the Citta becoming the real Dhamma. It's the supreme happiness. From the time that the Kilesa are eradicated there is no type of suffering that can even graze the heart of one who has put an end to the Kilesa. There's just supreme happiness throughout, right up to Nibbāna.

Nibbāna is also immutable. It is infinite and timeless.

These things are the results of the practice. No matter how hard your struggle is, keep in mind that this happiness lasts forever. The happiness of Dhamma is everlasting.

Right now is suffering. Oh, yes, suffering. If you want a time when there is happiness, well then, be strong and don't give in so that you can acquire happiness, supreme happiness, which is not born and does not die. It is Akālika, timeless.

This is important. I want you to pay attention to this. I am getting older by the day. I can feel this when I am guiding and teaching you lot. It is not very often that I have much energy when teaching, which means I don't pass on as much as I might. I struggle in order to assist the world. I help out of pity, that's all. Under normal circumstances I would not want to get involved.

Wherever I am, I am fine. There is nothing that disturbs my heart. When I am on my own, as usual, the world is a void. You could say this world doesn't exist. This is because the Citta finds no meaning in this world. There's only what I have discarded. What is inside is a brilliant luminescence; pure knowledge, that's all there is and this is all there needs to be. There is nothing muddled or confused. Not like it used to be when the Kilesa ruled the roost in my heart. The moment these Kilesa collapsed, there was supreme happiness inside my heart. This is the fruit of the practice.

No matter to what extent this occurs it is something that gives a sense of accomplishment in the work that we do. It is a sense of satisfaction in the results of the work that we have realized and achieved. There is nothing about this situation that can be criticized. We got on with the job and we received the results. It is for this very reason that I call on all of you to pay attention to your practice. Don't be spineless. Don't be lackadaisical.

These days, the world is full of Kilesa. They are everywhere. Conveniences of every kind are the Kilesa paving the way for us to drop into the abyss. That's all they are. They don't pave the way to heaven or to Nibbāna. They are not for the purpose of supreme happiness. They clear the way for the convenience of the Kilesa. They are convenient for purposes of this mass of suffering.

The path of Dhamma is cleared in order to achieve happiness, supreme happiness. This is where the difference is.

This is enough for now. This is the end of the desana.

Post Desana Narrative

Today, plenty of people came, as far as I could see. They were everywhere. This field was full this morning. It was a good job it didn't rain. Oh, oh. There wasn't a spare spot anywhere.

I didn't give any sort of a desana this morning because I have been giving desanas every single day. This morning I just spoke about them giving alms, that's all. I did tease and joke with them; that sort of thing. Giving a desana and directing them was something I didn't do because I have been giving them every day. This morning wasn't the right time to give a desana because people were coming and going all the time. They were also streaming through with alms and donations. Who amongst them would have had a heart receptive to listening to Dhamma? If they were interested, they would have stayed still. These people were wriggling about the whole time. They came, gave their donation and then they were off, so who was I going to give a desana to? For this reason I didn't give a desana this morning.

On the 13th and 14th of this month I have decided to go to Barn Phaeng. I feel sorry for them. Wat Barn Phaeng is a monastery that I and Ajahn Mun stayed in times gone by. From the time I lived at Barn Phaeng ... Oo, it's a long way away you know.

From this monastery to the market is a few kilometres. Back in the old days, there was nothing but jungle. West of where the monastery is there was just jungle. It was because of this that Ajahn Mun came to stay in that part of the forest, that's what he said. After he had gone, they build the monastery there. That's what happened. I therefore followed in the footsteps of Ajahn Mun. You can stay anywhere if it's in your Citta to do so.

It's for this reason that Barn Phaeng has received a lot of support from me. Not insignificant by any means. This has made me even more sympathetic.

At that time they were accepting Kathina¹⁷. As a result I divided up our Kathina and gave them some of it. I asked, "What's the matter with this monastery? You have someone to offer robes and someone ready to claim them but has there been any notification or announcement?"

"No", was the answer.

And not only that, up top at Wat Tum Yar, they had been in the same situation.

That was also at the time of Kathina. They were hoping that someone would provide them with Kathina. I felt sorry for them, so I agreed to give them some there and then.

I told them that if that was the situation, I would provide Kathina at both monasteries; Wat Barn Phaeng and Wat Tum Yar. This was because they were both in the same situation.

The rice and the curries would all come from the same place. This meant that those preparing the food would have to separate it and take one lot to Wat Barn Phaeng and another to Wat Tum Yar. That is how it was going to be. That's why I said that curries for both monasteries would be cooked in the same pot.

¹⁷ Kathina is a ceremony carried out at the end of the monks annual Rains Retreat in which the lay community present robes and cloth to the monks.

This last time, when Kathina was offered, it was exactly the same. I gave to both monasteries. I could not give to one without giving to the other. I told them they both got the same.

When I give Kathina, I will visit just one of the monasteries. The furthest one will have to come down to receive theirs. I have said that this will be their enticement.

This year I won't be donating as much as previously. This is what I reckon. I have done as much as I can. I did put the hard word on them so, even though they didn't ask for anything, I am going to give them something because I feel sorry for them. However, I am not going to donate a huge amount because I have done as much as I can already. It's only out of Metta that I do this.

I have specified that I will go on Saturday the 13th. I think we will be gone by midday. Those who want to go before can do so if that is what they want. I'll wait for the appropriate time before I depart.

I have reminded the monks about the white cloth. I had them put some to one side. I think there are ten lengths which should be enough. We have put together about ten lengths of white cloth that is in bolts or other quantities which can be donated. That's if we have a lot. It would be good if there were ten lengths. If there is less than this I will reduce the amount by the correct proportions of the three main robes¹⁸. This will ensure a similar, consistent outcome.

I have said that one essential thing is the measuring stick for the three robes. The sewing machine and the other tools are already there. That's because I gave them a sewing machine the last time I went. I asked them about the sewing machine and they said it was great, so that's why I am not giving them one this time.

I believe they will need additional rice. This is because the people from the Laotian side are part of the same group. This group will be dependent on the others for food. It's like they have been adopted by Wat Barn Phaeng. They come to visit all the time. This way there'll be an even distribution. So I think we will take some rice with us as well.

As far as the rice goes, I think we should take sticky rice. They won't want much ordinary rice. If we take it, they may not want it. We will need more than ten, twelve kilogram bags of sticky rice. I reckon we may need up to one hundred. It probably won't be less than one hundred, twelve kilogram bags of sticky rice. This is what I think.

Those living further away have already told the people in Barn Phaeng that there is no need to do too much about the rice so I may not need to give them much. If I need to give them some, I will, even if it is just a small amount. I will give more to the people of Barn Phaeng because their needs are extensive and quite different to the others.

The others frequently go to stay in order to get a handout for people living on the opposite bank. They are people as well, just like us. They have Kamma too. I don't carry opinions about them. It is enough that they are people, just like us. This is the major guiding principle in my heart. Calling them this or that, of this or that

¹⁸ Monks have three main robes as components of their requisites. The robes are a lower robe, worn around the waste and down to the calf/ankles; an upper robe, worn around the shoulder/neck down to the calf/ankle; and an outer robe, worn over the upper robe when in public or in cold weather.

nationality is all a convention that is defined by supposition¹⁹. When we humans co-exist we have to have factions and ranks as one way to distinguish us. The reality is we are all people and that should be good enough. We all have Kamma; no more no less than each other.

This is why I think that, at twelve kilo's per bag, we are not going to get away with less than one hundred bags. These will be split into two. Villagers from Tum Yar won't get much, I'll just give them a little. As far as monetary donations are concerned, they won't be getting a lot because each year they have been given millions of baht. Each monastery has had millions. I have given millions to both monasteries.

No matter how much people donate, it is all lumped together. They donate to me and I use all of it for grants by sharing it out. For example, people come and donate various amounts in addition to what they give specially to me. I then redistribute it. But those up top will get a little bit less than this place because the people here have all the responsibilities. All the guests are received and catered for at Wat Barn Phaeng. When the time comes, those up top²⁰ just saunter down to receive whatever they get. It is because of this that it is natural that they should get less. This is what I think. I feel sorry for them. What else can I do?

In terms of the problem of the poor, well, I am poor. The truth is I am penniless. However, my heart is not impoverished. What can I say, I am completely finished but I want to give all the time. This is the way it is inside my heart. This is nothing to do with the ways of the world I can assure you. I have no enemies or adversaries. I just don't have them. That is to say, this is the way my heart is, intrinsically.

Whatever others say my heart has never been really interested in them. It is always Dhamma, through and through. Metta is Dhamma. Wherever I go I just give out Metta.

I don't have any possessions. For me there is no such thing as paying for something and getting change. For example, suppose something cost sixty baht or forty baht and you give them a hundred baht note and they keep the change. That is the way it is for me. Forty baht or sixty baht normally makes sixty or forty baht in change. For me it is not like that. I just give Metta and don't expect any change.

You're relaxed and composed wherever you go with Metta Dhamma.

It is like there is nothing in my heart that presents a danger to me. If I said it was virtuous, then it is virtuous through and through, so where would danger come from? On the contrary, anything dangerous is only a danger to itself. This heart is completely righteous so what is there that could disturb it? It is impossible to make this goodness deficient in any way. Things that could be harmful can become defective and worn out but there are none of these in the heart's natural state.

This is the natural state of my Citta. All of you monks should take heed of this. I practised to the utmost in every way.

¹⁹ This concept has no real parallel in western philosophy or religion. By way of example, to clarify what is meant, you could say that one's body is made up of elements. They don't give themselves a name. They are what they are. We, however, decide that one blob of elements is called John and another blob Paul, etc. We "suppose" that they have this name. The "supposition" is not reality.

²⁰ "Up top" referring to those living on the hilltop.

I have never spoken about the devaputra and devas²¹. This is because there is no benefit in doing so. I will only mention them when necessary.

Just like Ajahn Mun said to me, he never mentioned these things to just anyone. He mentioned them only to two or three of his disciples. He never spoke of them in desanas given in the midst of a group of monks. He never mentioned them in any of his desanas.

That I have brought this up at all is simply to draw your attention to it; like a father would do with his children. If there are any issues, they can talk about them. Ajahn Mun would speak like a father to his children.

Nowadays, I emulate the way he spoke; such as the day that I spoke about heaven and earth coming tumbling down. Oh, yes. That's what it was. I had never seen the natural world in that way before. Everything was in continual harmony. Everything was quivering. I reckon the three spheres of Lokadhātu trembled at that time. My status was equal to that of a mouse, so how else would you have me describe this experience? In my wildest dreams I never thought that it would be like that. When it happened, it was like an explosion. That's what my heart was like. It was nothing short of blowing up and demolishing the Kilesa. There was a radiant light the likes of which I had never seen and never experienced before.

Having seen these things, what would you have me do? I had never imagined, expected or realized anything like this but this was what I encountered in the most emphatic way. Having experienced this, what is there to doubt?

The Lord Buddha described Dhamma as Sandiṭṭhiko; seen by oneself, realized by oneself. This being the case, why would there be anything to question the Lord Buddha about? It's the same for everybody. That's the way it is, Sandiṭṭhiko. Those who practise will see and know for themselves. For this reason there is no need to defer to the Lord Buddha²². If you still have to defer to what the Lord Buddha said then his proclamation of Sandiṭṭhiko is yet to have meaning for you. This is the full meaning of Sandiṭṭhiko.

From the time that the radiant light appeared, I have had no need to assess anything that I hear. (Knowing what is right) happens by itself, instantaneously. This is no ordinary state. I never conceived or imagined that it would be like this.

It's like I said, an explosion. It's like a thunderous roar. This is "tumbling down", Avijjā being exterminated. Just like a thunderous roar arising. To say that it is a thunderous roar is not really correct but I don't know how else to describe it. It's like a loud bang going off. At the same time the radiant light appears and then they are all gone.

Whatever there is has been there since the very beginning but we don't see it. We are blind. As soon as the radiant light appears and you see this, everything disappears. So, what have you got to say about that? Whoa. You continue until you arrive at the realization, "Ah, when the Lord Buddha reached enlightenment, this is how he reached it, isn't it?" Listen to what I am telling you.

²¹ Devaputra and Deva are celestial beings that inhabit realms in higher planes of existence than the human world.

²² I.e., looking up what the Lord Buddha said in the text about such an experience by way of a comparison.

What is audacious about measuring up to the Lord Buddha? It's not being audacious at all.

This is something that is evident within the heart. In everyday language we would say that it would be overwhelming or very exciting or it is something that sends shivers down you and this happens all by itself.

“Ah, this is what happened when the Lord Buddha became enlightened, isn't it? I said this repeatedly.

How can it be said that this is comparing oneself to the Lord Buddha when there is no intention to do so? It is simply something that is apparent within oneself, it's self evident.

“Ah yes! This is how the Lord Buddha got enlightenment isn't it?” This was the first thing that came up.

The second thing that came up was, “Oh, this is real Dhamma isn't it? It's like what I've seen, hey. The true Dhamma is like this isn't it?” I repeated this at the time. I exclaimed this in my heart.

If you want to explain this in terms of the excitement, you could say that is was the Khandha that were excited. The basic nature of reality has no excitement like this. This is a case of the Khandha being thrilled and excited in their own way. It happens because, at such a time, this natural phenomenon²³ influences the Khandha so they become excited.

After that occurred, “This is the true Sangha, isn't it? It is this natural phenomenon. Oh yes, this is the real Sangha, isn't it?”

After that, it immediately came together, “Ur, this is how the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha are one and the same?” This is how it's always been. This is how they are one and the same?”

It had never occurred to me that the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha were one and the same. They have been like that from the beginning but I had never thought of it like this.

If I am to give a metaphor, when they all burst out, they are the vast ocean and indistinguishable. Water flowing out of various watercourses makes its way to the ocean; when it gets there it only has one name, the ocean. You don't continue to claim this bit of water flowed from that channel and that bit water flowed from this channel. You don't do this at all. When the water reaches the ocean, it is indistinguishable. Wherever you come in contact with it, it's the ocean.

They are the same as Mahā Vimutti and Mahā Nibbāna, or they are Dhammadhātu. If I was to be pedantic about this I would say they are Dhammadhātu. I feel this is a very close fit. All three are synonymous and can be interchanged. However, when they are well and truly a snug fit in the heart they are Dhammadhātu. This is what I have to say about it. This is what I am talking about when I mention Dhammadhātu. They are like the waters of the ocean of Dhammadhātu.

Once the radiant light penetrates, zap, how could you doubt any of the Buddhas. What would there be to doubt? It's like a short, sharp stab and then they all become the

²³ Enlightenment.

ocean. What's there to doubt? This is the way it is. There is no need to verify this with anyone else.

Wow! It flashes up instantly. "The true Dhamma is like this is it? This is how the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha can be one and the same? They are Dhammadhātu. This is how they are indistinguishable from the vast ocean?"

Wow! It is truly astonishing. Whatever I thought or imagined before, I never conceived the way that it was when the loud bang happened and I knew lucidly in my heart. I never thought or imagined what would be so certain in my heart so how can I not speak about it if I am to say anything at all? This is the way it is. There is complete certainty in my heart. My heart is a professor of knowledge. It has total understanding²⁴ so there is no room for doubt or the need to verify this experience with anyone, including the Lord Buddha. This is what I am telling you.

When I speak about these things I reminds me of Ajahn Mun when he lived in Norng Pur. At that time I was gathering together then breaking apart bones and flesh. I was just concentrating on breaking them apart; I was pretty wet behind the ears. This was when I stayed at Norng Pur, okay.

He spoke about Dhamma at the exquisite level. He was speaking with real gusto. At first, the monks went and related their experiences to him. He was really moved by this. He told us that the bone fragments of Luang Poo Sow had become relics. That's what he said.

After that he explained the story behind the bone fragments becoming relics. He then proceeded to take some of the bone fragments that were yet to turn into relics and pounded them into dust. He then formed the dust into small shapes and distributed them with great fanfare. This was the time when they were dispensed. He got up immediately. He was touched by this.

Shortly after they were dispensed at that place, he burst out and made it clear that these kinds of remains were the kinds of a dog. That's what he said. He then said, "So, are you lot going to be dogs or monks?" He scolded us in this way.

"If you are going to be dogs, then go and chew on a bone. You can eat like that. If you are going to be monks then you must practise by following the principles of Dhamma and Vinaya for the sake of the pure Dhamma that is precious, excellent and superb. So how will you lot practise?"

This just burst out of him.

This was something that struck forcefully against the Dhamma in him and got an immediate reaction. After that he talked in the most indomitable way. When he reached this stage and he had finished he said, "Sādhu" and lifted his hands. I sat and watched. He said, "Sādhu."

He went on to say, "Even if the Lord Buddha were to reside right in front of you, you would not need to ask him about this. What would be the point? We have the same sort of belongings. We know the same sort of things. We see the same kind of things. So, what would there be to ask?"

²⁴ This clearly relates to Dhamma and not necessarily all worldly knowledge.

I never forgot this. I listened in my own way. At that moment, instead of gnawing on the bones I was able to get the meat of what was said. The lesson learnt at the time that I encountered this was an instantaneous “WOW” realization. You see, I didn’t mean to imitate him. This is how it was; I immediately accepted everything Ajahn Mun said.

I thought, “Ah, this is what he meant about asking the Lord Buddha. This is exactly it.”

That is how it was. When you have this amount of knowledge, what is there to doubt? Whether anyone else believes me or not is of no interest.

The truth fills my heart so who should I have faith in? Who should I practise for? I practise for the sake of the Dhamma. The Dhamma and my heart are now one and the same; this is how it is. This is why I have no interest in whether or not others believe me. There is nothing more interesting to me than the principle of truth.

It is because of this that when I speak there is no question of being timid. What is there to be afraid of? Lokadhātu’s three spheres of existence are nothing but garbage bins. When I refer to them as a garbage bin, I am lumping them all together. Occasionally, I do speak about them separately. What I mean by a garbage bin is the complete Kammic cycle. This is the garbage bin. That’s what I say.

Nibbāna, on the other hand, is not a garbage bin, nor is Dhammadhātu. These are entirely free from the garbage bin. Whatever is in the Kammic cycle is the rubbish bin.

Now, I will differentiate the categories of garbage bins. There are several types, such as Ucgatitaññu, Vipacitaññu, Neyya and Padaparama²⁵. These are garbage bins. The Ucgatitaññu is the highest grade. That is to say they are people with the character and the prerequisites needed to go beyond the Kammic cycle. They are always looking for the way out. An example of this would be the entire group of five²⁶. They belonged to this type of garbage bin.

By garbage bin I mean those that still have Kilesa. Even if they are people of the highest integrity, if they still have Kilesa, they are garbage bins. However, they are of the Ucgatitaññu variety. Do you understand?

Vipacitaññu. These are slightly lower down the ladder but they are garbage bins just the same. This is because their Cittas’ still have Kilesa and so it is fair to call them garbage bins.

Even if the Kilesa only penetrate slightly, they can all be called garbage bins. The difference between these various garbage bins is their degree of refinement.

The level of Neyya is the middle of the road. These people may descend into hell or ascend into heaven. People in this Neyya category can go either way. If they give in to the Kilesa they can get dragged off to the hell realms. If they stand up to the Kilesa, they can be swept upwards. This is why these are referred to a people that can be trained, time and time again, so that they can succeed. This is the third category.

²⁵ The four kinds of people. See Glossary for further details.

²⁶ The group of five refers to the first group that was taught the Dhamma. Some scholars would place these in the second category, Vipacitaññu.

The fourth category, Padaparama, are people that have completely lost their worth. Nothing has any meaning to these people.

There are four categories. Lumping them all together, they are all garbage bins. This is because they have Kilesa and conventional knowledge²⁷ inside them. As a result, they all have to be called garbage bins. Even if the Kilesas are extremely refined, they are still there and that is still a garbage bin.

The instant you transcend these, puff, there are no more garbage bins. There were none in the heart of the Lord Buddha and no Arahāt had them. That's why they say this is the end of the problem. They have risen above all the garbage bins. I want you all to understand this.

You know, I don't mean the words "garbage bin" to be an insult to the conventional world²⁸. I speak according to the convention that has Kilesas casting a shadow to a greater or lesser degree. The level of Kilesas will determine the type of garbage bin and that's it. I want you to remember this well.

I don't very often separate things in this way; just occasionally. This is what I mean by the words "garbage bin".

When I give a desana, I tell it the way it is. I have never been afraid of anything in Lokadhātu's three spheres of existence. Desanas are laid down in a manner that is appropriate to the time, the place and the listeners; nothing else. This is laying it out in the conventional way. If I were to lay it out in the way of Dhamma it would just rush out instantly. I speak in a conventional way at levels that are suitable for the time, the place and the people. I lay down the desana in stages.

As an analogy, a desana may be like making a curry in a big pot. If it is a curry for a big pot, I cannot give a desana that is like a curry for a small pot or a tiny pot. It has to be a curry for a big pot. Hitting this point and that point in a random manner is giving a desana like making a curry in a large pot. I can do this so that the people that come understand at their level. For those for whom it is fitting to receive Dhamma at some level so that they can make use of it, I can give desanas for them also. I can give desanas to anyone, at any level, in accordance with their level of development. This is making a curry in a big pot.

Making a curry for a small pot means doing a shortened version. A curry for a tiny pot is made even faster.

You know, in giving this desana I didn't use a curry for a small or tiny pot. Most of this desana was a curry for a big pot, even though the Dhamma in it just came out in its own way.

When I look to see who is capable of receiving this kind of Dhamma, there are very few and so this Dhamma does not come out very often. This is because desanas have a way of finding their own level. Sādhū. I am not saying this to show off or brag. It's like I have a built-in radar that is locked on all the time. As soon as I sit down with a group of people, I understand where they are at immediately and can assess how

²⁷ The Thai word Sammut means to "assume" or to "suppose" eg to suppose that a blob of elements is called a person, or a dog or a house etc.. The Pali "Sammuti" from which the Thai is derived means "conventional", as in Sammuti Sacca – Conventional Truth. In English it is not possible to translate in a way that allows for both meanings.

²⁸ These could equally be translated as the "world of supposition".

much and how detailed an account I should share with them. I don't simply trot out words. That is not possible if there is knowledge in your heart and you want others to listen to what you have to say.

It happens as soon as I sit down and look around. Off it goes. In modern, everyday language this would be referred to as "radar". It's always ready to lock on by itself. It knows what to do by the internal disposition of its owner. It's able to make the appropriate assessments. As soon as I sit down, the extent to which I talk is understood and revealed to me. There is no need to consider how long the desana will go on for, no matter how long the desana may be. This just pops up without prompting. If I give a desana in the manner of a curry for a small pot, it just rushes out.

Giving a desana in the manner of making a curry for a small or a tiny pot makes giving the desana very easy because I just stick firmly to the fundamentals of the truth. It just rushes out. For good or for bad, you just won't be able to keep pace with what is being said. So what have you got to say about that?

What do you say about giving a desana in the manner of making a curry for a large pot being a bit random? Making a curry for a large pot is called a large garbage bin. Then there is a small garbage bin and a tiny one. There are various levels. That's the way it is.

I am telling you the truth. Everything that I have said is the truth. In relation to the conventional world, the world of suppositions, there is nothing that is attached to my heart. There is nothing from the conventional world that overshadows it at all. I am certain of that. I listen but this is the conventional world. There is no garbage bin of any variety that overshadows (my heart).

There is nothing but the innate nature (of my heart), through and through, so what is there to fear or to be brave about? As a result there is no such thing as bravery and fear has no meaning. There is no such thing as "can do", or waste, or winning and losing. It is just Dhamma, which is beyond all these things. Because of this, when I give a desana, whatever I say conforms to the quintessence of Dhamma. If something is good, I'll tell you it's good. If something is malicious, I will tell you that it is evil. This matches the real Dhamma.

I have never thought of anyone as my enemy. That has never been my position. Everything happens entirely in accordance with Dhamma, through and through. This is absolutely the way it is. Whoever wants to get something out (of what I say), can do. If they don't get anything from it, well, that's their Kamma. I have no expectations of anyone. I teach the world purely out of Metta, nothing else.

I have spoken for a while and I am tired now. This is enough.

Do you see this, the elements and Khandhas? When I have spoken for a while, they get weak. Dhamma, on the other hand is ageless and timeless. It is vigorous all the time. However, the elements and Khandhas, as the desana goes on, remind me of what they are. However much of a desana I give and however much they remind me, when that reminder comes I have to apply the brakes and gradually slow down until I stop. They are giving me the message right now. I have to take the elements and the Khandhas as my limitation. I don't take the Dhamma as a limitation.

Ohhh. I am worn out. Yesterday.... Are you listening to me? Since I came to live in this monastery this has never happened to me before. Last night I could see distinctly about these elements and Khandhas. That is to say, normally I just go through my routine. When it gets to the middle of the evening or the middle of the night I go down and walk Caṅkama so as to change postures and make things a little easier. I do this as regular as clockwork. Sometimes once an evening, sometimes twice. These days, more and more, this activity is driven completely by the elements and Khandhas. Now, if I get really tired and weary, to the extent that I have various aches and pains, I just cannot get to sleep.

I have to force myself to walk Caṅkama and it doesn't matter what time it is. One o'clock in the morning, two o'clock in the morning, three o'clock in the morning. I force myself to do it. I cannot sleep so I have to walk. No sooner do I start walking than I become weak. As I become weaker, I can then go and lay down. When I meditate lying down, I can get to sleep. If I have to force myself in this manner, I have to go down (from my hut) and walk.

However, last night it was not like this. I was really, really weak; for what reason I don't know. Not long after 6pm, that's all, I came up here. I wasn't looking at anything in particular then I flopped down and laid there until sun rise. I didn't get up at all. I didn't even come out to light my candle. Just look. I gave up lighting the candle. Ordinarily I light the candle in the middle of the night and go walking. Last night I did not come out at all. I forgot about lighting the candle. I did not emerge at all. That's the way it was. Last night was the only night that it has been like this.

This surprised me. It was a unique event for me. I realized this is what the elements and Khandhas forced me to do. They didn't want to get up and go anywhere. They had me lay down, dead straight; like a log. I investigated the elements and the Khandhas as I was until dawn but I still didn't want to get up.

My companions came and roused me. I could hear them outside. I hear them every day but this morning when they tried to roust me, I still didn't want to stir. Do you get this point? As soon as I got up I went to walk Caṅkama though I was somewhat wobbly on my feet. I walked for what seemed like thirty minutes. At that time I still had no energy. I did some more staggering and I thought to myself, "Um, why is this happening?"

I carried on walking back and forth but that proved futile so I went up (into my hut) again. After that I put on my robe and went down over there²⁹. This is what happened. This is the extent to which things have gotten.

In the morning I walked Caṅkama. Instead of gradually getting stronger my curiosity returned and I thought, "That's enough. Finish. This is an example of these elements and Khandhas becoming feeble. How can you have any faith in these?"

²⁹²⁹ Probably referring to the Sala or meeting hall.

Glossary

Akāliko	Not bound by time
Āloko	Light
Anāgāmi	A Non-returner; one of the four Ariya Sangha; the stage prior to Arahant
Anattā	Not self; void of ego; one of the three characteristics of existence
Aniccā	Impermanence; one of the three characteristics of existence
Arahant	An enlightened being; one who has overcome Avijjā
Ārammana	Sense object, eg sound, odour, taste; the Thai derivation means feeling, mood or frame of mind
Asubha	Loathsomeness of the body as a meditation subject and as a description
Atthāna	Something that is impossible
Avīci	The name of one of the most frightful hell realms
Avijjā	Ignorance; the first component of Paticcasamuppāda
Bhāvanā	Meditation; mental development
Caṅkama	Meditating while walking backwards and forwards
Citta	The heart (not the physical heart); the seat of all mental activities; the fundamental “knowingness” corrupted by defilement
Devadatta	The cousin of the Lord Buddha who was reborn in the hell realms because, out of desire to replace the Lord Buddha as the leader of the Sangha, he caused physical harm to the Lord Buddha by throwing a stone at him.
Devatā	A celestial being inhabiting realms higher in the cosmos than the human realm
Dhamma	The teaching of the Lord Buddha; a law; phenomena; the third of the Triple Gems
Dhammadhātu	Dhamma element, synonymous with Nibbāna; non-conditioned element; the essence of Dhamma
Dhutanga	Austerity practices, 13 in all. Monks may practice none or only some; there is no compulsion to practice any
Dukkha	Suffering; one of the three characteristics of existence; one of the 4 Noble Truths
Ekaggatācitta	The Citta focused on itself.
Ekaggatārammana	The Citta focused on a single object.
Hiri	Moral shame
Jhāna	A state of mental absorption

Kāma	Sensuality; thence Kāma-rāga - sensuous lust, Kāma-loka – sensuous world
Kamma	Wholesome or unwholesome action. In Thai it usually refers to unwholesome action only
Kammatthāna	Literally “working ground”. Meditation subjects and the practice of meditation. Often used to refer to the monks of the forest tradition who practise meditation
Kathina	A ceremony at the end of the rains retreat (pansa) where the lay community offers cloth and robes to the monks
Khandha	Aggregates; the 5 groups – form (corporeality), feelings, recollection (perception), mental formations, consciousness
Kilesa	Defilements: Greed, Hatred and Delusion
Lokadhātu	The world element ie, all the elements in all the spheres of existence. The three spheres of existence: kāma-loka (the sensual world); rupa-loka (the fine material world); arupa-loka (the immaterial world). Within each world there are a number of different realms.
Magga	Path; a conscious moment unique to each of the four stages of Enlightenment; the Noble Eightfold Path
Mahā	Great; a title given to a monk who has passed certain examinations
Māra	The Evil One
Maya	Achieved through the practise of; accomplished via practise
Metta	Loving kindness
Nāma	Mind; a collective term for feelings, recollection, mental formations and consciousness
Nesajji	The sitters practice. The thirteenth Dhutanga (austerity practices) where monks avoid the reclining posture.
Neyya	The third grade of person; trainable
Nibbāna	Extinction; freedom from Avijja; the state of Enlightenment
Nimitta	A mark or a sign; a mental image; vision
Ottappa	Moral dread
Pacceka-Buddha	A Buddha enlighten without the benefit of having listen to the Dhamma but who does not go on to teach others; sometimes referred to as a Silent Buddha
Padaparama	The lowest grade of person; hopeless or untrainable
Paññā	Discernment; wisdom
Pansa	Three month retreat for monks taken during the rainy season
Parikamma	A word repeated in order to help focus concentration; preparation for concentration

Parinibbāna	Full Nibbāna; often used to refer to the state of the Lord Buddha after the extinction of the 5 Khandha
Pariyatti	Learning the teachings of the Lord Buddha
Paṭipatti	Practising the teaching of the Lord Buddha
Paṭivedha	Penetrating the Dhamma and realizing its goal
Phala	Fruit; result; a conscious moment unique to each of the four stages of Enlightenment
Rāga	Lust; greed
Rukkhamulasenāsam	Living at the foot of a tree, a Dhutanga practice.
Rupa	Form; corporeality; one of the 5 Khandha
Sādhu	A salutation; it is well; a positive acknowledgement of what has been said before
Sakidāgāmi	A Once Returner; will have no more than one more human life
Samādhi	Concentration
Samatha	Tranquility; the practice of Samādhi
Sammā	Right; perfect
Sammuti	Conventional; the world of supposition where we “suppose” that elements that come together in certain ways are a dog, or person, or a building etc but the elements themselves make no such claim. They are what they are.
Sampajañña	Clarity of consciousness
Saṃsāra	The round of birth, death and re-birth; the wheel of life
Samudaya	The origin of Dukkha (suffering). The second of the Four Noble Truths.
Sandiṭṭhiko	Seen here and now by oneself
Sangha	The order of monks; the third of the Triple Gems
Sankhāra	This term has several meanings depending on context: Mental formations – one of the 5 Khandha; Kāmic formations; conditioned phenomena
Sañña	Recollection; memory; perception; one of the five Khandha
Sati	Mindfulness
Sattaloka	The world of sentient beings
Sāvaka	A follower of the Lord Buddha. The term is usually reserved for those followers who have attained any of the 4 stage of enlightenment

Senasānam	A resting place
Sila	Morals; moral precepts
Sotāpanna	A Stream Enterer; someone who is assured of reaching Nibbana
Svākkhato	Well-expounded
Taco	Skin
Tanhā	Craving; the cause of Dukkha;
Tathāgata	A term used by the Lord Buddha when referring to Himself.
Tipitaka	The three baskets; the three division of the Pali Cannon – Vinaya, Sutta, Abhidhamma
Ucagataññu	The highest grade of person; genius
Udapādi	Arising, arisen
Upādāna	Clinging; attachment
Vedanā	Feelings; one of the five Khandha
Vimutti	Deliverance (from suffering)
Vinaya	Code of conduct for monks
Viññāna	Consciousness; one of the five Khandha
Vipacitaññu	The second highest grade of person; intellectual
Vipassanā	Insight; insight meditation
Visuddhi	Purity; Purification