

THE HEART OF DHAMMAKĀYA MEDITATION

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THE HEART OF DHAMMAKĀYA MEDITATION

Based on the Teachings of
The Most Venerable Chao Khun
Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni

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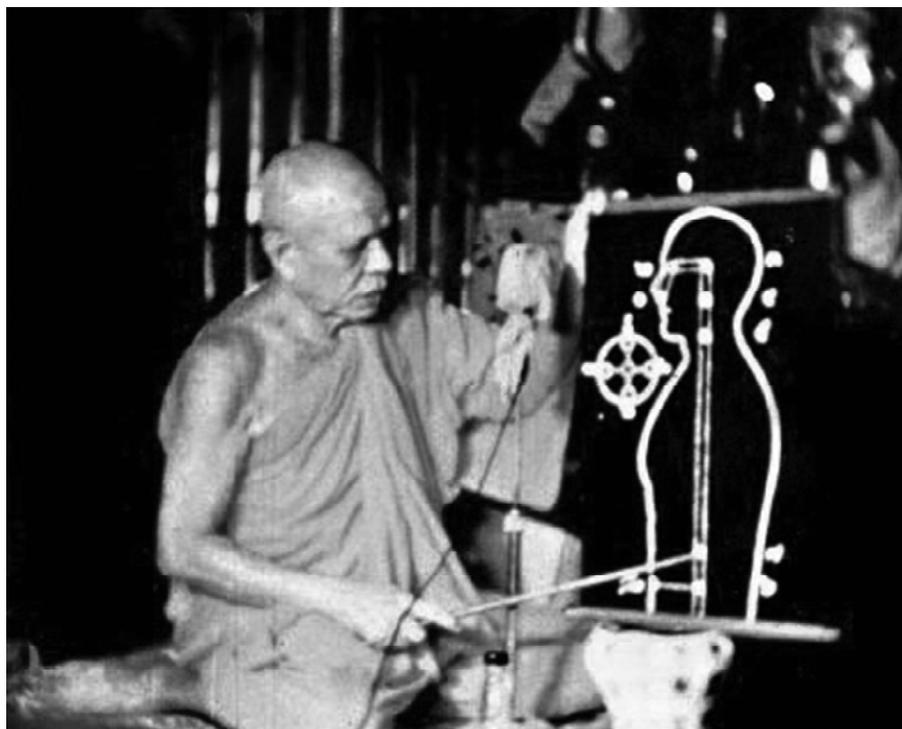
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DEDICATION



With deepest reverence,
we dedicate this book and all of our efforts
at Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakayaram to

**The Venerable Chao Khun
Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni**
(Luang Phor Sodh Candasaro)
who cleared the path for us.



Luang Phor Sodh Candasaro giving meditation instruction

The text of **The Heart Of Dhammakāya Meditation** is recommended for everyone because of its significant value. The text is not only of great academic value, but also provides immeasurable spiritual benefits for those who practice it.

Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith should be highly commended for his efforts and dedication to help others understand Vijjā Dhammakāya.

The Most Venerable
Somdej Phra Buddhajahn
Abbot, Wat Saket Rajavara-Mahavihara
(The Golden Mount)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PHRA RAJYANVISITH (HON. D.)

I am deeply indebted to all *Dhamma* devotees who have contributed in many ways toward the publication of this book. Their total support was indispensable. They include Phra Khru Baitika Dr. Barton Yanathiro, Phra Natpakanan Gunanggalo, Dr. Tan Pek Hong, Mr. William Webb, Mr. Victor Toh Peng Kee, Mr. John Ladalski, Mr. Reng-son Mualchontham, and Mr. Vuthichai Achariyaphorn, to mention a few. May all be blessed for their meritorious efforts.

Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith (Hon. D.)

President, the National Coordination Center of
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Dhammakayaram

FOREWORD

SOMDEJ PHRA

MAHARAJMANGKALAJAHN

About five hundred years after the Great Decease of Lord Buddha, there remained no evidence of the Dhammakāya meditation technique. After devoted practice, the Venerable Chao Khun Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni restored the principles of Dhammakāya meditation and taught them. Today the approach has become well-known once again.

The Venerable Chao Khun Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni once said that Dhammakāya meditation would be known all over the country, primarily because it penetrates right to the heart of the practice of purification. Defilements such as greed, hatred, delusion, conceit, wrongview, doubt, sloth, restlessness, shamelessness, and lack of moral dread are uprooted naturally and effectively. *Avijjā* or ignorance becomes *Vijjā* or knowledge.

Dhammakāya meditation is not a new practice, as many believe. It is the original Buddha-

Teaching. Dhammakāya meditation is the exact path that the Buddha practiced. It is cited many times in the *Tipitaka* (Buddhist Canon), and directly follows the Noble Eightfold Path which is classified into the three categories of *Sīla* or morality, *Samatha* or Right Concentration, and *Vipassanā* or Right Wisdom. In combination with the four *Satipatthāna* or Foundations of Mindfulness, the *Samadha* and *Vipassanā* will advance to Right Wisdom pertaining to the *Saṅkhāra* or compounds and *Visaṅkhāra* or non-compounds. The Right Wisdom of the Four Noble Truths will be unfolded. *Nibbāna* or freedom from all conditioning and suffering will, thus, be attained.

Without Lord Buddha, this teaching would never have been known and practiced. Without the Venerable Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni, Dhammakāya meditation would never have been well known again. It is un-surpassingly lucky to have this book in your hand. Various benefits will be gained even at the beginning of Dhammakāya meditation practice.

The Most Venerable
Somdej Phra Maharajmangkalajahn
Abbot, Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen,
Vice President, Dhammakaya Buddhist
Meditation Institute

FOREWORD

PHRA RAJBRAHMATHERA

Cease to do evil; cultivate doing good and purify your mind. That is the Teaching of the Buddhas. This has been regarded as the heart of the practice of Buddhism. In modern society, where dissatisfaction often runs deep and disturbs the world populace, the wise are again coming to see the disillusionment of their sensual search and are turning their attention spiritually inward. Many have come to testify to the value of observing and practicing the Teaching and making the *Dhamma* a reality within their own hearts.

Hard to control, unstable is the mind; it flits wherever it likes. Good is it to subdue the mind. A subdued mind brings happiness. Meditation, in turn, leads to a calm, controlled and enlightened mind.

This book, **The Heart of Dhammakāya Meditation**, deals with meditation practice as ex-

pounded by the Master of Vijjā Dhammakāya, my own teacher, the late Venerable Chao Khun Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni. He is our prominent spiritual leader who is revered through the land and fondly known as “Luang Phor Wat Paknam.” The author and my pupil, the Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith, is an experienced and accomplished meditation instructor who is to be admired for presenting the subject clearly, systematically and succinctly.

Learning (*pariyatti*), practice (*patipatti*), and achieving the end purpose (*pativetha*) are the three main parts of Buddhist tenets. This book should inspire many readers. It is based upon the author’s teachings as spoken from the heart, from the depths of his own meditative experience. This book should serve well to present concisely the second and third parts of the Buddhist tenets (concentration *Samadhi* and wisdom *Paññā*) to many meditation practitioners.

The Venerable Chao Khun Phrarajbrahmathera

Deputy Abbot and
Director of Meditation Affairs
Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen

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I INTRODUCTION

This text is for all who seek to understand reality or the true meaning of life as well as those who seek inner purification. Wisdom and virtue develop hand-in-hand. As the meditator progresses beyond the distortions of the passions, insight sharpens and understanding deepens.

Vijjā Dhammakāya does not require blind faith. You do not have to believe in Buddhism to benefit from it. It is a method for training the mind to become concentrated and keenly aware, focused inward at the center of the body. With practice, you will encounter new experiences for yourself and will develop confidence.

In 1916 (BE 2459), Luang Phor Sodh Candasaro (Chao Khun Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni) rediscovered the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach to medi-

tation which had been lost sometime during the first five hundred years following the passing away of Lord Buddha. The technique leads the meditator directly along the path to enlightenment and emancipation by combining concentration (Samatha) and insight (Vipassanā) meditation techniques. It is, thus, extremely focused and effective.

Vijjā Dhammakāya practice has become popular and widespread throughout Thailand. This book is intended to make the method more widely available to English speakers.

VIJJĀ DHAMMAKĀYA

Meditation begins with turning the powers of observation and awareness inward. We are accustomed to perceiving the outside world, but introspection requires special effort. Steeped in science, we have prided ourselves on “objectivity” while remaining largely unaware of inner biases.

Traditional scientific objectivity required isolation from the object observed. Since quantum mechanics was introduced, science has recognized that we are part of the world we perceive and what we

see depends on how we look at it. Meditation is like polishing a lens to enable us to see more clearly. Skill in meditation develops the ability to perceive experience directly without the distortions implicit in conceptualization.

Many seekers turn to meditation because of dissatisfaction with life. This is the universally experienced sadness / suffering / tension (*Dukkha*) on which Lord Buddha based the Four Noble Truths. But, this motivation to ease tensions or cope with anxieties is only a starting point. Many meditation techniques will provide relief on this worldly level, but the beauty of Vijjā Dhammakāya is that it leads directly upwards from this plane to more and more refined, purer and purer levels of awareness.

The effectiveness of the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach derives from focusing attention at the center of the body and combining three meditation techniques simultaneously. Meditators often debate the efficacy of concentration (*Samatha*) versus insight (*Vipassanā*). Vijjā Dhammakāya employs elements of both. Higher and higher levels of concentration enable personal insight to progress from a more worldly view to Right Understanding and ultimately to supra-mundane Right Wisdom.

THE BOOK

The Heart of Dhammakāya Meditation is based on lectures given at the Buddhist Vihara, Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur during a three-day visit to Malaysia, August 1st to 3rd 1990. In addition, I have included the chapter on Vijjā Dhammakāya Meditation Practice to complement the theoretical aspect of the three lectures from the practical viewpoint.

The original lectures were interspersed with meditation practice. In fact, the procedure was usually to practice first and discuss afterwards. We have had to adopt a more academic approach for the general reader, but I urge all to try practicing the meditation approach presented. Vijjā Dhammakāya practice is described in Chapter V and additional aids such as sound and video tapes are available from the Wat websites www.dhammadcenter.org in English.

The First Edition of this book was published by the Dhammakāya Buddhist Meditation Foundation in March 1991, largely due to the devotion and dedication of our Malaysian colleagues at the Dhammakāya Meditation Resource Center (DMRC)

in Kuala Lumpur. The second edition was revised in the United States to make the teachings available to a wider audience. This Third Edition has been revised at Wat Luang Phor Sodh to make the teachings available to English speakers worldwide.

Chapter II considers the relationship between Concentration-Insight Meditation (*Samatha-Vipassanā*) and the Noble Eightfold Path.

Chapters III and IV deal with the development of Right Concentration and Right Wisdom respectively.

Chapter V presents Dhamma Practice according to the Dhammakāya approach.

Chapter VI answers commonly asked questions, and Chapter VII provides a summary and conclusion.

The appendices provide the reader with a biography of our spiritual leader, the late Chao Khun Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni, as well as a biography of the author, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith (Hon. D.). Other appendices present the pre-meditation service, a glossary, Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakayaram, and meditation retreats at Wat Luang Phor Sodh Buddhist Meditation Institute.

It should be noted that, for precision, Pali terms are included throughout the text in italics, using the Romanized alphabet according to Warder (1991).¹ The letter *m̐* is pronounced “ng.” For the convenience of our readers, we have, throughout, written the mantra or repetitive word (*Parikamma-bhāvanā*) as *Sammā Arahang* rather than *Sammā Araham̐*. Pali words are defined in the Glossary.

Capitalization is used to distinguish between dhamma and Dhamma, where the former refers to all compound phenomena and the latter to the teachings of Lord Buddha.

In Pali, singular or plural are usually differentiated by various forms such as Dhamma (singular) and Dhammā (plural). To avoid confusion for the general reader, in this book, the suffix “s” is sometimes added to represent the plural.

Technical Buddhist terms like Right Understanding, Five Hindrances and Eightfold Path are capitalized to indicate that they should be understood in the special sense intended by the Enlightened One.

¹ Warder, A.K., 1991. **Introduction to Pali** (Third Edition). Oxford: The Pali Text Society.

The word Right, for example, relates to the absolute or ultimate as opposed to the conventional “right” which is a matter of personal point-of-view.

I welcome comments from all readers and critics. I will feel that all these efforts are worthwhile if readers practice the meditation technique and realize for themselves what Vijjā Dhammakāya is all about.



II CONCENTRATION - INSIGHT MEDITATION

SAMATHA-VIPASSANĀ

Meditation by concentration of the mind to remove the Five Hindrances is known as *Samatha*, while the contemplation of physical body, feelings, mental functions and phenomena (*dhamma*) to develop Right Wisdom is called *Vipassanā*. The Vijiā Dhammakāya approach includes aspects of both *Samatha* and *Vipassanā* meditation.

After Enlightenment, Lord Buddha taught Four Noble Truths. These are Suffering (*Dukkha*), the Cause of Suffering (*Samudaya*), Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha*), and the Noble Eightfold Path (*Magga*) leading to the extinction of suffering. The Noble Eightfold Path (*Ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*) consists of Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration of mind. Dhamma Practices leading to the Noble

Eightfold Path are classified under the three categories, *Sīla* or morality, *Samatha* or Right Concentration and *Vipassanā* or Right Wisdom.

SĪLA (MORALITY)

Let's first consider how to follow the first three folds of the Noble Eightfold Path which are known collectively as *Sīla* (Morality). These are Right Speech, Right Action (or Conduct), and Right Living (or Livelihood). When a person accepts precepts and practices *Sīla*, it helps to prevent wrong speech and wrong action resulting from wrong mentality, which arises under the influence of Greed, Attachment, Anger, Ill-will, or Delusion. Practicing speech, bodily action and thought based on the precepts of morality helps us become more and more peaceful.

SAMATHA (CONCENTRATION)

Samatha meditation leads us to the next three folds of the Noble Eightfold Path. These are Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration. The practice of *Samatha* meditation deals with con-

centration. It helps to remove the Five Hindrances (*Nivarana*) to wisdom which are attachment to Sensual Desire, Ill-will, Inactivity or Sleepiness, Anxiety or Restlessness of mind, and Doubtfulness. *Samatha* Meditation also helps to develop mind powers (*Abhiññā*), especially super-normal vision and supernormal hearing. These, in turn, assist in the development of supernormal knowledge of the past and future. *Samatha* also helps in learning about the natural Law of *Kamma* or Karma (cause and effect) as well as rebirth. This is very helpful for developing Right Wisdom in *Vipassanā* meditation. *Samatha* meditation also helps to calm down and remove Craving, Passion, and Attachment to compounds or worldly objects.

VIPASSANĀ (INSIGHT)

Vipassanā meditation is the technique for developing Right Wisdom. This derives from contemplation of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*Satipatthāna*), the physical body, feelings, mental functions and *Dhamma* (Note # 1). It includes Right Wisdom with regard to the Five Hindrances, the Five Aggregates, the Four Noble Truths, and the twelve links in the Chain of Dependent Origination.

NOTE # 1

The fourth Foundation of Mindfulness, Dhamānupassanā has been rendered in English as “Contemplation of Mind Objects.” This is not wrong, but vague, implying all mental phenomena. In fact, Lord Buddha specifies only five major teachings for contemplation [The Five Hindrances, Five Aggregates, Six Internal and External Sense-Bases (Āyatana), Seven Factors of Enlightenment, and the Four Noble Truths]. Thus, we keep the original Pali, Dhamma, with a capital letter implying teachings. It should be noted, however, that these are not only external teachings, but also internal phenomena that can be observed and contemplated directly in meditation.

Concerning Right Wisdom, we should develop Right Understanding of the two fundamental aspects of Nature: first is Right Understanding of the three common characteristics of compounds. Lord Buddha said:

Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā

All compounds are impermanent.

Sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā

All compounds are unsatisfactory or subject to suffering.

Therefore, any person who attaches to compounds with craving and delusion will suffer, according to the degree of attachment. Finally, *Sabbe dhamma anattā* -- All compounds are devoid of self.

Some translate the phrase *sabbe dhamma* literally as “all phenomena” (both compound and non-compound). This is not true. According to Lord Buddha’s Teaching in the *Dhammapada* Pali text, as interpreted by the original *arahant* commentators and by the most recent translators (Carter and Palihawadana 1987),² the words *sabbe dhamma*, in this context, refer only to the Five Aggregates. These are *saṅkhāra* or compounds. Thus, the reference excludes pure, non-compound aspects of nature such as *Nibbāna*.

The second aspect of nature to be discerned with Right Wisdom is Right Understanding of non-compound nature (*Visaṅkhārā*). This means “the pure” and pertains to *Nibbāna*. The Pali Canon describes *Nibbāna* as not subject to change, of pure

² Mahamakut Buddhist University, 1989 (BE 2532), “*Aparam Pañcasata Bhikku*.” in **Dhammapatatthakatha Thai Textbook**, Volume 7, pg. 62. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press.

essence (*Dhammasāraṃ*)³ and absolutely permanent (*Niccaṃ*).⁴ It is everlasting (*Tādi* or *Dhuvam*),⁵ with no more death and rebirth. Any person who attains *Nibbāna* will find supreme peace and happiness (*Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ*)

THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

Vipassanā meditation also helps to develop Right Wisdom of the Four Noble Truths. These include the Noble Eightfold Path as the fourth Noble Truth, the path leading to the cessation of all suffering. *Vipassanā* leads to Right Thought and Right Intention. Right Thought pertaining to the Four Noble Truths and Right Intention for the removal of all passions. This includes the subtlest passion, men-

³ Mahamakut Buddhist University, 1982 (BE 2525), “*Itivuttaka Dhātu Sutta*” in **Sutta and Commentary: An Interpretation, Khuddaka-Nikāya** pg. 310. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press.

⁴ Mahamakut Buddhist University, 1985 (BE 2528), “*Bhikkhū hi Puttha Pañha*” in **Dhammapatthakatha Thai Textbook**, Volume 6, pg. 180. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press.

⁵ Mahamakut Buddhist University, 1985 (BE 2528), “*Aññatara Upāsaka*” and “*Pasenadi-kosala*” in **Dhammapatthakatha Thai Text-book**, Volume 6, pg. 132. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press.

tal attachment (*Anusaya-kilesa* or *Āsava-kilesa*) and the subtlest ignorance, especially inherent misconception (*Avijjāsava* or *Avijjā-anusaya*) which is the root cause of suffering.

Vipassanā also helps to cut the Chain of Dependent Origination. Initially, ignorance (*Avijjā*) gives rise to impression (*Saṅkhārā*), impression brings about consciousness (*Vīññāṇa*), consciousness originates the psycho-physical organism (*Nāma-rūpa*), and this results in the sense organs (*Salāyatana*). These, in turn, bring about contact (*Phassa*), feeling (*Vedanā*), craving (*Taṇhā*), attachment (*Upādāna*), the will-to-become (*Bhava*), rebirth (*Jāti*), and the suffering of old age, sickness, despair, sorrow and death (*Jarā-maraṇa*).

When the Noble Eightfold Path is perfectly cleared, at least the following three fetters will be cut:

1. Wrong View (*Sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) about the characteristics of all compounds
2. Doubtfulness (*Vicikicchā*) about the Dhamma Practice leading to *Nibbāna*
3. Wrong Religious Practices (*Sīlabbataparāmāsa*)

Those who have fully opened the Noble Eightfold Path and are able to cut these fetters will become Noble disciples, beginning as Stream Enterers (*Sotāpanna*).

VIJĀ DHAMMAKĀYA

Let us consider the principles underlying the Vijā Dhammakāya approach to *Samatha-Vipassanā* meditation. Some may think that the approach is new and is not in the scriptures or is not Lord Buddha's teachings. In fact, this method is exactly the teaching of Buddha.

The final goal of meditation is to reach *Nibbāna* by removing all ignorance and passions, and by developing Right Wisdom regarding the path of attainment. All this is possible when you reach Dhammakāya. Dhammakāya is really Lord Buddha. Lord Buddha said :

*Tathāgatassa hetam vāseṭṭhā
abhivacanaṃ dhammakāyo itipi
brahmakāyo itipi dhammabhūto itipi
brahmabhūto itipi.*

Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, the words Dhammakāya, Brahmakāya, Dhammabhūta and Brahmabhūta are names of the Tathāgata.⁶

This means Dhammakāya is the name of Lord Buddha, or is Lord Buddha. Both Lord Buddha and the other Noble Ones (*Arahant*) spoke of Dhammakāya. They described Enlightenment or attainment of *Nibbāna* through the arising of Dhammakāya.

So, Lord Buddha and the *Arahanta* are really Dhammakāya which is the purest element. It is non-compound, and very different from the crude body. The crude body is a compound thing like the Five Aggregates, which is subjected to change. Anyone who is attached to such compounds will suffer, because soon the compounds will no longer exist. The Dhammakāya *Arahant* is not of that character. He is permanent. The Pali word *Dhammasāraṃ* means “elemental” and *Niccaṃ* means “permanent.” *Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ* means *Nibbāna* is the highest or supreme happiness (pertaining to something which exists without change forever). The Pali

⁶ The Pali Tipitaka, Siamrat, book 25, Dīghanikāya Pātikavagga, Section 55, page 92.

words *Tādi* or *Dhuvam* are used when referring to *Nibbāna* which is non-compound like Dhammakāya. Lord Buddha said (Nibbāna Sutta III):

Bhikkhus, non-compound nature exists; if the non-compound or purest nature were non-existent, there would be no detachment from that which is compound. It is due to the existence of the non-compound that detachment from the compound becomes possible.

Some ask why nobody mentioned Dhammakāya earlier (Note # 2). In fact, all of this information is in the scriptures. Then, why did so many overlook it? I can only answer that Luang Phor Wat Paknam, in particular, meditated all the way to *Nibbāna* and could see these two natures, the compound and non-compound, exactly as Lord Buddha described them. I cannot comment on those who say otherwise. Those who hear this *Dhamma* which talks about both the compound and the non-compound (*Nibbāna*) are very lucky.

NOTE # 2

The word Dhammakāya appears many times in the scriptures. Here are six examples.

[1] In the Pathikavagga Sutta (Thai ฬ. 11/55/92), Lord Buddha says Dhammakāya is a name for the Buddha. “*Dhammakāya, Dhammabhūto, Brahmakāya* and *Brahmabhūto* are all names for the Tathāgata.” The Thai Dīgha-nikāya Commentary (Thai ฬ. ๑๓. 3/50) explains that this is because Dhamma came from his heart via his words.

[2] In the Khuddaka-nikāya, Apadāna (Thai ฑ. ๑๒. 32/2/20) Lord Buddha said that private (Pacceka) Buddhas “...have a lot of Dhammakāya.” The Apadāna Commentary (Thai ๑๒. ๑๓. 1/245) explains that this means that they have a high natural state.

[3] Also in the Khuddaka-nikāya, Apadāna, (Thai ฑ. ๑๒. 33/157/284) Lord Buddha presents Himself as Dhammakāya – already fully developed.

[4] Badantacariya Buddhaghosa (Thai ฬ. ๑๓. 2/342-343) explained that Dhammakāya means the Tathāgata [Lord Buddha] plus the nine supra-mundane *Dhamma* – the four paths and four fruits of the Noble Disciples and *Nibbāna*.

NOTE # 2

[5] The Paramattha Dīpanī Commentary (Thai ฐิติ. ๑๓. 334) explains that anyone who sees Dhammakāya with the insight (*Ñāna*) eye sees Lord Buddha, the private (*Pacceka*) Buddhas and the Arahants.

[6] The same Paramattha Dīpanī Commentary (Thai จริยา. ๑๓. 324) explains that the Dhammakāyas of Lord Buddha and the private (*Pacceka*) Buddhas and the Arahants are True Self. “The Perfections (*Pāramī*) have rid these Dhammakāyas of all defilements. They are True Self. Thus, they are ultimate and eternal.

If one looks beyond the specific word “Dhammakāya” for Dhammakāya concepts, they are found close to the heart of Buddhism. Upon hearing the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta, Kondañña attained the *Dhamma Eye* or *Dhamma-cakkhu*. And, Lord Buddha’s definitive treatise on meditation, the Greater Sutta on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, begins with the instruction “A monk abides contemplating body in body.” The ultimate verification of Vijjā Dhammakāya lies not in the scriptures, but in the thousands of meditators who have repeatedly seen the body in body and attained remarkable results. We invite you to see for yourself.

In the following chapters we will examine the principles of *Samatha* and *Vipassanā* along with *Vijjā Dhammakāya*. You will see the *Vijjā Dhammakāya* approach is exactly in accordance with Lord Buddha's teachings and aims directly at supra-mundane Right Wisdom (*Nibbāna*). The *Dhammakāya*, which is the purest element, is non-compound and possesses characteristics of *Nibbāna*. Luang Phor Wat Paknam taught his disciples to aim at the Right, purest *Dhammakāya* nature, or *Nibbāna*, and to understand *Nibbāna* in all aspects.

We have seen that Lord Buddha was enlightened to the Four Noble Truths: Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, Cessation of Suffering, and the Noble Eightfold Path leading to the extinction of suffering. We have also described the three basic *Dhamma* Practices that develop the Noble Eightfold Path: *Sīla* or observance of moral precepts, *Samatha* meditation for concentration of the mind to remove the Five Hindrances, and *Vipassanā* meditation which involves contemplation of the physical body, feelings, mental functions and *Dhamma* to develop Right Wisdom.

When the Noble Eightfold Path is firmly established, meditators will be able to cut at least three

fetters (*Saṅyojana*). These are Wrong View regarding the characteristics of compounds (*Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*), Doubtfulness about the Three Gems and *Dhamma* Practices (*Vicikicchā*), and Wrong Practices (*Sīlabataparāmāsa*). With these three fetters removed, practitioners will be able to become Stream Enterer (*Sotāpanna*) Noble Disciples and eventually attain *Nibbāna*.

SUMMARY

In summary, meditation by concentrating the mind to remove the Five Hindrances is known as *Samatha*, while contemplation of the physical body, feelings, mental functions and *Dhamma* to develop Right Wisdom is called *Vipassanā*. These meditation practices must be based on *Sīla* or moral precepts. Anyone practicing these *Dhamma* can be sure they will attain Right Wisdom concerning Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, Cessation of Suffering, and the Noble Eightfold Path leading to the extinction of suffering – in short, the Four Noble Truths.

The Vijjā Dhammakāya approach includes aspects of both *Samatha* and *Vipassanā*. It is not a new doctrine. Dhammakāya is mentioned in the

scriptures and the method follows exactly Lord Buddha's teachings. This meditation technique leads directly to *Nibbāna*. Dhammakāya is the non-compound. Thus, it is *Nibbāna* and is Lord Buddha. The approach is especially effective because the meditator who has reached Dhammakāya can see and experience both compound and non-compound nature. With practice, he or she can cut the fetters and become a Noble Disciple. By cutting the first three fetters, one becomes a Stream-Enterer (*Sotā-panna*). After continuing to cut all fetters, one becomes a Dhammakāya Saint (*Arahant*).



III THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONCENTRATION

SAMATHA PRACTICE

Meditation by concentrating the mind is known as *Samatha* (Serenity). *Samatha* removes the Five Hindrances (*Nīvaraṇa*) and prepares the mind for Wisdom (*Vipassanā*) meditation. The Five Hindrances are attachment to sensual desire, ill-will, inactivity or sleepiness, anxiety or restlessness, and doubt.

The mind is accustomed to flitting from object to object in the outside world. Concentrating the mind and bringing it inward requires effort, but the mind cannot be forced. Therefore, Lord Buddha taught various concentration devices.

CONCENTRATION DEVICES

Lord Buddha taught forty⁷ concentration devices or meditation subjects for tranquilizing the mind (Buddhaghosa, *The Path of Purification*).⁸ They are the ten recollections (*Anussati*), ten meditations on impurities (*Asubha*), ten complete objects (*Kasiṇa*), four immaterial absorptions (*Arūpa-jhāna*), four divine abidings (*Brahmavihāra*), one perception (*Āhāre patikūlasaññā*) or contemplation of the impurity of material food, and one defining contemplation (*Vavatthāna*) on the Four Elements (Earth, Water, Fire, and Air).

The ten *Anussati* or recollections are: (1) *Buddhā-nussati* or recollection of the virtues of the Buddha, (2) *Dhammā-nussati* or recollection of the virtues of the *Dhamma*, (3) *Sanghā-nussati* or recollection of the virtues of the *Sangha*, (4) *Sīlā-nussati* or recollection of the duties of morality, (5) *Cāgā-*

⁷ The forty are listed in the *Visuddhi-magga*. Some scholars maintain that only 38 were specified by Lord Buddha and that two were added later.

⁸ Buddhaghosa, Bhadantacariya, c. 0007 (c. BE 550), **The Path of Purification** (*Visuddhi-magga*), translated by Bhikkhu Ñanamoli. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, Third Edition 1975. The forty meditation subjects are summarized in Chapter III, stanza 104, on page 112.

nussati or recollection of generosity, (6) *Devatā-nussati* or recollection of celestial beings, (7) *Maraṇassati* or recollection of death, (8) *Kāya-gatāsati* or mindfulness of the body, (9) *Ānāpānasati* or mindfulness of breathing, and (10) *Upasamā-nussati* or recollection of *Nibbāna* or peace.

The ten impurities or kinds of foulness (*Asubha*) are: (1) the bloated, (2) the livid, (3) the festering, (4) the cut-up, (5) the gnawed, (6) the scattered, (7) the hacked and scattered, (8) the bleeding, (9) the worm-infested, and (10) a skeleton.

The ten *Kasiṇa* or complete objects are: (1) earth, (2) water, (3) fire, (4) wind, (5) space (*Ākāsa*), (6) Light (*Āloka-kasiṇa*) and (7-10) the four colors or *Vañṇa-kasiṇa* (blue, yellow, red, and white).

The four divine abodes or *Brahmavihāra* are loving kindness (*Mettā*), compassion (*Karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*Muditā*), and equanimity (*Upekkhā*).

A meditator can select any one or combination of these forty meditation subjects, according to his or her own character. For example, *Kasiṇa* concentration is very suitable for those with sensual desire, restlessness of mind, or inclination toward

anger, hatred or ill will. For those whose habits are intellectual thought, devotion or delusion, mindfulness of breathing (*Ānāpānasati*) and recollection of Buddha's virtues (*Buddhā-nussati*) are most suitable.

DHAMMAKĀYA MEDITATION

Vijjā Dhammakāya meditation is based on four principles: three methods of concentration and the Principle of the Center. The three concentration techniques are: meditating on an object of visualization (*Kasiṇa*), recollection of Lord Buddha's virtues (*Buddhā-nussati*) and mindfulness of breathing (*Ānāpānasati*)

The Principle of the Center specifies that these three methods of concentration are all applied simultaneously at the center of the body. Thereafter, meditation proceeds to successively higher levels by always focusing at the center of the center. This combination of techniques is effective for meditators of all different types.

The Object of Visualization

The Vijjā Dhammakāya object of visualization (*Parikamma-nimitta*) is usually a luminous sphere or translucent Buddha Statue. In *Bhāvanā* or meditation practice, we teach visualization of the light sphere (*Āloka-kasiṇa*).

When you visualize, your mind resides in the object you conceive. Whatever you see in the mind, your mind is right there. If you think about members of your household, your mind will be with them. If you visualize a sphere and you see the sphere, it means that all four components of the mind have come together inside the sphere. This is why we ask you to imagine a sphere. This helps to concentrate the components of the mind. If you lose mindfulness of the sphere, you will see something else. This means your mind has gone elsewhere. Try to keep visualizing in order to keep your mind inside the sphere.

The four components of the mind are the spheres of vision, memory, thought and awareness. Use all four in imagining the sphere. Visualize it. Remember what the sphere is like. (It is transparent like this, clear like this...) Think about the sphere all

the time. There is a transparent spot at the very center of the sphere. Keep your awareness focused there. Don't let the mind wander away. Know all about the sphere.

Visualization progresses through three stages on the way to the first state of absorption (*Jhāna*). First is ordinary perception. The meditation object (*Kasiṇa*) visualized at the beginning is called the preliminary vision (*Parikamma-nimitta*).

As the meditator concentrates on the light object and commits it to memory, the image becomes more and more refined, clearer and clearer, until it looks like a crystal ball. This is known as the learning sign (*Uggaha-nimitta*) and is the first level of meditation. Luang Phor Wat Paknam taught his disciples to visualize the light sphere or *Parikamma-nimitta* until the *Uggaha-nimitta* appears.

When the meditator concentrates at the center of the *Uggaha-nimitta* until it becomes very clear, bright and still, he or she will become able to enlarge or reduce it. Then, the counterpart sign (*Pati-bhāga-nimitta*), which looks like a crystal sphere, will emerge. This is the second stage of concentration, the light object (*Āloka-kasiṇa*), and is called *Parikamma-bhāvanā* or preliminary meditation.

The appearance of the *Āloka-kasiṇa* marks the beginning of substantial meditation. The purpose of this approach is to bring all of the mind components in the crystal sphere to be more and more perfectly concentrated at the center of the body. This concentration helps to remove all the hindrances such as inactivity or sloth, sleepiness and doubtfulness.

When the meditator stops still at the center of the light object (*Patibhāga-nimitta*), he or she will feel delight in this state of mind and ill-will will be removed. If fear creeps in, the practitioner will lose this state, but if he or she continues to become more and more peaceful, stopping still at the center of each center to become more and more refined, the *Patibhāga-nimitta* will become very bright and clear, and the meditator will feel very happy or blissful. Restlessness of mind and anxiety will be removed. By keeping the mind still at the center, all sensual desires will be removed. This stage is the first absorption or *Pathama-jhāna*. This is concentration on the light object or *Āloka-kasiṇa*. It is one of the easiest and most effective methods for concentrating the mind.

Recollection of Buddha's Virtues

Vijjā Dhammakāya meditation combines visualization of the light object (*Āloka-kasiṇa*) with recollection of Buddha's virtues. *Buddhā-nussati* is cultivated by means of a repetitive word or mantra (*Parikamma-bhāvanā*).

The Vijjā Dhammakāya mantra is “*Sammā Arahang*.” *Sammā* means Right, Highest or Ultimate. It stands for *Sammā-sambuddho* which means the Buddha's Supreme Right Enlightenment or Supreme Right Wisdom. The word *Arahang* means the virtue of the Buddha being far away from passion. In other words, it represents perfect purity. Thus, when you repeat the words “*Sammā Arahang*,” “*Sammā Arahang*” you are calling Buddha's wisdom and purity into your mind. This is *Buddhā-nussati* or recollection of Lord Buddha's virtue.

The meditator mentally repeats *Sammā Arahang* while simultaneously visualizing the light object (*Āloka-kasiṇa*). The recitation helps to make the vision of the sphere bright and clear.

Mindfulness of Breathing

Vijjā Dhammakāya meditation also combines Mindfulness of Breathing (*Ānāpānasati*) with Visualization of the Light Object (*Āloka-kasiṇa*) and repetition of *Sammā Arahang*. All three techniques are focused at the center of the body.

Those who perform mindfulness of breathing or *Ānāpānasati* correctly stay mindful of the breath touching a fixed point and visualize it. They do not follow the breathing in and out or up and down. In this way the mind becomes more and more refined and finally stops still. Luang Phor Wat Paknam applied *Ānāpānasati* to the center of the body to help the mind become concentrated there.

To focus the mind at the center of the body where your breathing ends, concentrate your mindfulness at the center of the light sphere and observe your breathing in and out. Your breath passes through the sphere and you can visualize it. This is mindfulness of breathing or *Ānāpānasati*. Do this until you see the sphere clearer and clearer, then forget about the breathing.

Ānāpānasati helps the mind become concentrated more quickly. As the mind concentrates, breathing becomes shallower. The mind becomes more and more refined until it stops still at the center of the body. This is the purpose of *Ānāpānasati*.

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE CENTER

The fourth foundation of Vijjā Dhammakāya meditation practice is the Principle of the Center. Luang Phor Wat Paknam discovered that the mind naturally resides at the center of the body, two “*anguli*” (2 middle finger joints) or about two inches (5 centimeters) above the navel (figure 1). Only when the mind is at rest at the body’s center can one penetrate to the full depths of the *Dhamma* as it was revealed to Lord Buddha.

Using the three techniques described, the meditator first brings the *Āloka-kasiṇa* sphere to the center of the body. Then, he or she proceeds to focus again and again at the “center of the center” of concentric spheres as they appear. In this way, the meditator progresses through more and more refined body-minds to Dhammakāya and *Nibbāna*.

DRAWING THE MIND INWARD

The uncontrolled mind is attracted outward through sensory contact and flits restlessly from object to object. Bringing the mind to concentrate at the center of the body requires considerable effort. You cannot, however, force the mind. If you try, it slips away. This is why Vījjā Dhammakāya uses the Light Sphere, *Sammā Arahang* and *Ānāpānasati* to concentrate the mind and make it tractable.

Coaxing the Mind

Don't force the mind too much. If you force it, the sphere goes away. On the other hand, if your energy is too slack, the sphere will also disappear and you won't know where it has gone. If you feel too eager to see the sphere, you can't. It's gone again.

Mental training is like pressing a ping pong ball into water. You must have the right balance. Relax a little. Don't press too hard. Don't be anxious, but don't be slack or allow sleepiness to creep in. Just coax the mind. Soothe it evenly and peacefully. The mind is something you cannot force.

Keep your mind alert at all times. If the mind wanders away, recognize it immediately. Bring the mind back as soon as it goes off somewhere.

How do you bring the mind back? Just visualize the sphere and repeat *Sammā Arahang*. The mind will come into the sphere again, that's all.

THE PATH TO THE CENTER OF THE BODY

Luang Phor Wat Paknam taught a specific method for beginning meditators to bring the Light Sphere (*Āloka-kasiṇa*) to the center of the body. There are seven positions along the way. We will study this in detail in Chapter V. Let us, however, summarize the method here to complete consideration of *Samatha* meditation.

Begin by visualizing the sphere at the nostril aperture (position 1), for ladies on the left and for gentlemen on the right, while mentally reciting the words *Sammā Arahang* at least three times to keep the sphere clear and still.

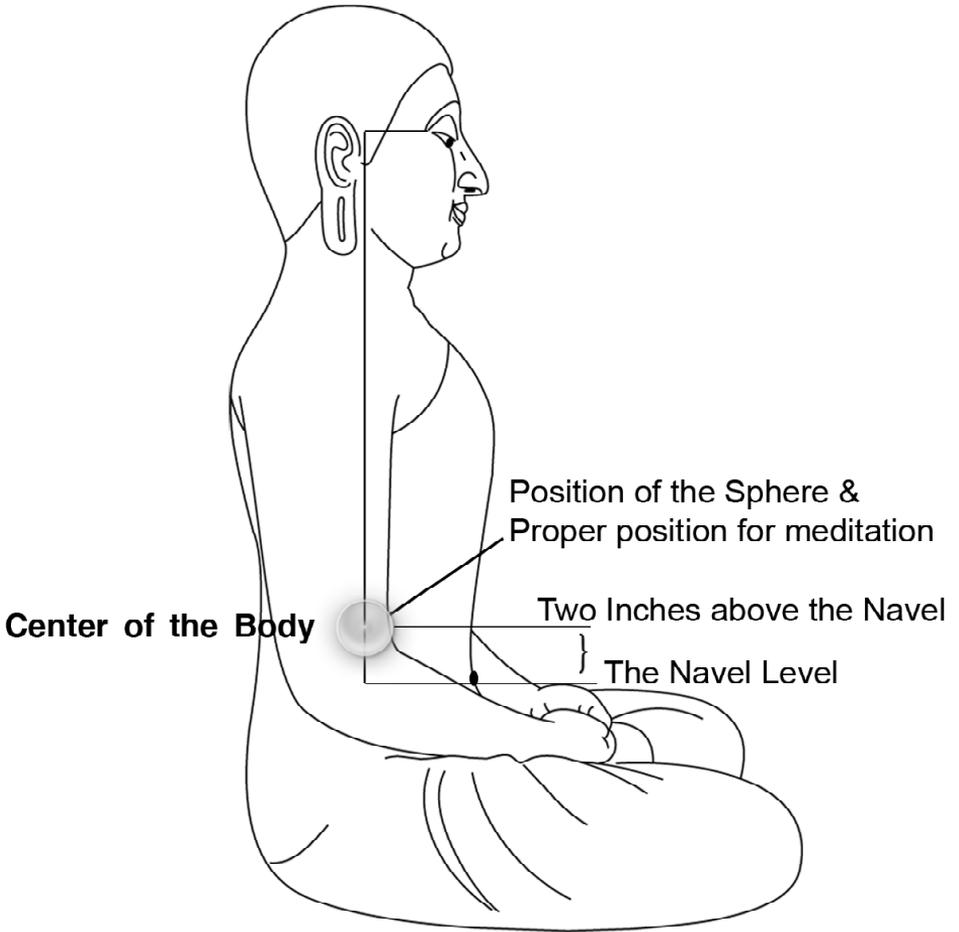


Figure 2: The Center of the Body

What is the proper size of the sphere? Whatever you can visualize. About the size of an eyeball will do. Don't worry that a larger sphere couldn't fit into the nose. All transparent things can go anywhere. Whatever the starting size, the sphere will become even larger if the mind stops still.

Move the sphere from your nostril upwards into your nose to the inside corner of the eye at the tear duct (position 2), for ladies on the left, for gentlemen on the right. Move it inside the corner of the eye at the tear duct, not outside. Focus your mind at the center of the sphere inside the corner of the eye and mentally recite the words *Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang*. Then, move the sphere slowly, keeping your mind at its center by seeing the transparent spot at the center of the sphere.

Slowly move the sphere to the center of the head (position 3). Where is the center of the head? Suppose you have two lines, from the front to the back and from left to right. The intersection of those two lines is the center of your head. The sphere should be in line with your inside corner of the eye sockets, not above or below.

After you have mentally recited the words *Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang* to keep the sphere still at the center, move it downwards slowly to your palate, the ceiling of your mouth (position 4). Just visualize that the sphere can go anywhere. Don't bite it, just see it. Repeat the words *Sammā Arahang*, at least three times to keep the sphere still.

You may find difficulty in moving the sphere downwards. That is because your mind is used to being outside all the time. It is difficult to bring it inside and it requires some time to train the mind. If you meditate correctly, you will be able to bring your mind in. *Vijjā Dhammakāya* is one of the most effective methods for doing this. It may be difficult for the beginner, but later it becomes easier.

To solve the problem of bringing the mind with the sphere downwards into the center of the body, roll your eyeballs upwards a little bit temporarily. This makes your mind components move backwards and downwards. Then, focus your attention at the center of the sphere and move it downwards, position by position.

Mentally move the bright, clear sphere slowly and directly downward to rest at the top of the throat aperture (position 5). Repeat the words *Sammā Arahang* to yourself three times to keep the sphere bright and clear and to hold it steady.

Next, move the sphere down to the center of the body, where the breathing stops, in line with your navel (position 6). Repeat the words *Sammā Arahang*, *Sammā Arahang*, *Sammā Arahang* here, at least three times, then move the sphere upwards two “anguli” (middle finger joints) or about two inches (five centimeters). This is the final location (Position 7) where the mind naturally resides at the center of the body.

This technique for drawing the mind inward is a preliminary practice. Meditators who can do it and know where the center of the body is do not need to move the sphere from starting to final position every time. They can begin directly at the center of the body in the seventh position. Those who find difficulty in moving the mind into the center of the body will just have to practice patiently until they can do it well.

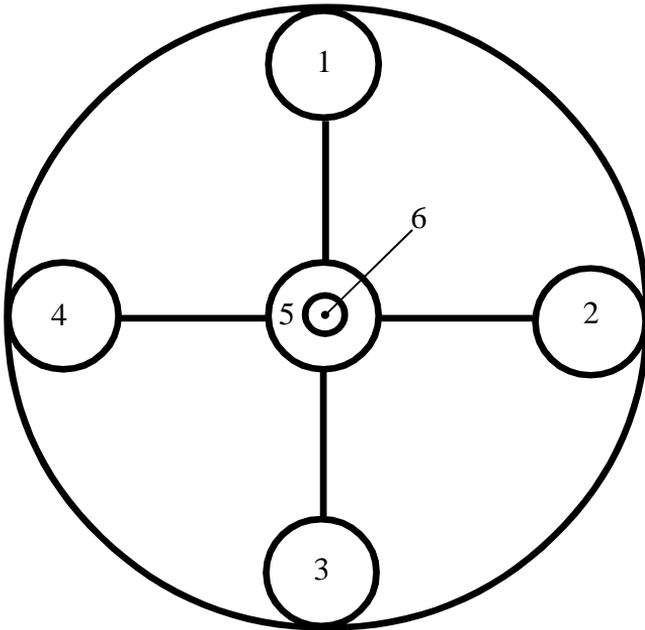


Figure 3: The Sphere at the Center of the Body and the Elements

The Center of the Body

When the mind stops still at the center of your body, the psycho-physical elements ([1] Water, [2] Earth, [3] Fire, [4] Wind, [5] Space, and [6] Consciousness) are all together at one point (figure 3). You can see with your mind the actual Light Sphere or *Pathama-magga* which is your own real nucleus. It is very bright and luminous.

When you see this, forget about all visualizations. Forget about reciting the mantra. Just rest your mind at the center. Then, the center will expand itself. More and more refined spheres will appear. Just stop still at the center of the center of each, until you reach the most refined one. Then, stop still.

When your mind stops still at the center of the body you can see your own *Dhamma*. Why do I say *Dhamma* is here and not in the scriptures or elsewhere? Because all practices of body, speech and mind regarding Right Action, Right Speech, and Right Thought lead to the mind becoming purer and purer at the center of the body. This is where the mind performs its functions. If you meditate at the center of your body, your mind will become purer and purer.

Pure Form

Purification of the mind is the purpose of Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*). When you see your mind is impure, you must purify it right away. You do this by holding it still at the center of the center until you reach pure dhamma, the purest mind and body you can attain. This is the Vijjā Dhammakāya practice.

When your mind is perfectly concentrated at its most refined and purest state, the center expands and you can see your own Refined Human Body (*Manussakāya*) at the center of the sphere within your Crude Human Body. This is the result of proper meditation. It means your human-level *dhamma* is pure and happy.

Then, larger and larger spheres will appear within the refined human body. As you continue, you can reach celestial *dhamma* and see your own Celestial Body and mind which is about double the size of the human body. As your body and mind and the elements of the Five Aggregates become purer and purer you can reach the Brahman Body which is about double the size of the Celestial Body. Next, you will see the Formless Brahman Body which is about double the size of the Brahman Body. Don't worry about the name; whatever you see, that's it.

Don't be surprised when you see the refined body becoming larger and larger, very refined, very beautiful with adornments and very radiant. This is due to the merit which you have performed. Proceed to become the more and more refined bodies and minds, by placing your mind at the center of the center of each.

When your mind reaches the purest state, you will see Dhammakāya. It looks like a transparent Buddha statue, radiant with a lotus bud upon the head. The standard height is about nine meters in width and height. That is the preliminary size. From then on, subsequent Dhammakāya will be larger and larger, and more and more refined. They become very radiant, and up to forty meters in height and width. Do not be surprised.

You might ask “Why practice according to this approach in which the meditator sees the body larger and larger?” If you can see an angel or *Deva*, the real *Deva* or *Brahma* is even larger. Don’t be surprised. You can be sure of this. There exist internal bodies. There are at least eighteen bodies, each more and more refined, purer and purer, until the most refined body, the Dhammakāya. You will perceive Dhammakāya when your mind is at the purest. By stopping still at the center of the center, you will pass through the spheres of all mundane bodies (the human, celestial, Brahman and formless Brahman bodies), until you reach the supra-mundane body, Dhammakāya. Then, you have attained *Nibbāna*.

Why can you reach *Nibbāna* during meditation? So long as you purify your mind by stopping still at the center of the center, your mind will become purer and purer until it temporarily reaches the purest. This is temporarily way beyond, or above, or far away from the passions, due to meditation. This is called *Vikkhambhaṇa-vimutti* or temporary emancipation via suppression. In that state of mind you can see *Nibbāna*. You can see Lord Buddha who exists in *Nibbāna*. Don't doubt it. It is in the scriptures. Lord Buddha said that *Nibbāna* exists as a supra-mundane abode (*Ayatanaṃ*) where Lord Buddha and his disciples exist.

SUMMARY

Samatha meditation aims at concentration to remove the Five Hindrances. Lord Buddha taught forty meditation devices. *Vijjā Dhammakāya* utilizes three of these simultaneously, focused at the center of the body. They are visualization of the Light Object (*Āloka-kasiṇa*), repetition of *Sammā Arahant*, and Mindfulness of Breathing or *Ānāpānasati*. Luang Phor Wat Paknam taught how to use these techniques to bring the mind inward to rest at the center of the body. Here you can see your own true

nucleus or dhamma where the results of Right Action, Right Speech and Right Thought can be observed. Continuing to concentrate and purify your mind at the center of the center, you can pass through eighteen internal body-minds until you reach non-compound Dhammakāya and temporarily attain *Nibbāna*. In this state you can see *Nibbāna* and Lord Buddha who resides in *Nibbāna*.



IV THE DEVELOPMENT OF RIGHT WISDOM

VIPASSANĀ PRACTICE

Vipassanā practice aims at development of Right Wisdom with regard to the Five Hindrances, Five Aggregates, the Four Noble Truths, and the twelve links in the Chain of Dependent Origination. It consists of contemplation of physical body, feeling, mental functions and phenomena (*dhamma*).

I have collected the following information from the scriptures, along with the rendering of the famous commentator, Acariya Phra Buddhaghosa, whom we believe to be a Noble One. His interpretations of Lord Buddha's Teachings have become the texts for Pali study in Thailand, from the elementary to the advanced level. Other materials presented here are collected from the Vijjā Dhammakāya teachings of Luang Phor Wat Paknam, the Most Venerable Chao Khun Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni, and his disciples.

All of this information I am very sure is valid and leads directly to the supra-mundane state of *Nibbāna*, our ultimate goal in practicing Buddhism. Some words may be a bit difficult to understand, especially for beginners in the study of Buddhism. I will try my best to make them clear by using simple explanations.

Vipassanā practice can be divided into two levels: mundane Right Understanding of compound phenomena (*Saṅkhāra*) (Note # 3), which is called *Anupas-sanā* and supra-mundane Right Understanding of non-compound nature (*Visaṅkhāra*). The first level focuses on mindfulness of the Five Hindrances to wisdom and helps develop Right Understanding of the impermanence of compound phenomena such as the Five Aggregates of our body-mind complex. However, this level cannot remove cravings permanently; the meditator must proceed to supra-mundane *Vipassanā* practice to develop Right Understanding regarding the Four Noble Truths and the Chain of Dependent Origination (*Paticca-samuppāda*).

Vijjā Dhammakāya meditation is especially effective for bringing meditators beyond the mundane to the supra-mundane. In the Vijjā Dhamma-

NOTE # 3

The word, *Saṅkhāra*, has several meanings. In the broad sense, it embraces all existing things, i.e. the material universe. *Saṅkhāra* includes everything of which impermanence is the inherent characteristic, or everything which springs from a cause.

In the context of the formula *Sabbe saṅkhāra anicca*, the term *saṅkhāra* refers to existence or matter, the three characteristics (*tilakkhana*) of impermanence, suffering and the non-existence of “self.” In the Dhammapada, *dhamma* is substituted for *saṅkhāra* in the third formula. The commentaries interpret both *saṅkhāra* and *dhamma* in the sense of the grasping Five Aggregates or *Khandhas*, or conditioned nature.

kāya approach, practitioners learn not only by studying, listening and reading texts, but also by seeing and feeling for themselves. As their minds become purer and purer, meditators come to see that they have Dhammakāya within themselves. This is very efficient as it develops Right Understanding and Right Wisdom through direct experience as well as learning from scriptures. It is not just imagination as some critics suppose.

ANUPASSANĀ OF COMPOUND PHENOMENA

Vipassanā meditation reveals that all compounds, including the Five Aggregates of the psycho-physical organism, are impermanent and subject to change, and that is why they cause suffering for those who attach to them with craving and delusion. Finally, *Vipassanā* discloses that such compounds as your “self” do not exist. All compounds are “non-self” (*Anattā*) (Note # 4).

Contemplation of compounds (*Anupassanā*) is comprised of four practices: contemplation of the external and internal physical body (*Kāyā-nupassanā*), contemplation of feeling or sensation (*Vedanā-nupassanā*), contemplation of mental functions (*Cittā-nupassanā*), and contemplation of compound phenomena (*Dhammā-nupassanā*).

When the meditator has concentrated the mind at the center of the body, the meditator can see his or her own real nucleus or *Dhamma* Sphere where all practices of body, speech and mind regarding Right Action, Right Speech, and Right Thought lead to the mind becoming purer and purer.

NOTE # 4

Anattā, *Nibbāna* and *Dhammakāya*: The subjects of *Anattā* and *Nibbāna* have been the crux of disputes over Buddha's Teachings for centuries. Some Buddhist scholars unreservedly cling to the view that 'abiding self' is neither applicable to any conditioned phenomenon nor to *Nibbāna*, the unconditioned element

The Vijjā Dhammakāya approach, representing the teaching of the Most Venerable Luang Phor Wat Paknam, by whose earnest efforts and wisdom the age-old, long forgotten vista of the original teachings of Lord Buddha were reopened, maintains that *Anattā*, the 'abiding self' and or 'Non-Self' is compound in nature, and, hence, is subject to the flux of changes and suffering, but this is only meant on the mundane level. The emergence of Dhammakāya, the purest and most refined of elements, occurs in the supra-mundane sphere of *Nibbāna*, the unconditioned.

Vijjā Dhammakāya invites earnest seekers 'to come and see' for themselves. Abundance of materials and references can be found in the scriptures, but the essence of the Teachings can best be perceived through direct experience. the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach offers the most efficient way to the Path of Purification and Wisdom.

The Five Aggregates (Khandha)

The psycho-physical organism is composed of the Five Aggregates, the body and four mind components. The form aggregate or *Rūpa-khandha* consists of the elements of Water, Earth, Fire (temperature), Wind, Space, and Cognition. The cognitive element contains the four Mind Aggregates. The crude physical body is the outside aggregate made up of all these elements. The four mind components as **acts** or spheres are:

1. *Vedanā*: **sensing**; traditionally: “feeling”; in Thai: เห็น, vision, “seeing with the mind.”

2. *Saññā*: **labeling**; traditionally: “perception”; in Thai: จำ, memory, “remembering the word.”

3. *Saṅkhāra*: mental **conceiving** or constructing; traditionally: “karmic form energies”; in Thai: คิด, thought “thinking.”

4. *Viññāṇa*: **cognition**; traditionally “consciousness”; in Thai: รู้, knowing or awareness.

These are pure elements in the form of concentric spheres at the center of the body. With concentration, each center enlarges itself, emerging as a sphere. First comes the Sphere of Vision, then Memory, then Thought, and finally the sphere of Cognition or Awareness.

By refraining from bad conduct and performing good deeds or wholesome acts, and by purifying your mind through meditation, the mind will become purer and purer. The Five Aggregates and their elements become purer and purer. The sphere you see becomes pure, transparent, bright and refined. You can be sure that your mind, together with your body, or all elements of the Five Aggregates are also pure and refined. The purer your mind becomes, the more you will receive good results in the form of happiness and well-being. But, if you perform bad deeds and do not purify your mind, then the five elements of mind and form (*Nāma-rūpa*) become impure. The sphere becomes cloudy and impure with passions which will cause you troubles in life and unhappiness.

This is what Lord Buddha taught, the contemplation of *dhamma*. *Dhamma* is located at the center of your body. Mindfulness through contemplation of *dhamma* purifies the mind and the Five Aggregates. This leads to more and more refined mental states, revealing more and more refined body-minds. This is what happens when you keep your mind still at the center of the center. So long as your mind is pure, how can you do anything bad?

Characteristics of Compounds

When you purify your mind beyond *Arūpa* [formless] Brahman, you will reach Dhammakāya, the purest state of mind. Dhammakāya is non-compound. From here you can see clearly that all bodies at any level below this are compounds composed of the Five Aggregates. They are all subject to change and one who attaches to them will suffer because compounds do not last forever. Realization of this is the purpose of mundane *Vipassanā* meditation (*Anupassanā*). The meditator develops Right Wisdom about the three common characteristics of compound things. You learn:

Sabbe Saṅkhārā Aniccā

All compounds are impermanent.

Sabbe Saṅkhārā Dukkhā

All compounds cause suffering.

Sabbe dhammā anattā

All compounds are non-self.⁹

⁹ The Pali Tipitaka, Siamrat, book 25, Khuddakanikaya Dhammapadakatha, sections 30, page 51-52.

VIPASSANĀ OF NON-COMPOUND NATURE

Non-compound nature, however, is not described by these three characteristics. When one meditates, he or she becomes more and more refined, purer and purer, until the purest Dhammakāya state of mind is reached. Then one can experience and see *Nibbāna* for oneself. In *Nibbāna* you can see the Enlightened Dhammakāya of Lord Buddha. Those who have attained the Dhammakāya level can see both compound and non-compound nature. *Nibbāna*, the supra-mundane sphere is permanent, supreme happiness, existing forever without change.

Higher Dhamma

Let us consider contemplation at the supra-mundane level in greater detail. At this level the practitioner contemplates higher-level *Dhamma*: The Five Aggregates, the Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination (*Paticca-samuppāda*), the Twelve Bases of Cognition of the six sense organs, the Eighteen Elements (*Dhātu*) and the Twenty-two Potential Faculties (*Indriya*).

In this state of mind, we aim at removal of ignorance, the root cause of suffering, by analyzing the Twelve Links in the Chain of Dependent Origination. From ignorance originates impression, impression originates consciousness, consciousness originates the psycho-physical organism (*Nāmarūpa*), the psycho-physical organism originates the six sense organs, the six sense organs originate contact, feeling, craving, attachment, rebirth and suffering due to old age, sickness, and death.

Supra-mundane *Vipassanā* meditation also involves contemplation of the external physical body as well as all its internal parts. We find, in reality, that all the parts of the body are impure; not even a single part is pure.

The Four Noble Truths

Then, Supra-mundane *Vipassanā* meditation proceeds to help develop higher levels of Right Understanding of the Four Noble Truths, especially about suffering. One who attains Dhammakāya can visualize the sphere of suffering at the center of the body for each person or other creature. The sphere of suffering contains the sphere of old age, the sphere

of sickness, and the sphere of death. For example, when a person is going to die, his or her sphere of death will appear at the center of the sphere of the human body. When the sphere of the human body separates from the sphere of the celestial body, the person dies. This is the way to learn deeply about suffering within one's own self or suffering within other people.

As practitioners develop to higher supra-mundane levels, they come to understand the Four Noble Truths, attachment to the Five Aggregates, and Dependent Origination. Subsequently, the meditator will also develop the Seven Enlightenment Factors. All these realizations develop along the Noble Eightfold Path. When the Noble Eightfold Path is followed perfectly at that level, the practitioner can cut all fetters to worldly objects and become a Noble One.

Right Understanding

All these aspects of Right Understanding help practitioners to calm their minds and remove the passions of hatred, ill will, sensual desire, greed and delusion; especially excessive desires. They come

to understand that the more one is attached to any compound with craving and delusion, the more suffering they will have. Thus, they learn how to make the mind neutral and peaceful. This supra-mundane level of meditation can effectively cut fetters, reduce or remove passions, and lighten attachment to this world.

Supernormal Vision and Hearing

The Vijjā Dhammakāya approach is very efficient in developing Right Understanding. When you sit in meditation and concentrate by keeping your mind still at the center of your body, your mind becomes purer and purer until you attain more and more refined bodies. Eventually you will reach the purest state of mind, Dhammakāya. Then you will be able to see clearly with your inner vision that all of the mundane bodies from the human up through the more and more refined bodies such as the celestial, Brahman and Formless Brahman are impermanent, subject to change, and non-self.

Vijjā Dhammakāya meditation develops the faculties of supernormal vision and hearing. You can come to see the whole mundane world, starting from

the Sensual World (*Kāma-loka*) to the World of Pure Form (*Rūpabrahma-loka*) and the Formless World (*Arūpabrahma-loka*). You can see the hells and the celestial worlds whenever you like. Through meditation you come to see how all worldly creatures suffer. They suffer in the suffering worlds because of their own unwholesome karma. Some experience happiness in the happy worlds due to their wholesome karma, for limited periods.

Supernormal vision and hearing are very helpful for development of supernormal recollection of former existences. Those who have attained the Dhammakāya level can also understand rebirth and the passing away of beings. They develop the supernormal knowledge to see former existences of themselves and of other mundane creatures, as well as to see the future or results of karma.

The Law of Karma

You can also attain supernormal knowledge of cause and effect, the Natural Law of karma. You can see with your supernormal vision that whoever performs good (*Kusala*) actions will be reborn in a happy world. In contrast, those who commit bad or

unwholesome (*Akusala*) actions will be reborn into suffering worlds such as hells or as animals or ghosts. You come to know that until they overcome their ignorance, all mundane creatures will be reborn in either happy or suffering worlds, according to the nature of their constantly changing karma. Mundane existence is impermanent, changing endlessly, sometimes happy and sometimes sad. After seeing all these facets of nature, you will understand.

The meditator can see the effects of karma directly. Those who commit unwholesome acts and violate precepts of morality regularly will see their refined bodies, especially their refined human body, become impure and look unhappy. On the other hand, those who perform good, wholesome (*Kusala*) conduct will have pure refined human bodies and more and more refined bodies, according to the quality of their daily actions. As their minds become purer and purer, they can attain Dhammakāya and see their Dhammakāya within.

Dependent Origination

When we analyze Dependent Origination at the supra-mundane level, we learn that ignorance

causes craving which leads to attachment and eventually to rebirth. From ignorance comes craving along with bad conduct, bad speech and bad thoughts. These, in turn, cause attachment and rebirth. This is the Chain of Dependent Origination. Its nature can be understood through meditation according to the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach up to the Dhammakāya level.

Seeing and Experiencing Directly

Thus, in the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach, we know not only by studying, listening and reading, but also by seeing directly for ourselves. This is very efficient. It develops Right Understanding by seeing and feeling as well as learning from the scriptures. It is based on experience, not imagination.

If you follow the right method, you can see whatever you want to see. For example, to develop higher-level Right Understanding about the Extinction of Suffering (the Third Noble Truth), practitioners can stop still at the exact center of purer and purer bodies. The mind becomes purer and more refined, with purer and purer *Dhamma*. When meditators reach Dhammakāya, they can continue puri-

fyng themselves by stopping still at the centers of the Dhammakāya. More and more refined, purer and purer Dhammakāya will appear until they become non-compound in nature. That is the way one purifies one's mind.

This approach leads one to Extinction of the Cause of Suffering. As meditators purify themselves by becoming more and more refined bodies, feelings, minds and *dhamma*, they become mindful of the *dhamma*, hence becoming even purer and purer *dhamma*. Eventually, they can attain to the state of non-compound nature. This is *Nirodha* or the Extinction of Suffering by experience, not just thinking about it or imagining it. Practitioners can purify their minds in this manner until they remove all fetters entirely. This is the most efficient meditation – seeing and feeling as well as learning from the scriptures.

Right Wisdom

Pursuing the Noble Eightfold Path via this *Vipassanā* practice while maintaining Right Concentration at all times develops higher and higher levels of Right Wisdom from mundane to supra-

mundane levels. Right Concentration of mind is easily achieved by the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach because it starts with concentration on a device or object such as the Light Object (*Āloka-kasiṇa*). The Vijjā Dhammakāya approach also includes Mindfulness of Breathing (*Ānāpānasati*) and Recollection of Lord Buddha's Virtues (*Buddhā-nussati*). These are helpful for calming the mind and concentrating the mind at "one-pointedness." Thus, Vijjā Dhammakāya provides an efficient and effective method for both concentrating the mind and contemplation to develop Right Wisdom. This is what I have learned both from my own experience and that of my colleagues.

The Path may be difficult; for some, very difficult, because the Dhammakāya sphere is not attained easily. But, for sure, this is the most efficient way to concentrate your mind, especially for those who can develop into Dhammakāya. To develop Right Concentration, we must be sure of the way. We must develop meditation to the first state of absorption (*Pathama-jhāna*). People who cannot reach this level cannot cut the fetters. They don't have sufficient attainment of the Noble Path which includes Right Concentration of mind. Any method

that helps to develop *jhāna* or absorption levels is good. The fetters must be cut before complete removal is possible.

*Natthi jhānaṃ apaññassa,
Natthi pañña ajhāyino, yamhi jhānañca
Paññā ca, sa ve Nibbāna santike.*¹⁰

Without absorption there is no wisdom,
Without wisdom there is no absorption,
and He who has both absorption and
wisdom is near to *Nibbāna*.

In order to remove ignorance, which is the root cause of suffering, one needs to understand what ignorance is. Ignorance is lack of knowledge of the past and future, lack of knowledge of the Noble Path, and lack of knowledge of Dependent Origination. Because of this ignorance, one has cravings and attachments and commits bad conduct or *akusala kamma* that brings unfortunate results, leading to rebirth in the suffering world.

Meditation at the supra-mundane level can help develop Seven Enlightenment Factors: mindfulness, analysis of phenomena (*dhamma*), energy,

¹⁰ The Pāli Tipiṭaka, Siamrat, book 12, Khuddaka-nikāya, Dhammapada, Section 35, page 65.

joy, tranquility, concentration of mind, and equanimity. The Seven Enlightenment Factors develop automatically along the Noble Eightfold Path. Through the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach, the Seven Enlightenment Factors can be developed more easily. This does not mean that I am already Enlightened; I am studying too. I have learned this from the teachings of Luang Phor Wat Paknam, my own experience, from and a little bit from others, as well as from the Pali Scriptures.

By the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach, one can develop supernormal recollection of past existences and see the future, especially cause and effect or the natural law of karma. This practice enables one to understand clearly the characteristics of compounds as well as the characteristics of the non-compound, which you rarely hear about elsewhere. Your understanding will become deeper and deeper, with higher and higher Right Wisdom. This can efficiently remove ignorance.

Noble Disciple States

Anyone who can cut at least the first three fetters (*Saṃyojana*) will become a Stream Enterer Noble Disciple. They are false self concept and

wrong view about compounds (*Sakkāyadiṭṭhi*), doubt about Dhamma Practice (*Vicikicchā*), and reliance on wrong religious practices (*Sīlabbataparāmāsa*). As a result of eradicating these three fetters, one will truly understand the real nature of all compounds and hence not be bewildered by them. The practitioner will attain full confidence about the Path that leads to Emancipation (*Nibbāna*) and will no longer cling to mere rules and rituals (including superstitions and wrong practices for attaining *Nibbāna*). When these three fetters are removed, one becomes a Noble Disciple of the first stage (*Sotāpanna*).

The Vijjā Dhammakāya approach provides very high levels of understanding, especially about the non-compound (*Nibbāna*). The approach appears in the scriptures, but is often overlooked. When you practice according to the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach, you will come to understand that the words *Sabbe dhammā anattā* or “all compounds (conditioned phenomena) are non-self”, do not include the non-compound (unconditioned phenomena) like *Nibbāna*. Others may say that they do include the non-compound or *Nibbāna*. In fact, this is not true. We will now examine relevant references from the scriptures. You will see that *Nibbāna* is non-com-

pound in nature both according to the scriptures and according to verification by meditation, especially via the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach.

Right Understanding of Nibbāna

Right Understanding of *Nibbāna* can be viewed from three perspectives: (1) *Nibbāna* as a condition, (2) *Nibbāna* as the possessor of the condition, (3) *Nibbāna* and as a supra-mundane sphere.

1. Nibbāna as a Condition

Lord Buddha describes *Nibbāna* as non-compound in Nibbāna Sutta III:¹¹

*Atthi bhikkhave ajātaṃ abhūtaṃ
akataṃ asaṅkhataṃ. No ce taṃ
bhikkhave abhaviṣṣa ajātaṃ
abhūtaṃ akataṃ asaṅkhataṃ.
Nayidha jātassa bhūtassa
katassa saṅkhataṃ nissaraṇaṃ
paññāyetha.*

¹¹ The Pāli Tipiṭaka, Siamrat, book 25, Khuddakanikāya, Udāna, Section 160, page 207-208.

*Yasmā ca kho bhikkhave atthi
ajātaṃ abhūta akata asaṅkhatāṃ.
Tasmā jātassa bhūtassa katassa
saṅkhatassa nissaraṇaṃ paññāyati.*

Monks, there exists unborn, unchanging, unmade, non-compound nature. If it were not for this unborn, unchanging, unmade, non-compound nature, an escape from here would not be known...

But, monks, since there is the unborn, unchanging, unmade, non-compound nature, therefore an escape from the born, changing, made compound nature is known.

Monks, this unborn nature is the only way to Release (*Vimutti*) and to become a Noble Disciple oneself and ultimately to attain Enlightenment;

Elsewhere in the scriptures, Lord Buddha describes four basic characteristics of *Nibbāna* as a condition:

1.1 Nibbāna is void of defilements of any kind

Lord Buddha said this in *Suttapitaka*, *Khuddaka-nikāya Dhammapada Arahantavagga*. This doesn't imply that *Nibbāna* does not exist, but only says that *Nibbāna* is void of defilements of all kinds. Lord Buddha refers to this as *Suññata-vimokkha*. This means that it is free from all defilements such as sensual desire, hatred, and delusion. But, it exists.

1.2 Nibbāna is permanent

In *Suttapitaka*, *Khuddaka-nikāya, Itivuttaka*, Lord Buddha describes *Nibbāna* as *dhammasāraṃ*, meaning “very essential” or “very pure” and *niccaṃ*, meaning “permanent.”

1.3 Nibbāna is not subject to change

Lord Buddha says in *Dhammapadatthakathā*, *Arahanta-vagga, Vaṇṇanā Sārīputta* Section, and elsewhere, that *Nibbāna* exists forever and does not pass away, since there is no more death and rebirth. He describes it as *dhuvam* which means “existing forever” and *tādi* which means “permanent,” stable or constant.

1.4 Nibbāna is supreme happiness

Lord Buddha says specifically in the *Sutta-pitaka*, *Khuddaka-nikāya*, *Dhammapada*, *Sukhavagga*, *Aññatara Upāsaka* section, “*Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ*, or *Nibbāna* is supreme happiness.

In summary, *Nibbāna* is a condition according to Lord Buddha’s Teaching. It is existing void of defilements, permanent, not subject to change, and in supreme happiness. By the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach one comes to experience these conditions.

2. Nibbāna as Possessor of the Condition

Another aspect of *Nibbāna* pertains to the possessor of the *Nibbāna* condition. Since *Nibbāna* does exist, is permanent, and does not change, can these Five Aggregates possess the *Nibbāna* condition? No. There must be something else that is non-compound and of the purest nature to manifest the state of *Nibbāna*. Then, what is that? This is what we call Dhammakāya. Dhammakāya is not a new concept. It is referred to repeatedly throughout the scriptures. We shall cite a few of the most important references.

Lord Buddha said in the *Suttantapitaka*,
Dīgha Nikāya, *Pātika-vagga*, *Aggaññasutta*:

*Tathāgatassa hetam vāseṭṭhā
abhivacanam dhammakāyo itipi
brahmakāyo itipi dhammabhūto itipi
brahmabhūto itipi.*¹²

Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, the words
Dhammakāya, Brahmakāya,
Dhammabhūta and Brahmabhūta are
names of the Tathāgata [the Buddha].

This means Dhammakāya or Brahmakāya is
my name. I am Dhammakāya (the purest, non-com-
pound essence).

Dhammakāyo means an amassing, develop-
ing, growing, maturing, aggregation, or becoming
(*kayo*) of the purest Virtue and Truth (*Dhamma*).
Dhammabhūto means the purest of the pure, or the
purest essence. Brahmakāyo means of supreme qual-
ity, not subject to change, and supremely blissful.
This is why Lord Buddha is called Dhammakāyo
and Brahmabhūto. These words refer to purity at its

¹² The Pāli Tipiṭaka, Siamrat, book 25, Khuddakanikāya, Udāna,
Section 160, page 207-208.

highest, not only for Lord Buddha's virtues, but also for the virtues of Buddha's disciples. When the scriptures mention Dhammakāya they also mean Dhammakāyo.

The following quotation from the Aḡaṇṇa Sutta translates Dhammakāya literally as "Truth-embodiment" or "Virtue Embodiment." It applies the term to a follower whose faith in Lord Buddha's teachings is so strong that he can be called a son of the Exalted or heir to the Dhamma.

You, Vaseṭṭha, who, differing all of you in name, in clan and family, have gone forth from home into the homeless life may be asked: Who are ye? Then do ye reply: We be *Samanas* who follow him of the sons of the Sakiyans.

He, Vaseṭṭha, whose faith in Tathāgata [Lord Buddha] is settled, rooted, established and firm, a faith not to be dragged down by recluse or brahman, or by *deva* or *Māra* or *Brahma* or anyone in the world, well may he say: I am a veritable son of the Exalted. One, born from his mouth, born of Truth

and Virtue (*Dhamma*), created by Truth and Virtue, heir to Truth and Virtue. And why? Because, Vasettha, these are names tantamount to *Tathāgata*, belonging to Truth and Virtue, and again, belonging to the highest, and again, one with Truth and Virtue, and again, one with the Highest or Ultimate.¹³

Dhammakāyo translates literally as having a Truth-body or embodying Virtue. Buddhaghosa says: Why is the Tathāgato [Lord Buddha] said to have a Truth-body or Virtue-body? Because, having devised the Three-*Pitaka*-Buddha-Word with his mind, he practiced it in his speech and action. Therefore, he embodied Truth and Virtue (*Dhammatā*) and was considered as Truth and Virtue. He is called Dhamma-kāyo because of this embodiment of Truth and Virtue. He is also said to have *brahma* (supreme) body, because Truth and Virtue are also called *brahma* in the sense of being the best, supreme, ultimate, or most excellent.

¹³ T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, Dialogue of the Buddha part III, The Pali Text Society.

According to the commentary, *brahma* is used in the sense of the best (*Setthatthena*). Also, “Truth-embodiment” is literally “Truth-essence” or “of the nature-of-Truth and Virtue” (*Dhamma-sabhāvo*). In brief, “Truth-body” is Dhammakāya.

Another reference, Suttapitaka Khuddakanikāya Sarabhaṅga Thera, stanza 365, states that all Buddhas, not only Sakyamuni Buddha, but all the former Buddhas as well, were Dhammakāya. He who follows Lord Buddha’s Teachings diligently also becomes a Dhammakāya.

This is also indicated in the Verses of the Elders, I Theragātha, page 50:

I, Sarabhaṅga, did not previously see the whole complete disease; this disease has (now) been seen by (me) doing the bidding of the one above the devas.

By the very road by which Vipassī went, by the very road by which (went) Sikhī, Vessabhū, Kaku-sandha, Konāgamana, and Kassapa, by that straight path went Gotama.

The seven Buddhas are rid of craving, without grasping, plunging into annihilation, by whom, **having become righteous**, venerable, this doctrine was taught.

In *Suttapitaka, Khuddaka-nikāya, Apadāna Ekupasathavakka, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī Theriyapadāna*, when Prince Siddhattha's mother passed away, his foster mother Mahapajapati Gotami nursed him as a young prince. Later, she became a *bhikkhunī* or nun and subsequently became Enlightened. One day, she wanted to say farewell to Lord Buddha, for she knew that she was going to die soon. She said to Lord Buddha, "My Dhammakāya is the *Dhamma* that you helped me realize."

Since she had nursed Prince Siddhatta and he had helped her realize the Dhamma, neither had to pay back the debt of karma to the other. When she said "My Dhammakāya is the Dhamma you helped me to realize within me", it means that the word Noble One or "I" am Dhammakāya.

There are more references, but it would take quite a long time to relate all of them.

3. Nibbāna as a Supra-mundane Sphere

Finally, I would like to mention another aspect of *Nibbāna*, *Nibbāna* as the supra-mundane sphere where the Dhammakāya of Lord Buddha and other Noble Ones exist.

Monks, there exists that condition (*Nibbāna*) wherein there is neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor air; wherein there is neither the sphere of infinite space nor the sphere of infinite consciousness, nor the sphere of nothingness, nor the sphere of neither-consciousness-nor-unconsciousness. There is neither this world nor a world beyond, nor both together; neither moon nor sun. Here, monks, I declare there is no coming to birth and no going (from life). Therein is no duration, no falling and no uprising. This is not something fixed, but it moves not on. It is not based on anything. This indeed is the end of ill.¹³

¹³ The Pāli Tipiṭaka, Siamrat, book 25, Khuddakanikāya, Udāna, Section 158, page 206-207.

Nibbāna cannot be made an object of thought or sense, it is unimaginable. As said by Lord Buddha in *Nibbāna Sutta II*:

Hard is the infinite to fathom; truth is
no easy thing to see. Craving is pierced
by the one who knows. For him who
seeth, naught remains.

By practicing according to the *Vijjā Dhammakāya* method, the meditator can come to know *Nibbāna* for himself.

SUMMARY

Vipassanā practice aims at Right Wisdom regarding the Five Hindrances, Five Aggregates, Four Noble Truths and Chain of Dependent Origination. It consists of contemplation of the body, feelings, mental functions and phenomena (*dhamma*).

Vipassanā practice can be divided into two levels: *Anupassanā* Right Understanding of compound phenomena (*Saṅkhāra*) and transcendent, supra-mundane *Vipassanā* contemplation of the non-compound (*Visaṅkhāra*) which is *Dhammakāya* or *Nibbāna*. *Vijjā Dhammakāya* is especially effective

in helping meditators to know the non-compound directly through their own experience.

In conclusion, meditation by the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach involves both concentration (*Samatha*) and insight (*Vipassanā*). It leads to Right Wisdom through direct learning, knowing, seeing and feeling, that is, through personal experience. Both mundane Right Understanding and supra-mundane Right Wisdom can be attained. Vijjā Dhammakāya *Samatha* concentration on the crystal light sphere (*Āloka-kasiṇa*) is one of the most efficient methods to tranquilize the mind. It helps the mind components to become easily one-pointed and can help develop supernormal knowledge such as recollection of former existences and direct experience of *kamma* at work. Intuitive understanding of the twelve-fold Chain of Dependent Origination efficiently helps to remove ignorance, the root cause of suffering.

Some may encounter difficulty in practice. Be assured that this is the most efficient way and leads directly to *Nibbāna*. Just continue practicing until you reach the ultimate goal. May your life be free from suffering and problems forever.



V

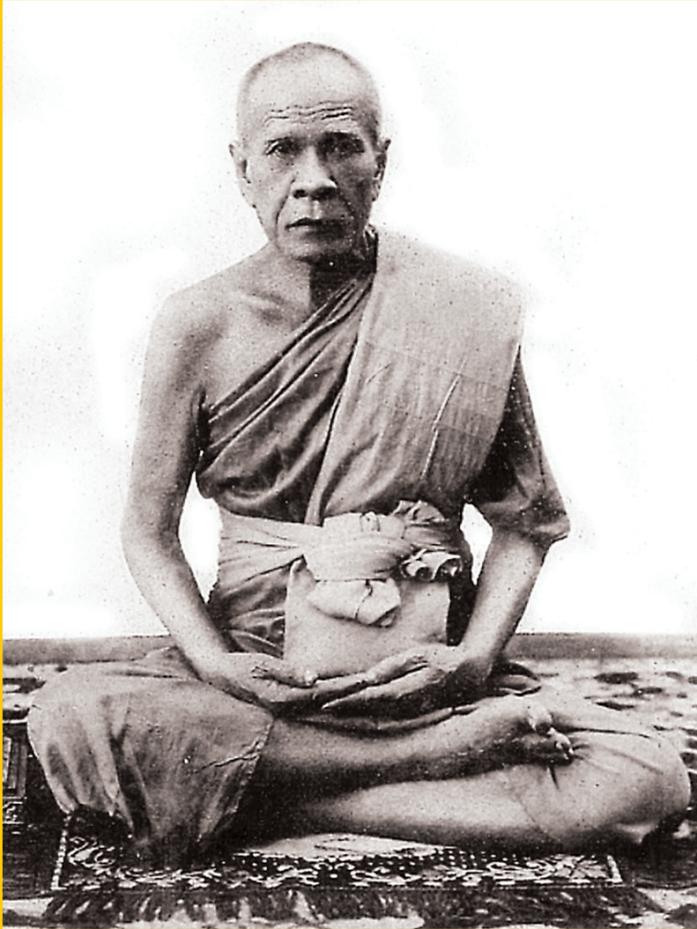
**VIJĀ DHAMMAKĀYA
MEDITATION PRACTICE**

Figure 4: The Meditation Posture



Figure 5: The Object of Visualization
(*Parikamma-nimitta*)

It is not easy to attain the finer states of life, but it is also not so difficult as to be impossible. It requires peace of mind. Never become emotional or get agitated about anything. That is counter to good concentration of mind. You have to be cool and peaceful. Something good like *Dhamma* is high level. It always appears with the peaceful person, situation, and mind, never with a disturbed mind. The good things, the best things in life, will always come to the peaceful-minded person. If you cannot understand this, just let it pass for the moment. Listen to the rest of the instructions and do what you can.

BASIC MEDITATION PRACTICE

Please sit in a regular meditation posture, cross-legged as seen in some images of the Buddha, with the right leg resting upon the left (Figure 4). The right hand rests on the left, palms turned upwards, right index finger just touching the left thumb. The body is upright and the mind fully alert. Take a deep breath and relax the body until you feel comfortable. Close your eyelids lightly, do not press them.

In *Samatha-Vipassanā practice*, two aids are used -- the repetitive word (*Parikamma-bhāvanā*) and the object of visualization (*Parikamma-nimitta*).

The repetitive word is “*Sammā Arahant*” and the object of visualization is a bright, clear, luminous sphere (Figure 5). Using these aids, we shall draw the mind inward along the path to the center of the body. Such concentration allows the mind components (Note # 5) of vision, memory, thought and awareness to come together into one-pointedness or *Ekaggatā-ramaṇa*

NOTE # 5

Luang Phor Wat Paknam revised the traditional translation of the Five Aggregates into four simple Thai words, to clarify the four mental functions which are usually collectively considered the “mind.” Of the Five Aggregates (*Khanda*), *Rūpa* = Body” stays the same, but the four mental functions are revised as follows: *Vedana*, which is generally translated as “feeling” becomes “vision” (เห็น in Thai), meaning “seeing with the mind” or “sensing.” That is, “perception” or data input via any of the sense organs. *Saññā*, which is generally translated as “perception” becomes “memory” (จำ in Thai), meaning labeling or remembering the word for what was sensed. *Saṅkhāra*, which has been confusingly translated as “karmic form energies” becomes “thought” (คิด in Thai), meaning mental conception or construction. Finally, *Viññāṇa*, which is generally translated as “consciousness” becomes cognition (รู้ in Thai), meaning “knowing.”

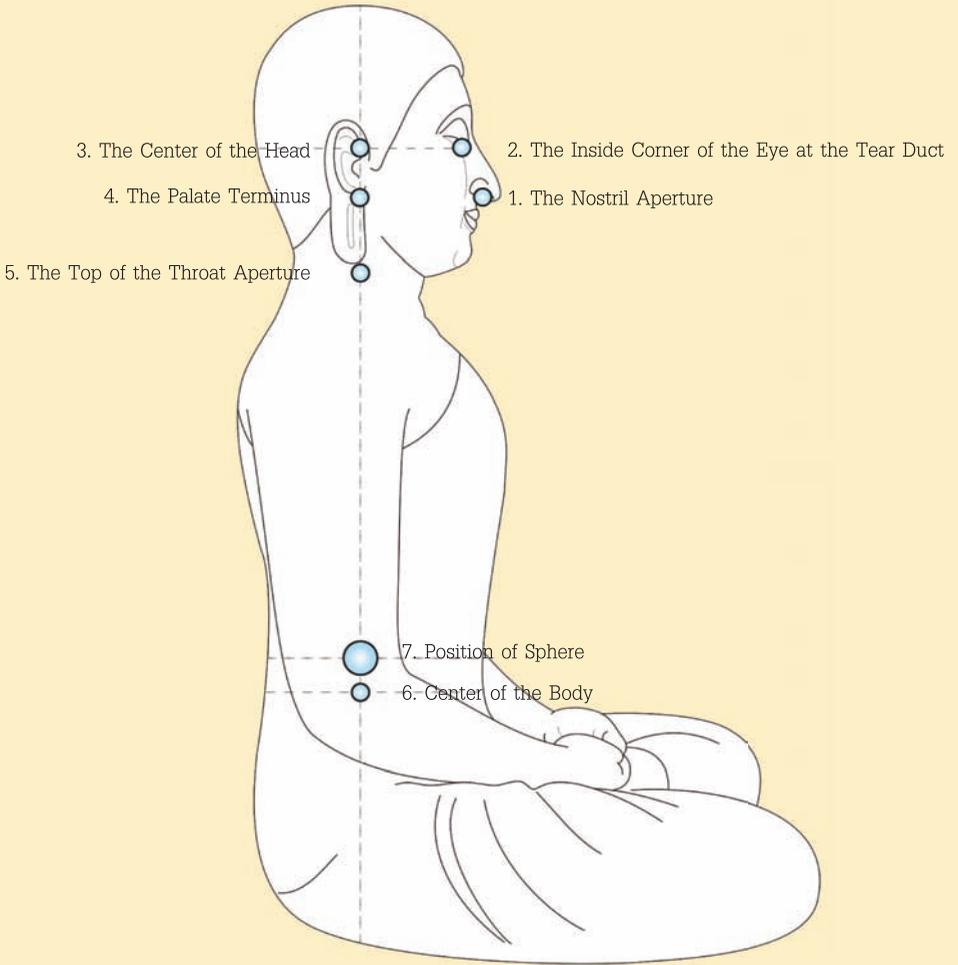


Figure 6: The Path to the Center of the Body

Position 1: The Nostril Aperture

Concentrate with your mind and visualize until there exists a vision of a bright and clear sphere. Let the sphere appear at your nostril, for ladies at the left nostril and for gentlemen at the right nostril. Fix your attention and rest your mind at the center of the sphere. This is a very bright and clear spot, the size of a grain of sand or needle point. Repeat the words “*Sammā Arahang*” mentally three times to sustain the bright and clear sphere at the nostril. This is the first position at which your mind is focused.

Position 2: The Inside Corner of the Eye at the Tear Duct

Next, mentally move the bright, clear sphere slowly up to rest at the eye socket – ladies to your left eye socket and gentlemen to your right eye socket. While you are slowly moving the sphere with your mind, fix your attention always at the small bright center of the sphere. As the sphere rests at your eye socket, repeat mentally the words “*Sammā Arahang*” three times. This is the second position.

Position 3: The Center of the Head

Mentally shift the sphere slowly to rest at the center of your head in line with the eyes. Keep the mind constantly fixed at the bright center of the luminous sphere. Repeat to yourself the words “*Sammā Arahang*” three times to keep the sphere as bright and clear as you can, so that it shines and remains in that position. This is the third position.

Position 4: The Palate Terminus

Roll your eye-balls upward without lifting your head, so that your vision will turn back and inside. Meanwhile, mentally move the luminous and transparent sphere slowly and directly downward toward the palate. Recite to yourself the words “*Sammā Arahang*” three times, to make the sphere even brighter and clearer, and hold it there. This is the fourth position.

Position 5: The Top of the Throat Aperture

Mentally move the bright, clear sphere slowly and directly downward to rest at the throat aperture. Repeat the words “*Sammā Arahang*” to yourself three times, to keep the sphere bright and clear and hold it steady. This is the fifth position.

Position 6: Center of the Body

Next, slowly move the clear, luminous sphere directly downward, while keeping your attention focused on the bright nucleus at its center. Bring the sphere to rest at the center of the body, where the breath ends, even with the navel. This is the sixth position. Mentally recite the words *Sammā Arahang* three times to keep the transparent sphere bright and luminous, and to hold it steady.

Position 7: Position of Sphere

Now, shift the sphere directly upward two “Aguli” or two middle finger joints above the navel. This is the center of the body and the seventh position. This is the mind’s permanent resting place. Whenever a person or any other creature is born, dies, sleeps or awakens, the Dhamma Sphere which governs the body arises from this position. The *Dhamma* Sphere is composed of the Vision Sphere, the Memory Sphere, the Thought Sphere, and the Cognition Sphere. During meditation, the *Dhamma* Sphere appears to float from the sixth position up to the seventh position. The seventh position is also considered to be the center of the body.

Keep the bright, clear sphere resting at the center of the body in the seventh position. Mentally recite the words “*Sammā Arahang*” continuously to keep the sphere still and make it become brighter and clearer. Concentrate so that the sphere shines continuously. Focus your mind at the bright center of the sphere, and at the bright center of each successive sphere that emerges.

Pay no attention to any external sensation. Let your mind delve deeper and deeper into the successive centers as you recite “*Sammā Arahang*”, the *Parikamma-bhāvanā*. Even if ants are climbing all over you or mosquitoes are flying all around, pay no heed. Don’t even pay attention to following the breath.

Bring your mind to rest at the center of the center, by envisioning a bright sphere. Your mind should rest steadily and continuously at the center of the sphere. Do not force the mind too strongly. Over exerting the mind will cause a shift in your meditation and the mind will not be able to see.

Do not use your physical eyes to focus on the vision. The practice is only for your mind. Gently train your mind to see a bright, clear, steady

sphere. Mentally observe and focus on the bright clear center. Concentrate on the center of each consecutive sphere that emerges from the preceding one. Do not wander to the left, right, front, rear, top or bottom. Always focus on the center of each new sphere which emerges from the bright shining center. Rest the mind there.

PATHAMA-MAGGA SPHERE

As the mind components of Vision, Memory, Thought and Cognition are drawn into oneness, they come to rest at the same center of the body. The meditator will notice a gradual decrease in response to external sensations. With proper concentration, the mind will then fall back to the sixth position. Then, a bright, clear sphere will emerge at the seventh position. The sphere may be the size of an egg yolk.

Smaller ones may look like a star in the sky. Large spheres may be as big as the sun or the moon. This is the sphere of *Pathama-magga*, the preliminary sign of concentration. It is the first step towards the Path (*Magga*), the Fruit (*Phala*), and *Nibbāna*. This is also known as the Dhamma Sphere, which makes the human body possible.

When this luminous and clear sphere appears, do not be overjoyed or overreact. If you do, the concentration could loosen and the sphere might disappear. Keep your mind evenly calm in equanimity (*Upekkhā*). Hold the mind still, without repeating the *Parikamma-bhāvanā* (*Sammā Arahant*). Once the sphere of *Pathama-magga* is perceived, there is no need to continue this mental recitation.

Concentrate the mind at the small, luminous, clear center of the *Pathama-magga* sphere. Five smaller spheres will appear within this sphere. One is concentric at the center. The others are in front, at the right, left, and behind, respectively.

These small spheres are the refined centers of the basic elements. In front is the Water Element, controlling fluids in bodily functions. To the right is the Earth Element, controlling solid parts. To the back lies the Fire Element dealing with the body's temperature and heat. To the left is the Wind Element, controlling internal movements of gases. At the center is the Space Element, controlling the various gaps within the body. In the center of the Space Element is the Cognitive Element or *Viññāṇa-dhātu* which controls consciousness. Four thin bright, clear lines connect each of the circumferential spheres to the central sphere.

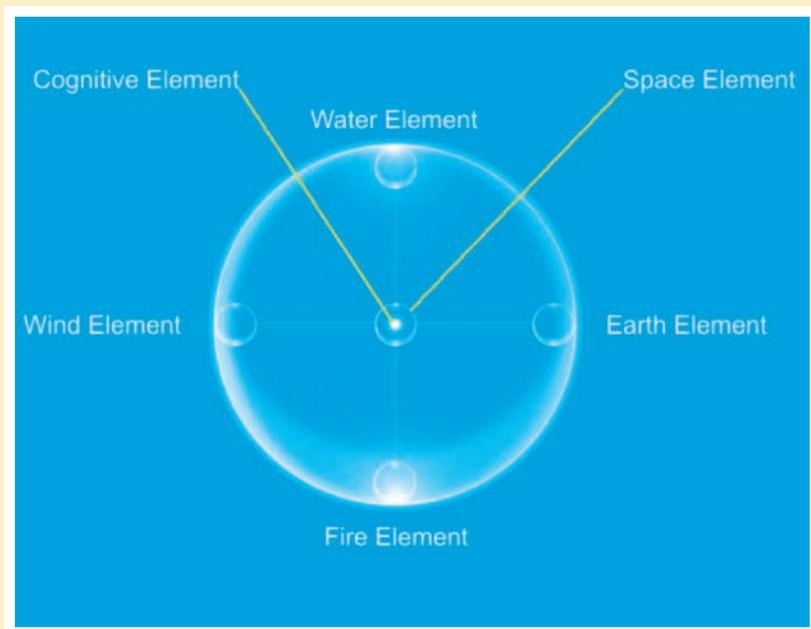


Figure 7: The *Pathama-magga* Sphere at the Center of the Body

The *Pathama-magga* Sphere will appear as reflecting the physical, verbal and mental purification of the meditator. When the mind is at rest, concentrated at the seventh position, it allows all six refined elements to come into unison at this seventh position, the center, where the original *Dhātu-dhamma* was generated.

ADHICITTA SPHERES

Once this *Pathama-magga* sphere can be observed, concentrate further at the center of the clear, luminous sphere. When the mind is still and in the right mode, the center will expand, giving rise in its place to a new, more luminous, clear and refined sphere of moral conduct (*Sīla*). Through this sphere, we can refine physical, verbal and mental deeds more efficiently and on a deeper level than through common morality. This is the pure *Sīla* of meditation (*Kammatthāna*) and can be regarded as *Adhisīla* or higher (purer) morality. When the mind can remain permanently in the center of this *Sīla* Sphere, the physical, verbal and mental activities and their intentions will always be clean and pure. Higher Morality (*Adhisīla*) goes together with Higher Mind (*Adhicitta*), and can lead to Higher Wisdom (*Adhipaññā*), Emancipation (*Vimutti*), and Insight (*Vimutti-ñāṇadassana*) or the vision of truth from Emancipation.

As the mind stays at rest, still and concentrated further into the center of the sphere of *Sīla*, and in the right mode, the center of the sphere will keep on expanding and in its place will appear a new, more luminous, clear and refined sphere of

Samādhi. This further refines physical, verbal and mental activities. When the mind rests still and deep in *Samādhi* at this stage, it will overcome the Five Hindrances to clear comprehension: (1) sleepiness or laziness (*Thīna-middha*), (2) doubt or anxiety about the practice (*Vicikicchā*), (3) ill will or malice (*Byāpāda*), (4) restlessness of mind, day dreaming or distraction (*Uddhacca-kukkucca*), and (5) sensual desire, enchantment or lust for life (*Kāmachanda*). This is the commencement of the first state of absorption (*Pathama-jhāna*). The mind is now gentle enough for insight practice (*Vipassanā*) to develop the wisdom (*Paññā*) to know correctly and clearly the Truth of *Dhamma* (Reality). Hence, it is called the *Adhicitta* or higher mind.

Concentrate further and rest still at the center of the center of the Sphere of *Samādhi* (Concentration). With the mind at rest, still, and in the right mode, the previous center will expand and a new, more luminous, clear Sphere of *Paññā* (Wisdom) will appear in its place.

Similarly, with the mind resting still and concentrated at the center of the *Paññā* Sphere, the Sphere of *Vimutti* (Transcendence or Emancipation) emerges. Let the mind adhere to the center of the

Vimutti Sphere, keeping it always luminous and clear. This will destroy the crude desires belonging to human beings such as greed, vengeance and wrong point-of-view. Hold your mind at rest in the center of the center of the *Vimutti* Sphere. When the mind is in the right mode, the Sphere of *Vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana* (the view from transcendence or “Insight”) will appear.

REFINED BODIES

Concentrate the mind further, resting still at the center of the center of the Insight (*Vimutti-ñāṇadassana*) Sphere. With the right mode of mind, the center will expand and a Refined Human Form or *Panīta-manussakaya* will emerge from this center (Figure 8B). The Refined Human Form appears identical to the meditator, but is finer than the ordinary form. It sits in the regular meditation posture, facing the same direction as the meditator.¹⁴ In some cases, a clear crystal Buddha appears with a crown of budding lotus. The Buddha is beautiful, pure and perfect. This is Dhammakāya.

¹⁴ Some pictures indicate looking down on the body from the top. This implies using the physical eyes. But, we are training the mind's eye which dreams. The mind's eye has no fixed perspective, no distance from the object. It is right there.



Figure 8A:
Crude Human Body
(*Manussakāya*)



Figure 8B:
Refined Human Body
(*Panita Manussakāya*)



Figure 8C:
Crude Celestial Body
(*Dibbakāya*)



Figure 8D:
Refined Celestial Body
(*Panita Dibbakāya*)



Figure 8E:
Crude Form Brahman Body
(*Rūpabrahmakāya*)



Figure 8F:
Crude Form Brahman Body
(*Panīta Rūpabrahmakāya*)



Figure 8G:
Refined Formless Brahman Body
(*Arūpabrahmakāya*)



Figure 8H:
Refined Formless Brahman Body
(*Panīta Arūpabrahmakāya*)

Whatever refined form (*Panītakāya*) is observed, concentrate with all your mind to assume or become this form (*kāya*). As the centers of all *kāya* are concentric, the mind is now right at the center of the new *kāya*. Concentrate until both the sphere and the *kāya* are bright and clear. The mind now rests still at the center of the nucleus of the new sphere, so that it is all bright and clear. As new spheres are observed, proceed in the same manner as before through the new spheres of *Sīla*, *Samādhi*, *Paññā*, *Vimutti*, and *Vimutti-ñāṇadassana*.

The mind now rests still at the center of the small bright nucleus of the Insight Sphere (*Vimutti-ñāṇadassana*). Then, the nucleus will expand and a new refined form (*Panītakāya*) will be observed. The Celestial Body (*Dibbakāya*) arises (Figure 8C). When the Refined Celestial Body, *Panīta Dibbakāya* (Figure 8D) arises, detach all your feeling from the present body to assume or become the newly refined one. Concentrate all your attention at the center until the spheres of *Dhamma*, *Sīla*, *Samādhi*, *Paññā*, *Vimutti*, and *Vimutti-ñāṇadassana* are observed successively.

Continue to repeat the same procedure for further mental purification through subsequent spheres and bodies (*kāya*). Whenever there arises a

more refined body, detach your feeling from the present body and assume or become the new refined one. Concentrate your attention at the center until the spheres of *Dhamma*, *Sīla*, *Samādhi*, *Paññā*, *Vimutti*, and *Vimutti-ñāṇadassana* are observed.

The (Form) Brahman Body or *Rūpabrahmakāya* (Figure 8E) appears next, then the Refined (Form) Brahman Body or *Panīta-Rūpabrahmakāya* (Figure 8F). Next comes the Formless Brahman Body or *Arūpabrahmakāya* (Figure 8G), followed by the Refined Formless Brahman Body or *Panīta Arūpabrahmakāya* (Figure 8H).

DHAMMAKĀYA

Finally, Dhammakāya Gotrabhū, the wisdom through which a Noble State (transcendence) is developed, is attained and seen (Figure 9). The lap-width, height and sphere diameter are each nine meters (10 yards). Dhammakāya Gotrabhū is the first of ten Dhammakāyas. Dhammakāyas appear like diamond Buddha statues, crowned with a budding lotus. They are luminous, radiant and as clear as a pure, perfect, first-rate diamond. As you continue to concentrate at the center of the center, more and more



Figure 9: Dhammakāya Gotrabhū
(Noble-state Wisdom)

refined, purer and purer, larger and larger Dhammakāya will be observed. Follow the same procedure described for previous *kāya*, concentrating through successive spheres until the next body appears. The path towards ultimate release is summarized in Figure 10. The following Dhammakāya will be attained:

Dhammakāya Gotrabhū (Noble-state Wisdom) and then a Refined Dhammakāya Gotrabhū whose lap-width, height and sphere diameter are all nine meters or more.

Dhammakāya Sotāpanna (Stream-winner) and then a Refined Dhammakāya Sotāpanna whose lap-width, height and sphere diameter are ten meters or more.

Dhammakāya Sakadāgāmī (Once-returner) and then a Refined Dhammakāya Sakadāgāmī whose lap-width, height and sphere diameter are twenty meters or more.

Dhammakāya Anāgāmī (Non-returner) and then a Refined Dhammakāya Anāgāmī whose lap-width, height and sphere diameter measure up to thirty meters or more.

Dhammakāya Arahant (Perfect One) and then a Refined Dhammakāya Arahant whose lap-width, height and sphere diameter extend up to forty meters or more.

With all of your mind, become the more and more refined Dhammakāya Arahants. Rest your mind and keep it still, right at the center of the sphere of the most refined Dhammakāya Arahant that you can attain. Hold steady until you reach *Āyatana Nibbāna*, the place or sphere where the most refined Dhammakāya Arahants can exist in the highest

perfection. This is where Lord Buddhas and the Arahants whose Five Aggregates or *khandha* have passed away exist forever. For them, it is called *Anupādisesa-nibbāna* or *Nibbāna* without residue. For the meditator, however, this is only a brief visit to Nirvana during meditation. This is called temporary transcendence via temporary suppression of defilements (*Vikkhambhana-vimutti*).

One who has attained Dhammakāya has developed mindful contemplation of physical body, feelings, mental functions and phenomena (*dhamma*). He or she can cut at least three fetters (*Saṅyojana*): the wrong view of perceiving a “self” in the Five Aggregates or *Khandhas* (*Sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), uncertainty (*Vicikicchā*), and useless or wrong ritual practices and vows (*Sīlabbataparāmāsa*). This meditator can then become a Noble Disciple (*Sotāpanna*).

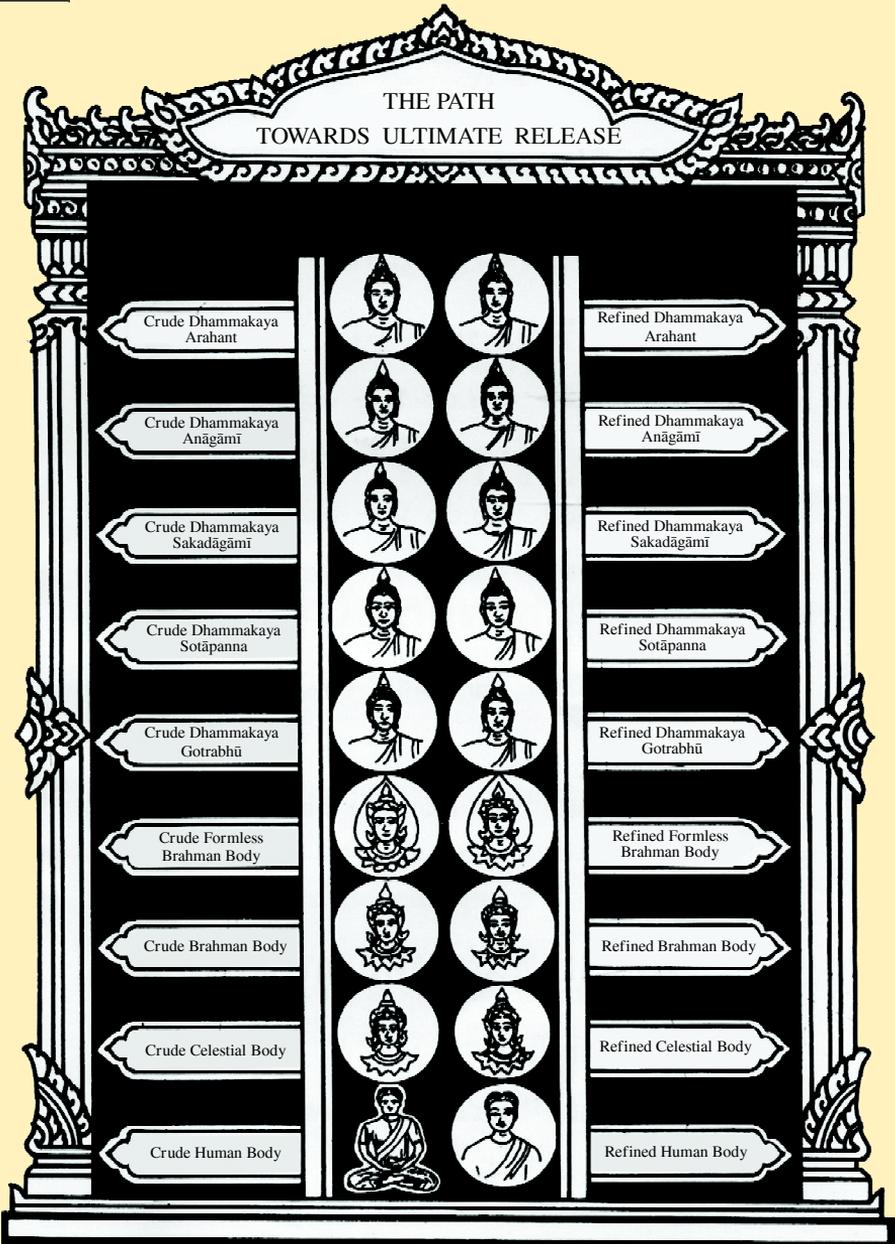


Figure 10: The Path towards Ultimate Release

AN ADVANCED MEDITATION SESSION

The following transcript of a session with experienced meditators indicates how *Samatha-Vipassanā* Meditation can be used for contemplation of the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path.

Before we start meditating, let us make a wish that all our spiritual perfections accumulated from the past up to the present will help us in our concentration of our minds and aid us to attain the Path (*Magga*) and the Fruit (*Phala*) at this moment. The ten spiritual perfections are:

The Perfection of...

<i>Dāna Pāramī</i>	charity, giving, generosity, self-sacrifice.
<i>Sīla Pāramī</i>	morality, good conduct.
<i>Nekkhamma Pāramī</i>	renunciation.
<i>Paññā Pāramī</i>	wisdom, insight, understanding.
<i>Viriya Pāramī</i>	endeavor, energy, effort.
<i>Khanti Pāramī</i>	endurance, tolerance, forbearance.

<i>Sacca Pāramī</i>	truthfulness.
<i>Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī</i>	resolution, self-determination.
<i>Mettā Pāramī</i>	loving-kindness, friendliness.
<i>Upekkhā Pāramī</i>	equanimity, indifference to praise and blame.

May all our accumulated perfections, together with the virtues of our parents, teachers, preceptors, and the Triple Gem, help us to be mindful and remove the five hindrances, attain Dhamma and reach the enlightened Dhammakāya. When making this request, our mind will be happy and delighted by all the good meritorious deeds we have done in the past up to the present.

And now let us start our meditation.

Focus your attention to the center of the sphere at the center of the body. Whenever the real nucleus appears, rest your mind gently at its center until the center expands itself. Then fix your attention at the center of the newly refined sphere and when the four components of your mind are perfectly concentrated, the center will expand itself and

another brighter and more refined sphere will appear. Go on with this procedure until your refined human body appears. It will be sitting in the same position as the crude body. Now focus all your attention at the center of the refined human body and forget completely about the crude one.

When the body and sphere are more refined, you may observe that there will appear a rounded seat under the refined human body. Just acknowledge it, don't do anything. When your mind is perfectly concentrated at the center of the refined human body, the center will expand itself. Larger and larger bodies, more and more refined, will appear accordingly. Following the Refined Human Body you will see and become the Celestial Body and then the Refined Celestial Body, which are about double the size of the Refined Human Body. Then comes the Brahman Body and the Refined Brahman Body, which are about double the size of the Celestial Body. These are followed by the Formless Brahman Body and the Refined Formless Brahman Body, which again will be about double the size of the Brahman Body.

When you stop still at the center of the Refined Formless Brahman Body, the center will expand itself and Dhammakāya will appear. The standard size of the Dhammakāya is about nine meters in width and height, and it looks like a very brilliant and refined Buddha image. Now stop still at the center of the Dhammakāya and there will appear larger and larger, more refined and purer Dhammakāya. Each time, become that newly refined Dhammakāya and let your mind rest at its center. Continue purifying yourself in this way, always focusing mindfully at the center of the purest body and mind.

(A minute of silence.)

Now let us practice *Vipassanā*. [First, let us examine rebirth.] Stop still at the center of the sphere at the center of the Crude Human Body, in the Dhamma Sphere, also called the *Pathama-magga* sphere. At the center of the Dhamma-Sphere there exists the Sphere of Suffering. At its center you see the Sphere of Rebirth. It is bright, pure and transparent. We received this sphere when we were born.

At the center of the Rebirth-Sphere is the Sphere of Old Age. It looks black. The size depends upon your age. The older you are, the bigger the

sphere. At the center of the Old-Age-Sphere, a sick person will have a sphere as black as charcoal, called the Sphere of Sickness. At the center of that sphere, a very brilliant, black sphere appears when a sick person is close to death. This is the Sphere of Death.

When a person dies, all of the refined bodies, starting with the refined human body, detach from the center of the dying crude human body and seek rebirth right away as a rebirth sphere. For example, if this rebirth sphere departs with a human beings level of merit (*Dhamma*), it will be reborn into the human world. The rebirth sphere will settle at the center of the future father and wait for up to seven days. When the future parents have intercourse, the three spheres of father, mother, and potential child will come close together. The sphere of the child-to-be leaves the father and enters the mother's womb. A male rebirth sphere leaves the father through his right nostril and enters the mother through her right nostril. A female Rebirth Sphere leaves the father's left nostril and enters the mother's left nostril.

That's enough about rebirth. Now, let us come back out to the sphere of suffering and begin *Vipassanā* of the Four Noble Truths. At the center

of the Sphere of Suffering, there exists the sphere of the Cause of Suffering. It is comprised of three black spheres of craving, each one inside the previous one. The first is the sphere of sensual passion. The second is the sphere of the Desire to Become. And, the third sphere is the Sphere of the Desire Not to become.

At the center of the Sphere of Suffering is a Sphere of the Cause of Suffering, comprised of three black spheres. The first is the Sphere of Sensual Feeling or Passion, the second is the Sphere of the Desire to Become, and the third is the Sphere of the Desire Not to Become. These three spheres of cravings are situated at the center of the center of each other.

When you stop still at the center of the Sphere of Cause of Suffering, the center expands itself and the Sphere of Extinction of Suffering will appear. It is very bright and refined. The size will be about a foot in diameter or possibly even larger. At the center of this sphere you will find the Sphere of *Magga*, the Eightfold Path. It is comprised of the Sphere of *Sīla* (Morality), the Sphere of *Samādhi* (Concentration), and the Sphere of *Paññā* (Wisdom), each located concentrically inside the previous sphere.

When you stop still at the center of the Sphere of *Sīla*, three more refined spheres appear concentrically – the Spheres of Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood. Similarly, the sphere of *Samādhi* is comprised of three brighter spheres – the Spheres of Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration. Finally, the Sphere of *Paññā* (Wisdom) contains two concentric spheres, Right Thought and Right Intention. Thus, there are eight spheres in all, which collectively comprise the Noble Eightfold Path.

The spheres of the Four Noble Truths, which we have just examined, exist at the center of all worldly bodies from the Crude Human Body to the Refined Formless Brahman Body. One should contemplate them in each body. That is, in both the external (crude) and internal (refined) bodies at the Human, Celestial, Brahman and Formless Brahman levels.

The Dhammakāya body doesn't have a Sphere of Suffering or Sphere of the Cause of Suffering. It has only the Sphere of *Nirodha* (Extinction of Suffering) and the Sphere of *Magga* or Path. The diameter of the *Magga* Sphere is equal to the height and width of the Dhammakāya.

Whenever the concentration of mind is at least up to the first level of *jhāna*, Right Wisdom is present and the perfected Noble Eightfold Path can remove at least the first three fetters binding one to this world. These three “lower” fetters are:

- False self concept, attachment to aggregates, and wrong view of compounds;
- Doubt about Buddhist practices; and
- Reliance on false rules and rituals.

When these three bonds have been removed, Dhammakāya Sotāpanna appears followed by more and more refined Dhammakāyas. There will then be Enlightened Vision (*Ñāṇadassana*) and the meditator becomes a Noble Person.

Let your mind stop still at the center of the sphere at the center of your body, and then let us make a wish before completing this meditation session. Let us request Lord Buddha to bless all of us to live a happy and prosperous life without problems and suffering. Let’s extend our loving-kindness and share our merit accumulated from the past up to the present with all world beings. *Nibbāna paccayo hotu* - May these be the means whereby Nibbāna is ultimately attained.

SUMMARY

For meditation, sit cross-legged and make your mind peaceful and fully alert, closing the eyes lightly. We use two aids: the repetitive word “*Sammā Arahang*” and the object of visualization, the light sphere. Beginning meditators should visualize a sphere at the nostril and bring it through the seven positions to the center of the body, repeating “*Sammā Arahang*” to keep it bright and clear.

When the mind is concentrated, the Dhamma Sphere will arise at the seventh position. In it you can see the spheres of the elements. With concentration at the center of the Sphere of Consciousness, the sphere of *Sīla* will arise, then the spheres of *Samādhi*, *Paññā*, *Vimutti* (Emancipation) and *Vimutti-ñāṇadassana* (Insight).

With concentration, the refined human form appears, then more and more refined body-minds. The meditator becomes each, by concentrating at the center of the center. Eventually the practitioner becomes Dhammakāya Gotrabhū, Noble State Wisdom. Then more Dhammakāyas follow, up to Dhammakāya Arahant. By holding steady at the center, the meditator can see *Āyatana Nibbāna* where Lord Buddha and the *Arahants* exist forever.

Advanced meditators can see and contemplate the Spheres of Suffering, Old Age, Sickness and Death, as well as the Spheres of the Cause of Suffering, and the Spheres of the Noble Eightfold Path which lead to the extinction of suffering. With practice, the meditator can cut the fetters and become a Noble One.



VI QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This chapter presents questions and answers which serve to clarify Dhammakāya practice. It consists of two parts: Questions on Beginning Meditation and Questions on Advanced Meditation.

QUESTIONS ON BEGINNING MEDITATION

The following questions were posed to the Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith by those who attended the three-day series of Dhamma talks at the Buddhist Vihara, Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Q1. Where is the center part of the body?

A1. The way to locate the center part of your body is to imagine two transparent strings or lines.

One line passes from the front to the back, two “anguli” (middle finger joint lengths) or about two inches or five centimeters above the navel level. Visualize that line. The second line passes from the middle of the right side to the left. Now you can see the intersection of the two lines. That is the center of your body.

Q2. Do you see the bright sphere up here, near the eyes, or down here, at the center of your body?

A2. It should be at the center of your body. This is the most proper place. I know that many people may see the bright sphere on the forehead or outside. Try to bring it in to the center of your body. The technique for bringing your mind in is to roll your eyes upwards a little bit while gently closing your eyelids. This helps the mind components which are wandering outside to go backwards and vertically downwards, coming to rest at the center of your body. Try it. Roll your eyes upwards and imagine the center of your body, then the bright sphere will appear there.

Q3. Could you please tell that gentleman not to take photographs during the meditation session. The flashes distract my concentration.

A3. That can be a problem, but you must learn through experience to separate your mind from the outside environment. Even if the fan goes tick, tick... or you meet other disturbances, don't worry about them. Don't pay any attention to them. When you pay attention to your object of concentration and nothing else, your mind will be free and will stop still in the proper place. It is your mind that you wish to train. Try it.

Q4. I did not actually see the bright sphere when I closed my eyes. But, when I was breathing in and out I was concentrating on the breath and then I could get a white light. What do you think about this?

A4. That's good. This method can also incorporate *Ānāpānasati*. *Ānāpānasati* is mindfulness of breathing, without following the breath. Don't follow the breath, but be mindful of it at any one of several fixed points that the breath passes, like at the nostril aperture, the center of the chest, or at the center of your body. If you do *Ānāpānasati* prop-

erly, you will find your breathing becomes shallower and shallower, more and more refined. Eventually, it will stop still at the center of your body and you will see a very bright sphere there. This is the objective of *Ānāpānasati* in the Dhammakāya approach. The mind will stop naturally, by itself. Then, you have come close to the right track. When you observe the breathing, your mind will become better and better concentrated, even though your mind has not yet stopped still at the center. When your mind stops at the center of your body, you will see the light sphere there. Your mind should be still there. Try again.

If you are used to *Ānāpānasati* practice, just imagine a sphere at the center of your body and be mindful of it. When you breathe in and out, put your mindfulness there. Observe your breath passing through the sphere. Then, you will see the sphere getting clearer and clearer. When your mind stops still at the center of the sphere, you will find light. You will appear not to be breathing because the breath has become very shallow and refined. When your mind stops still, you will see a very bright sphere or nucleus as your object. Be mindful there.

Q5. Just now, when you said to imagine the sphere, I couldn't really see or visualize the sphere. What should I do?

A5. Try more. This is the first time you are trying to train the mind which has been wandering outside ever since you were born. You require a longer time to train it to stay at the center. Don't be over eager to see something. When a light appears, you may press your mind hard to see a sharp image of a sphere. If so, the light may disappear. Just relax. Don't pay attention to anything but the center of the object of concentration. Don't be too eager, just visualize the sphere. Stop still at the center of the center, repeating the words "*Sammā Arahang*". Try to practice today before going to bed or whenever you can. You can practice in any position: walking, sitting, eyes opened or closed, it doesn't matter. Just bring your mind into the center of your body.

This is very meritorious. Why? When your mind wanders outside, it will contact and attach to worldly objects you like, or feel aversion towards the objects you dislike. That will cause passion to arise in the form of craving, greed, ill will, or delusion. So, if you bring your mind inside, even for a second, it is very meritorious because the mind stops

unattached to any worldly object. Thus, your mind will become purer and purer. Try to do it everyday, every time you feel free to do so, in any position and at any place.

Q6. Reverend, when you see the sphere, isn't it supposed to be round? I see something which looks oblong.

A6. Yes, it may be so, but do not be bothered at all. If you stop still at the center (a very transparent spot), you see Dhamma. The Dhamma Sphere enlarges from that spot and becomes a sphere anyway.

Q7. You said to imagine the center of the sphere at the nose aperture, then the eye socket, then the center of the head. Why those positions?

A7. Luang Phor Wat Paknam, who originally taught the Dhammakāya approach, during his time, discovered that the mind of a person functions in this way when he or she is about to die, to fall asleep, to wake up, or to be reborn. The old mind at the center of the *Dhamma* sphere in the seventh position will drop to the sixth position, in line with the navel. Then, the new mind of the new body (which

depends on *kamma* or karma) will rest at the seventh position. That is why we call the center of the body the permanent place of the mind.

When exiting, the mind drops to the sixth place, then fifth, fourth, third, second, and first. Then, out it goes. Similarly, the mind enters by the same path. So, for the first meditation session, we are instructed by Luang Phor Wat Paknam to teach all students to know the path along which the minds gets in and out. This occurs when a person dies, is reborn, falls asleep, or awakens, or even during other activities not mentioned here.

This initial technique is for you to know how the mind gets in and out. Afterwards, for subsequent meditation sessions, we will advise you to immediately concentrate at the center of the body. Why? Within the physical body, more and more refined bodies exist along with *Dhamma* and mind. As you know, the mind components are feelings (*Vedanā*), perception (*Saññā*), formations (*Saṅkhāra*), and consciousness (*Viññāṇa*). These elements develop to be the four mind components: the Sphere of Vision, the Sphere of Memory, the Sphere of Thought, and the Sphere of Awareness. All these are naturally positioned at the center of the body.

Here, at the center of the body is where you can contemplate the four Foundations of Mindfulness or *Satipaṭṭhāna*. These *Satipaṭṭhāna* were cited by the Buddha as “the only way” to enlightenment, regardless of which approach you take. In *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice, one is mindful of and contemplates refined bodies, feelings, mental functions, and phenomena (*dhamma*) both externally and internally. This is done most efficiently at the center of the body, through the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach, because all the more and more refined bodies, minds and phenomena (*dhamma*) inside us are located at the center of each other.

When you stop still, your mind becomes purer and purer. You can reach more and more refined *Dhamma* and purer and purer minds and bodies until you reach the purest Dhammakāya. Dhammakāya is the purest state of mind and has different characteristics from *Saṅkhāra* or compound nature. Moreover, as your mind becomes purer and purer by stopping still at the center of the center of purer and purer *Dhamma*, mind and bodies, what happens? Nothing outside can disturb you.

QUESTIONS ON ADVANCED MEDITATION

This section consists of two parts: An Interview conducted by an Advanced Meditator and Questions Posed by a Foreign Monk

1. An Interview by an Advanced Meditator

An interview with Phra Ajahn Sermchai Jayamanggalo (now Phra Rajyanvisith) conducted by John Ladalski at Wat Meh Liew, Kuala Lumpur, on Friday August 3, 1990.

Q1. Is it possible to become a Noble One during meditation and then return to become an ordinary layman (puthujjana) again on coming out of meditation?

A1. Oh no, that is not possible.

Q2. What is a “puthujjana”?

A2. A layman who is thick with passion. If one becomes a Noble One, he cannot fall back to existences lower than the human world. But, if one is just a Dhammakāya without cutting the fetters, one can fall back when one does wrong.

Q3. So, even though he does Dhammakaya Meditation, but hasn't reached the "Stream-Enterer" stage yet by getting rid of the three fetters, he can come down?

A3. That's right. It is as simple as that.

Q4. How long does it take to attain *Nibbāna*?

A4. It is not possible to tell how long.

Q5. How long does it take to see the crystal ball or *pathama-magga*?

A5. It depends upon each person's capability. There are many factors. First, is former *kusala kamma* (meritorious deeds); second, present *kusala kamma* from trying to follow the Master's teachings. For example, meditators have to accept the precepts and try to keep mindful of the sphere by repeating the words "*Sammā Arahant*". Practice it often. Don't let wrong emotions such as losing your temper develop in the mind. Try to calm the mind. Be mindful all the time and practice often, using the right method.

Q6. So, if you attend the fifteen-day retreat in Rajburi, what is the possibility of being successful in seeing the crystal ball?

A6. I would say a third of the participants are successful, if they complete the fifteen days. At least you can more or less see the sphere.

Q7. Can we say that a longer time, say a month, would increase the success rate to 50%?

A7. No, I cannot say that. It may be 40% or even less, because usually fifteen days is the maximum for a person to continue exerting his or her whole effort. Longer than that and the meditator might become bored. You need a rest.

Q8. It cannot be like three months?

A8. Seriously, it doesn't help much. It should be about fifteen days. After that, relax a little bit, then proceed again. In that way you'll have progress.

Q9. What is the proper time to meditate during the day?

A9. Some people say in the morning at 3:00, 4:00, or 5:00 am, and some say 9:00 or 10:00 am. Afternoon is not very good. It becomes good again around 7:00, 8:00, 9:00 or 10:00 pm.

Q10. How about before you go to sleep?

A10. Yes. But for me, as I see it, it depends upon one's physical fitness and environment. If you feel exhausted or tired, take a rest. Afterwards, when you can find the proper conditions such as a quiet place, good weather and free time, meditation can be very helpful at anytime. It depends upon how you feel. The best way is to try to do as much as you can without forcing it too much. Don't be too eager.

Sometimes you might sit under a tree in good weather for only a couple of minutes and you can see the sphere! Some people can see it while walking along, not sitting formally. Like me, I see the sphere during walking. When your merit becomes full, you can see it. When your mind becomes tranquil, peaceful and still, you can also see it right away because the mind becomes perfectly concentrated.

Q11. Is there a correlation? If you do more merit, will you be more calm?

A11. Happy. You will be more happy.

Q12. Where does this happiness come from? From the kamma of doing merit?

A12. It comes two ways. Happiness can be brought about by sense objects and by doing good *kamma* which give the “right” result, a happy and peaceful mind.

Q13. How long should a meditation session be? How many minutes?

A13. I would recommend about thirty minutes for beginners. After you get used to it, it can be more and more until about an hour. If one is very good, two hours doesn’t matter. Sometimes when I am invited to bless a Buddha statue I meditate two hours. Normally, I will practice only one hour.

Q14. Did you ever do it for a very long time, say three, four or five hours?

A14. No, I have not done it that way. I change my position by walking or in other ways. Yes, walking, but I do not have to walk according to a rigorous format. I just take it easy.

Q15. Does *Māra*, that is *Devaputta-māra*, ever affect you or anybody who is especially transmitting or spreading the *Dhamma* through Dhammakāya Meditation? Does that affect people like some negative thing would happen more as a result of *Māra*? Does he affect or attack?

A15. He attacks any person who does good.

Q16. Is it more so for you?

A16. They try, but as you concentrate at the center of your body, your mind will become purer and brighter. Most of the *Māra* cannot come close and cannot attack. I wouldn't talk too much because sometimes when you talk about this, it is like a challenge to *Māra*. *Māra* is a bad thing which is like a bad person. If we talk about a bad person, even worse may befall us, but anyway I will talk about this.

Q17. Did you have any experience like that?

A17. *Māra* never got close to me.

Q18. Should one feel discouraged on hearing of another's progress in their meditation? How should we act to that situation?

A18. Make your mind neutral. Don't be interested in anything outside yourself. Lord Buddha taught us not to pay attention to another's activities. Just check your own activities.

Q19. In Majjhima Nikaya M.ii 37-44, it is said that an evil person may also be able to practice meditation and reach the eighth absorption level or *jhāna*, is that true?

A19. An evil person?

Q20. Can a person who attained the eighth *jhāna* level and who has psychic powers still have evil intentions? Can he be not an Arahant, but an evil person with Dhammakāya. Can he do evil things? Is that possible?

A20. As long as one's mind is Dhammakāya, he or she won't do anything wrong. One will be very good. But, at anytime when the mind is out of the center or the Dhammakāya is gone, he or she can be evil. Even for just a second the mind can be in and out. If you become evil and have evil in mind, the Dhammakāya will be gone. It takes a long time until your mind is pure enough to bring the Dhammakāya back again. But, no one knows this problem

and somebody says “Oh, this person is a Dhammakāya.” In fact, he is not one any longer.

Q21. What about *Devadatta*, did he ever reach Dhammakāya? He had great psychic powers.

A21. Yes, because of *Samatha* practice he reached Dhammakāya. But, he was not a Noble Person yet. The moment he had an evil mind like thinking of going against the Buddha, the Dhammakāya disappeared instantly and he lost all his powers.

Q22. Didn’t he possess power for a while after that?

A22. Yes, the misdeed was not bad enough. For example, he had the power to influence the Prince’s mind when he convinced Prince Ajatasattu to be on his side. But, by merely thinking about destroying or attacking Lord Buddha, all the power was gone.

Q23. Can an evil person be at the eighth *jhāna*?

A23. Evil people can clarify their own minds. You say “evil person”, but that person won’t do bad things all the time. Whenever he or she stops doing

bad things and tries to clear up the mind, he can reach that *jhāna*. Later, when he has bad mind again, he will lose it. Between times, some powers still exist. They are not entirely wiped out.

Q24. Is that statement I quoted logical and reasonable?

A24. While practicing the person is no longer evil, because the mind becomes purer and purer. But, the purpose of this concentration or meditation is for something else, not for Right Wisdom. During the time the mind is pure, the *Rūpa* and *Arūpa* forms are like those of a yogī. But, some yogī with even high-level concentration of mind still get angry sometimes and condemn one another. They can still go back to meditating.

Q25. That means that it is still possible?

A25. Yes, that is possible, but not the right way. Not the right way to develop Right Understanding. Not the right way to develop Right Wisdom. Therefore, he will destroy himself later.

QUESTIONS POSED BY A FOREIGN MONK

Q1. Is Gruat Nam (pouring water) a 100% Buddhist ritual?

A1. No, it was originally Brahman. Whenever they offer something to another person they poured water as a symbol of separating from the thing given. This meant they gave without conditions. When the ritual was adopted by Buddhism, the meaning changed. Here it is used to transfer merit collected from the past up to the present to other people, especially to the deceased.

We recite Pali words, but you are welcome to wish whatever you want. I would like to add that we should not only transfer our merits to our deceased relatives but also to everyone else, because, don't forget that we have been born countless times already, so nearly all world beings are our relatives. I am sure you came to this temple because once you were either my relative or my close student. So, when transferring merit, do it to close relatives first, then to all world beings.

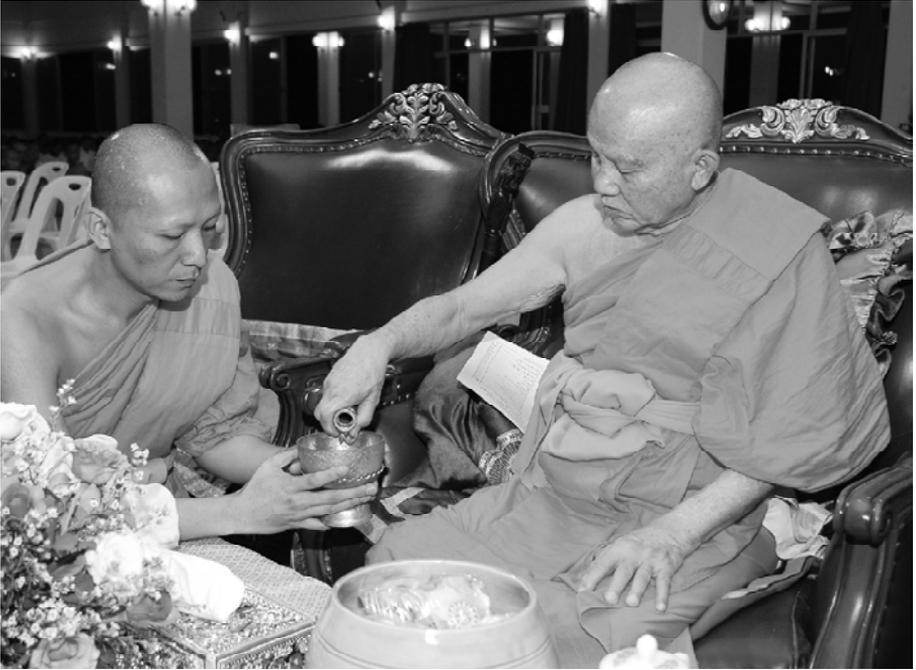


Figure 11: Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith is pouring water
(Gruat Nam)

Q2. But, if we go on giving merit away each time we gain some, would it not mean that we would end up having none left for our own use?

A2. Oh no, you see merit is like a light or a candle. Imagine yourself with a candle in your hand and see the light shining all around you. Transferring merit means that you invite everyone to come and appreciate your light and to receive it from you.

In other words, they will come with their candles to light from yours. Like that, you can see, your candle never gets weaker, but in fact brighter. Why? Because the light from the candles of all the people you have invited will reflect back on you.

Q3. When I am meditating, my attention seems to be concentrated mostly on all the arising spheres and bodies. When will I have the possibility to contemplate and when can I develop that all important wisdom?

A3. Any time the mind is free from hindrances, you can go on contemplating. For example, when you see the sphere clearly, you can enlarge it at will, which would then mean that your Sphere of Vision, Sphere of Memory, Sphere of Thoughts, and Sphere of Awareness would be larger too. Just go on until it is about the size of your whole body.

In that state, supernatural vision will be developed, enabling you to observe all angles of your body simultaneously. In other words, you do not have to move your vision from place to place to see at all.

You can now contemplate on every organ of your body until you fully realize that not one single part is at-tractive, but all organs are in fact impure.

This is also a very effective way to calm down your mind from sexual desire. I will give you an example.

When I was still a layman I took a com-muter pickup bus (song taew) home. I was lucky to get a seat, but as the bus filled there was standing room only and people stood very close. A young lady stood right in front of me, facing me, and her bosom was at times touching my face as the bus swayed. I was concentrated all the time, and in my mind I intended to see what she looked like. During the ride I saw every part of her body that I wished to see, and I then realized that it was in fact very dirty. She had her period and a rather unpleasant odor hit my mind at that point.

So, that was contemplation of the human body (*Kāyagatāsati*), and I have used that technique ever since, both on my own body and those of others. It also helped me in staying away from my spouse for ten years prior to my ordination as a monk.

When you get a sexual feeling, be mindful right away. Use your wisdom, and start contemplating as soon as you get rid of the hindrances. Purify yourself from the crude mind up to more and more refined minds. When you reach the purest, the most calm, contemplate! You will calm down any sexual

desire by seeing the reality of all organs. Be mindful all the time!

Q4. Would I ever be able to look into the future during meditation?

A4. Whenever you see the sphere and concentrate at the center of the center, you will see a small space, about the size of the hole of a needle or even smaller, depending on your level of concentration. The higher the level, the smaller the space. At the center of that space there exists an extremely thin thread or string — very thin indeed and transparent. It leads from your birth into the future. Stop still at the center so that your mind becomes neutral. Don't create any pictures, be neutral and make it your intention to follow the course of the string. When the center expands itself you will see your own life during the coming five to ten years. Become that older body and go to the center of the center and you can go on advancing your age until you see your own dead body.

I am sure that anyone who has a pure and neutral mind or Dhammakāya will know when they are going to die and how. When seeing the dead body of themselves, they can use the experience for recollection of death (*Maraṇassati*).

Even though we know the exact day we are going to die and in which position, we still do not get attached to it. In our wisdom we see our body and mind (Five Aggregates) as impermanent, suffering, and non-self.

As long as you have cravings you will have that string. In other words, strings exist within the four worldly bodies (Human, Celestial, Brahman and Formless Brahman). But, the Dhammakāya doesn't have any string.

I will, however, advise you that when you reach this level you should not talk to anyone about it. That would be violating Lord Buddha's Precepts. A monk only does it for the wisdom involved. I would also like to emphasize that as long as we are not saints or Arahants these things we are seeing are, of course, impermanent. So, doing this kind of contemplation requires mindfulness at all times.

Q5. What about looking back into previous lives?

A5. Focus your attention at the center of the Crude Human Body's sphere. Make your mind neutral and observe again that very small space where the thin transparent sting will appear. You then make

it your intention to see your own life in the past, let us say ten years back in time. Stop still at the center of the center until your mind is perfectly concentrated. Then the center will expand itself and you will see yourself when you were ten years younger. Then concentrate your mind and let it stand still at the center of that body and keep on going further and further back in time until you see yourself at birth. You can then go even further back to when you were in your mother's womb. Now go to the center of the baby and aim to see your life previous to this one. When you see it, observe where you are and who you are, generation after generation, further and further back in time.

Whenever you see these past lives you may contemplate on all the Five Aggregates of compound matter. Living compound things are subject to change according to the factors of good deeds (caused by merit) or bad deeds (caused by passion or craving). This will cause a person to be reborn in either a happy or a suffering world. Anyone who is attached to these compound things with craving and illusion, bad speech, bad action, and bad thoughts, will be reborn in a suffering world. Living a meritorious life of good deeds will lead to bliss and happiness in the next existence. The effect of suffering and happiness might even be experienced in the

present lifetime. You will finally realize that each life you observe is in fact non-self and no permanent refuge to anyone.

Then, contemplate the Three Characteristics of all compound things, before making it your intention to return to the present. Purify yourself by standing still at the center of the more and more refined bodies, by now probably even brighter and purer than before, until you reach the purest Dhammakāya. This will result in detachment from all aggregates. You should have a neutral mind free from any feelings, happy or unhappy, to obtain a peaceful mind of high absorption.

The purest Dhammakāya will then appear in *Nibbāna* (the Supra-mundane plane) where the Enlightened Dhammakāya of Lord Buddha and the Saints whose Five Aggregates have passed away will exist. You will see Lord Buddha (the enlightened Dhammakāya) sitting on his throne with his enlightened disciples gathered around him in a half circle. But not only that, you will also see the countless Buddhas of the past, both the *Subbaññū* Buddhas (surrounded by disciples) and the *Pacceka* Buddhas (sitting alone).



VII CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we have deliberated on the principles and practice of Dhammakāya meditation in considerable detail. We noted that Vijjā Dhammakāya combines aspects of concentration (*Samatha*) and wisdom (*Vipassanā*) meditation. These, together with morality (*Sīla*) make up the Noble Eightfold Path.

Vijjā Dhammakāya Samatha meditation utilizes three of Lord Buddha's forty concentration devices: visualization of the light sphere (*Āloka kasiṇa*), repetition of a mantra *Sammā Arahang* to call Lord Buddha's wisdom and purity into the mind (*Buddhā-nussati*), and mindfulness of breathing (*Ānāpānasati*).

The fourth principle at the heart of Vijjā Dhammakāya is concentration at the center of the center. By bringing the mind to rest at the center of

the body, the meditator can see his or her own *Dhamma* sphere which reveals the consequences of moral behavior. Continually focusing at the center of the center, the practitioner can proceed through ever purer body-minds all the way to *Nibbāna*.

Dhammakāya *Vipassanā* practice aims at Right Wisdom through contemplation of the body, feelings, mental functions and phenomena. There are two levels, mundane Right Understanding of compound phenomena (*Saṅkhāra*) and supra-mundane Right Understanding of non-compound nature (*Viśaṅkhāra*) which is *Nibbāna* and Dhammakāya. Vijjā Dhammakāya is especially effective in helping meditators to experience non-compound nature directly.

The real heart of Dhammakāya meditation is practice. Now that you have read about the principles and techniques, I strongly urge you to put them to use. Academic learning can indicate the way, but direct experience through meditation is the path to purification and wisdom.



A

**THE PRE-MEDITATION
SERVICE****ADOPTING THE FIVE PRECEPTS**

Candles and three incense sticks are lit. All bow or prostrate three times in homage to the Buddha, the Dhamma (Buddha's Doctrine), and the Sangha (Order of Disciples). Then, all recite with joined palms as follows.

Homage to Lord Buddha

Namo Tassa, Bhagavato, Arahato

Sammāsambuddhassa (Repeat three times:
Homage to the Lord, the Emancipated,
the All-Enlightened Buddha,)

**Requesting the Triple Refuge
and Five Precepts**

Mayaṃ Bhante Tisaraṇena Saha Pañca Sīlāni

Yācāma (May I receive the Triple Refuge
together with the Five Precepts)

*Dutiyampi, Mayaṃ Bhante Tisaraṇena Saha
Pañca Sīlāni Yācāma* (For the second time,
May I receive the Triple Refuge together with
the Five Precepts)

*Tatiyampi, Mayaṃ Bhante Tisaraṇena Saha
Pañca Sīlāni Yācāma* (For the third time, May
I receive the Triple Refuge together with the
Five Precepts)

*(After the monk has recited the following three
times, the laity does the same)*

*Namo Tassa, Bhagavato, Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa* (Repeat three times:
Homage to the Lord, the Emancipated,
the All-Enlightened Buddha)

(Repeat after the monk, one verse at a time)

Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi (I accept the
Buddha as my refuge)

Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi (I accept the
Dhamma as my refuge)

Saṅghaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi (I accept the
Saṅgha as my refuge)

Dutiyampi Buddhāṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi (For the second time, I accept the Buddha as my refuge)

Dutiyampi Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi (For the second time, I accept the Dhamma as my refuge)

Dutiyampi Saṅghaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi (For the second time, I accept the Sangha as my refuge)

Tatiyampi Buddhāṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi (For the third time, I accept the Buddha as my refuge)

Tatiyampi Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi (For the third time, I accept the Dhamma as my refuge)

Tatiyampi Saṅghaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi (For the third time, I accept the Sangha as my refuge)

Acceptance of the Five Precepts

Pāṇātipātā Veramaṇī Sikkhā Padaṃ Samādiyāmi. (I undertake to observe the precept of refraining from killing)

Adinnādānā Veramaṇī Sikkhā Padaṃ Samādiyāmi. (I undertake to observe the precept of refraining from theft)

Kāmesumicchācārā Veramaṇī Sikkhā Padam Samādiyāmi. (I undertake to observe the precept of refraining from sexual immorality)

Musāvādā Veramaṇī Sikkhā Padam Samādiyāmi. (I undertake to observe the precept of refraining from wrong speech)

Surāmerayamajjapamādatthānā Veramaṇī Sikkhā Padam Samādiyāmi. (I undertake to observe the precept of refraining from taking intoxicants)

Obeisance to the Triple Gems

(With joined palms, recite the following words of homage and invocation)

*Namo Tassa, Bhagavato, Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa* (Repeat three times:
Homage to the Lord, the Emancipated,
the All-Enlightened Buddha)

*Yamaṃ Sammāsambuddhaṃ Bhagavantaṃ
Saraṇaṃ Gato (Gata-for ladies), Iminā
Sakkārena Taṃ Bhagavantaṃ Abhipūjayāmi.*
(May I now pay homage to the Buddha, All
enlightened by himself, whom I acknowledge
as the Refuge whereby all sufferings will be
removed.)

*Yamaham Svākkhātam Bhagavatā Dhammam
Saraṇam Gato (Gata - for ladies), Iminā
Sakkārena Tam Dhammam Abhipūjayāmi.*
(May I now pay homage to the Dhamma, well-
preached by the Lord, which I acknowledge as
the Refuge whereby all dangers will be
removed.)

*Yamaham Supatipannam Saṅgham Saraṇam
Gato (Gata-for ladies), Iminā Sakkārena Tam
Saṅgham Abhipūjayāmi.* (May I now pay
homage to the Sangha who practice well,
whom I acknowledge as the Refuge whereby
all sickness will be removed.)

*Araham Sammāsambuddho Bhagavā,
Buddham Bhagavantam Abhivādemī.*

Homage to the All-Enlightened Buddha.

(Prostrate)

*Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo, Dhammam
Namassāmi.*

Homage to the Dhamma well-preached by
the Lord.

(Prostrate)

*Supatipanno Bhagavato, Sāvakaṅgho,
Saṅghaṃ Namāmi.*

Homage to the Sangha who practice well.

(Prostrate)

Resolution (Adhitthāna)

*Namo Tassa, Bhagavato, Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa*

(Repeat three times: Homage to the Lord, the
Emancipated, the All-Enlightened Buddha,)

*Ukāsa, Accayo No Bhante Accagamā Yathā bāle
Yathā mulhe Yathā akusale Ye Mayaṃ
Karamhā Evaṃ Bhante Mayaṃ Accayo No
Patiggaṇhatha Āyatim Saṅvareyyāmi.*

May I take this opportunity of imploring that for whatever offenses, whether by deed, word or thought, which I may have committed against the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha as I was deluded, heedless and with unwholesomeness entering my mind, may I be pardoned. As from this day I will be cautious and restrained.

May all the great All-Enlightened Buddhas past, present and to come, numberless as the sands in the bowels of the four great oceans, impregnate, illuminate, and irradiate my six senses: the door of vision (*Cakkhu-dvāra*), the door of audition (*Sota-dvāra*), the door of olfaction (*Ghāna-dvāra*), the door of gustation (*Jivhā-dvāra*), the door of form (*Kāya-dvāra*), and the door of the mind (*Mano-dvāra*), so as to apprehend and perceive the Truth in its original splendor and pristine purity.

May the Teachings of the Buddhas leading to the attainment of the Supra-mundane nava-lokuttara dhamma, ninefold in scope,* revealed times beyond counting (past, present, and to come), impregnate, illuminate and irradiate my six senses: *cakkhu-dvāra*, *sota-dvāra*, *ghāna-dvāra*, *jivhā-dvāra*, *kāya-dvāra*, and *mano-dvāra*, so as to apprehend and perceive the Truth in its original splendor and pristine purity.

May all the Emancipated and Noble Disciples of the Buddhas, the Sangha, beyond counting

* Ninefold: Sotāpatti-magga, sotāpatti-phala, sakadāgami-magga, sakadāgami-phala, anāgāmi-magga, anāgāmi-phala, arahatta-magga, arahatta-phala, and nibbāna.

(past, present, and to come), impregnate illuminate, and irradiate, my six senses: *cakkhu-dvāra*, *sota-dvāra*, *ghāna-dvāra*, *jivhā-dvāra*, *kāya-dvāra*, and *mano-dvāra*, as to apprehend and perceive the truth in its original splendor and pristine purity.

I hereby invoke the aid of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. And also my good preceptor, my good mother, my good father, and all my spiritual resources:

<i>Dāna Pāramī</i>	Merits of Charity
<i>Sīla Pāramī</i>	Merits of Morality
<i>Nekkhamma Pāramī</i>	Merits of Renunciation
<i>Paññā Pāramī</i>	Merits of Wisdom
<i>Vīriya Pāramī</i>	Merits of Perseverance
<i>Khanti Pāramī</i>	Merits of Fortitude
<i>Sacca Pāramī</i>	Merits of Truthfulness
<i>Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī</i>	Merits of Resolution
<i>Mettā Pāramī</i>	Merits of Loving kindness
<i>Upekkhā Pāramī</i>	Merits of Equanimity

Which I have practiced and accumulated for a hundred existences, a thousand, ten thousand,

a hundred thousand existences. Which I have practiced and accumulated from the beginning, whether remembered or not, may all these accumulated paramis aid me to attain the path (magga) and the fruit (*phala*) as at this moment.

Nibbāna paccayo hotu -- May this be the means whereby *Nibbāna* is ultimately attained.



B GLOSSARY

Abhiññā: Supernormal powers and knowledge consisting of five mundane powers attainable through various degrees of mind concentration and one Supra-mundane power attainable through insight penetration.

Adhicitta: Higher mentality.

Adhiṭṭhāna: Resolve, decision, resolution, will.

Adhipaññā: Higher wisdom.

Adhisīla: Higher morality.

Adinnādāna: Taking what is not given, stealing.

Adosa: Non-hatred, non-anger.

Ajahn: Thai word for teacher or meditation instructor.

Ākāsa: Space.

Āloka-kasiṇa: Spherical light object of concentration, such as a clear, bright and luminous crystal sphere.

Anāgāmī: A Non-Returner to the Realm of Desire, he or she has cut the five lower Fetters and will be reborn only in a higher world among the beings of the Pure Abode. From there, he or she will attain Nirvana.

Ānāpānasati: A meditation technique based on mindfulness of breathing.

Anattā: Non-self, absence of any grasping self or ego.

Aniccā: Impermanence: the rising and passing or changeability of all compounds, or the appearance and disappearance of compounds. Compound things never remain exactly the same for even one moment, but that they are vanishing and reappearing constantly.

Anumodanā: Congratulations, rejoicing.

Anupādisesanibbāna: Nirvana without residue or any remainder of physical existence or the mundane aggregates

Anupassanā: Contemplation of body, feelings, mental functions, and dhamma.

Anusaya: Evil propensities or passions of the mind, latent disposition, underlying tendencies, dormant mental impurity (also anusaya-kilesa).

Anussati: Recollections mentioned in the scriptures for use in concentration meditation.

Appanāsamādhi: Fixed concentration, attainment-concentration, absorption-concentration (*Jhāna*).

Arahant: A Worthy One. There are four types of Arahants, (1) one who attains the Path contemplating with bare insight without *Jhāna*, (2) one with the Threefold Knowledge, (3) one with the Sixfold Superknowledge and (4) one having attained the Analytic Insights.

Āsava: Cankers, corrupting influences, mental intoxication or influences, defilements of the mind or mental states.

Āsavakkhayañāṇa: The knowledge of destruction of cankers.

Asubha: Impure, loathsomeness, foulness often mentioned in the context of seeing the body's impure nature to overcome the delusion of thinking that the body is beautiful and forming attachments to it

Avijjā: Ignorance.

Ariyapuggala: A Noble One who has entered upon the Noble Path by virtue of his purity and spiritual insight into Ultimate Reality.

Āyatanam or **Āyatana** (Sanskrit): (1) Place, dwelling place, abode, home ... sphere, sense-organ and object.
 (2) Dhammakāya Arahants can exist in Nirvana in the highest perfection.
 (3) The Twelve Sensory Domains or the Twelve Spheres.

Bhikkhu: Buddhist monk who observes the 227 precepts of discipline.

Bhikkhunī: A Buddhist nun.

Brahmacariya: The Holy life, chaste life.

Brahman: A divine being of the Form World or Formless World.

Brahmakāya: Synonymous with Dhammakāya: Purist Body (Does not refer to the body of the Brahma-being of the Brahmaloaka).

Brahmavihāra: The four Divine States of mind, the sublime states of mind.

Buddha: The Buddha, Lord Buddha, the Enlightened One, the Awakened One.

Buddha-interval: The period between the appearance of one Buddha and another.

Buddhānussati: Recollection of Lord Buddha, reflection on the virtues of Lord Buddha.

Byāpāda: Ill will.

Cāga: Charity, generosity, sacrifice.

Cāgānussati: Reflection on generosity, recollection of liberality.

Chanda: Will, aspiration, intention, resolve, desire, wish.

Citta: Thought, mind, a state of consciousness.

Cittasaṅkhāra: Mental formation, mental function, perception and feeling.

Conditioned Phenomena: Formations, formed things, compound things. The characteristics of the conditioned are: (1) arising, (2) passing away and (3) while standing, changeability is apparent.

Dāna: Giving, gifts, alms-giving, charity, generosity, liberality, donation.

Defilements (Kilesa): The dhamma that makes the minds of beings depressed. They are: (1) Greed, (2) Doubt or uncertainty, (3) Hatred, (4) Sloth, (5) Delusion, (6) Restlessness, (7) Conceit, (8) Shamelessness, (9) Wrong view, (10) Lack of moral dread.

Dhamma or **dhamma**: (1) Phenomenon, nature, any object, the Five Aggregate elements, (2) The doctrine proclaimed by Lord Buddha after His Enlightenment. The natural laws pertaining to the True nature of existence, especially concerning the nature, cause, and cessation of suffering, and the path that leads to the end of suffering [The Four Noble Truths].

Dhammakāya Meditation: Dhamma-kāya Meditation is based on four principles: three methods of concentration and the Principle of the Center. The three concentration techniques are: meditating on an object of visualization - the light sphere (*Āloka Kasiṇa*), recollection of Lord Buddha's virtues (*Buddhānussati*) and mindfulness of breathing (*Ānāpānasati*).

Dhammakāya: The supra-mundane body of the purest element which is non-compound and not subject to the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-self.

Dhammakāya-Gotrabhū: Noble State Wisdom.

Dhammakāya-Anāgāmī: Non-returner.

Dhammakāya-Arahant: Perfect One.

Dhammakāya-Sakadāāmī: Once Returner.

Dhammakāya-Sotāpanna: Stream Winner, a state of attainment of the first state of holiness.

Dhutaṅga: Austere or strict practices for shaking off defilements.

Dhuvanī: Permanent, stable.

Dibbacakkhu: Divine eye, the faculty of supernormal vision, (also **Dhamma-cakkhu**) the power of seeing all that is taking place in the whole universe – e.g. the passing away and arising of beings in the different worlds such as the hells, the heavens, etc.

Dibbasota: Divine ear, heavenly ear.

Diṭṭhi: Views or understanding. If the word Diṭṭhi is mentioned alone, it means wrong view or understanding.

Dosa: Aversion, hatred, anger.

Dukkha: Suffering, unsatisfactoriness due to the transient nature of all compounds.

Ekaggatā: One-pointedness, as in concentration of mind.

Ekaggatā-rammana: Sense of One-pointedness; concentration.

Fetters: The dhamma that bonds beings into existence. There are: (1) False view of individuality, (2) Doubt or uncertainty, (3) Adherence to wrong rules and rituals, (4) Sensual lust, (5) Repulsion or anger, (6) Lust for realms of form, (7) Lust for formless realms, (8) Conceit, (9)

Distraction or Restlessness, and (10) Ignorance.

Jhāna: State of meditative absorption.

Kāmachanda: Sensual desire.

Kamma or **Karma:** Volitional action, deed, good and bad volition.

Kāmatanḥā: Sensual craving, craving for sensual pleasure.

Kammaṭṭhāna: Subjects of meditation, meditation exercise, the act of meditation.

Karuṇā: Compassion.

Kasiṇa: A device used as an object of concentration.

Kāya: Body or form.

Kāyagatāsati: Mindfulness with regard to the body, contemplation on the 32 part impure parts of the body.

Khandha: The Five Groups of Existence, the Five Aggregates (corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations, consciousness).

Khaṇikasamādhi: Momentary concentration.

Kilesa: Defilements.

Kukkucca: Remorse, confusion, worry.

Kusala: Wholesome, meritorious.

Kusala Karma: A wholesome or meritorious action which bears fortunate results in the future.

Lobha: Greed.

Loka: The world, a world, a plane of existence.

Lokadhamma: Worldly conditions, things of the world, worldly vicissitudes. (1) Gain and Loss, (2) Fame, Rank or Dignity and Obscurity, (3) Blame and Praise and (4) Happiness and Pain.

Lokiya: Mundane.

Lokuttara: Supra-mundane.

Layman: Male lay follower with faith who has taken refuge in the Buddha, his Doctrine and the Noble Disciples; true disciples take on Five Precepts and abstain from wrong livelihood such as trading in arms, living beings, meat, alcohol, and poison (i.e., anything which causes harm or hurt).

Laywoman: Female lay-follower.

Learner: Those who are walking the Noble Paths. They are Stream-Enterer (*Sotāpanna*), Once-Returner (*Sakadāgāmi*) and Non-Returner (*Anāgāmi*).

Learned: Those who have completed the Noble Paths. They are Arahants or the Worthy One.

Luang Phor, Luang Pu or Lung Ta: Thai word for addressing a senior monk, it has the meaning of Reverend Father, Grandfather and Granduncle, respectively.

Magga: The Path, the Noble Path, the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering.

Māghapuja: Worship on the Full-Moon Day of the third lunar month in commemoration of the Great Assembly of Disciples.

Mana: Mind, thinking function.

Maṅgala: Good omen, auspice, auspicious ceremony, blessings.

Manokamma: Mental action, action done by mind.

Manomayiddhi: Mind-made magical power.

Manosucarita: Good mental action, good conduct in thought

Māra: The Evil One, death, the tempter. Māra include (1) the Māra of defilement, (2) of the aggregates, (3) of Karma-formations, (4) as deity and (5) as death.

Maraṇasati: Mindfulness of death.

Mettā: Loving kindness.

Middha: Torpor, drowsiness, languor.

Moha: Delusion.

Muditā: Sympathetic joy.

Musāvāda: False speech, lying.

Nāma-rūpa: Mind and Matter, name and form, mind-body complex, mentality and corporeality, psycho-physical organism.

Nekkhamma: Renunciation, giving up the world, escape from sensuality, absence of greed, independence of sensual desire and pleasure.

Nibbāna (Sanskrit = Nirvāṇa), Literally, “extinction” (of greed, hatred and delusion).

Niccaṃ: Perpetuality, lasting, constant.

Nimitta: Sign, mental image. There are three types of Nimitta: (1) Preliminary Sign (Parikamma-nimitta), (2) Learning Sign or Visualized Image (Uggaha-nimitta) and (3) Counterpart Sign or Conceptualized Image (Paṭibhāga-nimitta).

Nirodha: The Cessation of Extinction of Suffering, cessation, extinction.

Nīvaraṇa: Hindrances (to Right Wisdom).

Noble One or **Noble Disciple**: Holy or Noble persons.

They are Stream-Enterer (*Sotāpanna*), Once-Returner (*Sakadāgāmi*), Non-Returner (*Anāgāmi*) and the Worthy one or Arahant.

Paññā: Wisdom, knowledge, understanding.

Parikamma-nimitta: Preliminary vision, initial visualization of the kasiṇa or meditation object (as remembered).

Paṭhama-magga: Preliminary sign (like the light sphere) which “appears” when a basic level of concentration is reached.

Paṭibhāga-nimitta: Counter image of the meditation object which is very clear, bright and translucent. It can be made smaller or enlarged at will. This stage of vision comes after further development from the Uggaha-nimitta.

Paṭisambhidā: Analytic insight, discrimination. (1) discrimination of meaning, analytic insight of consequence, (2) discrimination of ideas, analytic insight of origin (3) discrimination of language, analytic insight of philology and (4) discrimination of sagacity, analytic insight of ready wit.

Paṭivedha: Penetration, realization, attainment.

Phala: Fruit, result, consequence, effect.

Phra: (1) Title used when speaking of a Buddhist monk.
(2) Title for calling a noble one.

Precept: Moral practice or rule of morality.

Private Buddha: A Buddha who becomes enlightened by himself, but does not teach others.

Sammā-arahang: These are the words repeated (Parikamma-bhāvanā) in Dhammakāya Meditation to help gain mental concentration. Sammā is from Sammā sambuddho, the Buddha's Supreme Right Enlightenment or Supreme Right Wisdom. Arahang means the virtue of Buddha's being far from passions, or his Perfect Purity.

Sakadāgāmī: Once-returner, one who has to be born once more before attaining emancipation or arahantship.

Sakkāyadiṭṭhi: View regarding personality (Wrong view with respect to the common characteristics of all compounds).

Samādhi: Concentration (a meditative state).

Samatha: A technique to develop mental concentration by using a meditation device or kasiṇa (the Buddha has prescribed forty all together). Its object is tranquility, calmness, and one-pointedness, which lead to jhānas.

Samāpatti: Four Rūpa-jhānas and Four Arūpa-jhānas.

Saṅgha or **Sangha:** Community, assemblage, a chapter of Buddhist monks (not less than four monks).

Saṅyojana: The Ten Fetters which bind all beings to the round of rebirth.

Saṅkhāra: Compounded things, conditioned things, the world of phenomena.

Saṅkhata-lakkhaṇa: Three Characteristics of the Conditioned: (1) Its arising appears, (2) Its passing away appears and (3) While standing, alternation or changeability appears.

Saññā: Perception, memory.

Sati: Mindfulness.

Satipaṭṭhāna: Foundations of Mindfulness.

Saupādisesa-nibbāna: Nirvana realized with the body remaining, Nirvana with the substratum of life remaining.

Sīla: Precepts of morality, purity of conduct (body, speech, and mind), practice of restraint of the senses.

Silabbataparāmāsa: Clinging to rites and rituals following wrong practices and believing them to be the path of purification.

Sotāpanna: A “Stream-enterer,” entered on the Path of Noble-ness; the first stage of Noble Discipleship. (At least the first three of the Ten Fetters have been cut to attain this level.).

The Three Trainings or The Threefold Training: Practices of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom. They are also called Training in Higher Morality, Training in Higher Mentality and Training in Higher Wisdom.

The Triple Gem: (1) the Buddha, the Enlightened One, (2) the Dhamma, the Doctrine and (3) the Sangha.

Thīna: Sloth, unwieldiness, morbid state of mind.

Tilakkhaṇa: The Three Characteristics: (1) Impermanence, (2) Suffering and (3) Non-self.

Ucchedadiṭṭhi: Annihilationism, the doctrine of annihilation.

Uddhacca: Restlessness, agitation, distraction.

Uddhaccakukkucca: Restlessness and worry, worry, anxiety.

Uggaha-nimitta: Learning sign, visualized image.

Unconditioned Phenomena: The non-compound things. The characteristics of the unconditioned are: (1) no arising, (2) no passing away and (3) while standing, there is no alternation.

Upādāna: Attachment, clinging.

Upekkhā: Equanimity

Uposatha Day: Holy Day (New, quarter, half, three-quarter and full moon.)

Uposatha Hall: The shrine hall within a monastery where the Disciplinary Code (*Pāṭimokkha*) is recited on full-moon and new-moon days.

Vaṭṭa: The round of rebirth.

[Also, **Vaṭṭa 3**] Round of Defilement (*Kilesa-vaṭṭa*), Round of Karma (*Kamma-vaṭṭa*) and Round of Results (*Vipāka-vaṭṭa*).

Vedanā: Feelings, Sensation.

Vicāra: Sustained thought on the object of concentration.

Vicikicchā: Doubt (on the dhamma practices leading to Nirvana).

Vijjā: Higher knowledge, transcendental wisdom.

Vimutti: Release, emancipation.

Vimuttiñāḍassana: A state of attainment of knowledge and insight of salvation or deliverance.

Viññāṇa: Consciousness.

Vipassanā: Penetrative insight, intuitive vision, seeing as it is.

Vipassanāñāṇa: Insight-knowledge

Vipassanāpaññā: Insight-wisdom

Wisdom: Knowledge, understanding. The sources of wisdom are (1) wisdom resulting from reflection, (2) wisdom resulting from study and (3) wisdom resulting from meditation.

Wat: Thai word for monastery (e.g. Wat Paknam means Paknam Monastery).



C BIOGRAPHY OF THE VENERABLE PHRA MONGKOL-THEPMUNI (Sodh Candasaro)

The master of the Vijjā Dhammakāya approach, the late Abbot of Wat Paknam, the Venerable Chao Khun Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni, is fondly known and revered throughout the land as Luang Phor Wat Paknam, or simply as “Luang Phor Yai,” meaning senior father or meditation master.

Luang Phor was born October 10, 1884 (BE 2427) to a humble rice-merchant family of Supanburi Province as Sodh, the second child of Nai Ngern and Nang Sudjai Meekaewnoi. As was typical in those days, young Sodh received his education from the temples. At fourteen, when his father died, he became the chief bread winner for the family. Successful as he was in rice trading, at age nineteen the compassionate young man resolved to become a monk (*bhikkhu*) for life.



Having made arrangements to ensure his mother's welfare, the young man entered monkhood three years later, in July 1906 (BE 2449). At the age of twenty-two, he was ordained as Candasaro Bhikkhu at Wat Songpeenong, near his home. Phra Ajahn Dee of Wat Pratusarn, Supanburi, was his main Preceptor.

The day after his ordination, Candasaro Bhikkhu began meditation practice and study of Pali scriptures in search of deeper and wider knowledge, he moved from Wat Songpeenong to Wat Bodhi (Wat Phra Chetupon Vimonmangkalaram) in Bangkok. There, he frequented the centers of meditation practice and Pali study.

Soon, Luang Phor was recognized by his teachers, Phra Khru Yanavirati (Po) of Wat Bodhi and Phra Ajahn Singha of Wat Lakorn Tham, as an accomplished meditation instructor.

During those early dry seasons, Luang Phor adopted *Dhutangavatra*, the Austere Practices for Purification such as wandering in solitude through the forest wilderness, staying in caves and practicing the *Dhamma* with piety.

After ten years, Luang Phor set aside his informal study of the Pali Scriptures, having reached sufficiency to read the *Mahasatipatthana Sutta*. Thereafter he devoted himself totally to meditation practice.

Luang Phor spent the next Buddhist Lent at Wat Bang Khoo Vieng, on Bangkok Noi Canal, where his benefactor, Phra Ajahn Choom, was the abbot. There, at nightfall on the full-moon day of September, in his twelfth year as a Bhikkhu, Luang Phor prepared himself for meditation in the *uposatha*. He invoked illumination and guidance, and made a vow dedicating his life to Buddhism. Luang Phor vowed not to rise from his seat in front of the Buddha statue until he was permitted to attain some understanding of the *Dhamma* as discerned by the Buddha.

With his mind set and its components of vision, memory, thought and cognition all at rest at the center of his body, two “Anguli” (joints of the middle finger) above the navel, Luang Phor was able to penetrate the full depths of the *Dhamma* as it was revealed to and by the Buddha. That revelation of the *Dhamma* and ever more refined Dhammakāyas (Dhamma bodies) was so profound that it was only

possible when the mind was at rest at the body's center. After lent, Luang Phor went to teach at Wat Bang Pla, where three monks and four laymen who followed his meditation procedure were also able to attain various degrees of insight. Thereafter, Luang Phor gradually became renown throughout the land.

Somdej Phra Vanarat, Head of Bhasicharoen Sangha District, spotted Luang Phor's potential and requested him to assume the Abbotship of Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen. This was a neglected and deteriorating monastery erected five centuries earlier. Luang Phor wanted to decline this request, but he could not. With utmost patience and remarkable leadership, Luang Phor gradually rebuilt the monastery until it is today one of the largest and most important monasteries in the land. In 1949 (BE 2492), Luang Phor received the ecclesiastical rank of Phra Bhavana-Kosolthera. This was followed by the title Phra Mongkol-Rajmuni, and in 1957 (BE 2500) by the title Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni.

Vijjā Dhammakāya, the revelation of the *Dhamma* as attained by Luang Phor, was the heart of his teaching. His service to Buddhism can be seen from his regular routine:

- Meditating day and night with *Bhikkhus* and *Upasikas* in different sessions.
- Leading *Bhikkhus* and *Samaneras* in the uposatha every morning and evening, paying homage to the *Triple Gems* and ending with a sermon.
- Teaching public meditation practice every Thursday at 2:00 pm.
- Delivering public sermons on holy days (*Uposatha* or *Wan Phra*) and Sundays.
- Supervising the Pali Institute.

Thus, Luang Phor devoted his time and effort almost exclusively to teaching meditation. His disciples multiplied into the thousands. It was not uncommon for revered *bhikkhus* in far corners of the country, who apparently never met Luang Phor, to know him well and to respect him as their mentor.

His decease at the age of 75, on February 3, 1959 (BE 2502) was just a pause for the immortal master. His life should serve to remind other mortals to pursue their own obligations to the *Noble Path* carefully. Luang Phor's teachings live on, manifesting the Ultimate Righteous Truth.

Written by Phrarajbrahmathera.

D THE AUTHOR:
Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith
Meditation Master,
Buddhist Scholar and Educator



- Abbot, Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakayaram (July 9, 1991).
- President, the Executive Committee, National Coordination Center of Provincial Meditation Institutes of Thailand (Elected by the Directors of Provincial Meditation Institutes from throughout the country at a Seminar and Practicum organized by the National Buddhist Office 23-25 April 2008 at Wat Yanawa, Bangkok, Thailand and recognized by the Sangha Body).
- Director and Principal-Meditation Master, Wat Luang Phor Sodh Buddhist Meditation Institute (Since 2006) *An Associated Institution of the World Buddhist University*.
- Vice-chairman, the Administrative Committee, Maha-chulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Region 15 Academic Services Center (November 19, 2007).
- Director, Dhammakaya Buddhist Meditation Institute (1981).
- Manager, Rajburi Provincial Pali Studies Center (Appointed by the Sangha Body, October 20, 1999).
- Director, Rajburi Provincial Meditation Practice Center (Appointed by the Sangha Body, March 6, 2001).
- Director, Center for Development of Virtues and Ethics for the Security of the Nation, Religion and Monarchy (2009).

PROFILE AS A MONK

- Name:** Phra Rajyanvisith (Phra Ajahn Maha Sermchai Jayamangalo) Abbot of Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakayaram, and Director of Dhammakaya Buddhist Meditation Institute
- Date of Birth:** March 6, 1929.
- Entered Monkhood:** March 6, 1986.
- Buddhist Dhamma:** Completed grade three of Buddhist Theory, and grade six of Pali studies.
- Meditation Master:** Phra Rajbrahmathera, Deputy Abbot, Meditation master, Wat Paknam
- Meditation Experience:** Practiced Buddhist meditation since 1970.
- Preceptorship:** Appointed since January 31, 1996.
- Ecclesiastical Title from December 5, 1998:** Phra Bhavana Visutthikhun
- Ecclesiastical Title from December 5, 2004:** Phra Rajyanvisith

- An honorary Doctorate in Buddhist Principles in Management from Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in 2007.
- An honorary Doctorate in Religious Study in Buddhism from Mahamakut Buddhist University in 2009.

PROFILE BEFORE MONKHOOD

Work: Research specialist, United States Information Services (USIS), Bangkok.

Visiting lecturer in research methodology, research and evaluation, and public opinion surveys to various academic institutions (Thammasart University, Bangkok University, etc.).

Academic Qualifications: Certificate in accountancy, Bachelors of Commerce, and Masters of Arts in public administration (Honors), Thammasart University.

Certificate in social science research, Institute of Social Research, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

Certificate in Wang OIS Management Courses, organized by USIS, Washington DC, USA.

E WAT LUANG PHOR SODH DHAMMAKAYARAM

WAT LUANG PHOR SODH

The temple is located on the beautifully landscaped campus of the Dhammakaya Buddhist Meditation Institute at kilometer 14 of the Damnoen Saduak - Bangpae Road, in Damnoen Saduak District of Rajburi Province, 93 kilometers from Bangkok. It encompasses 244 rais. The 74 rais surrounding the main monastery were registered in 1991 as Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakayaram, in loving memory of Luang Phor Wat Paknam, Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni (Sodh Candasaro). Here is a brief Profile:

Address: 109 Moo 7 Damnoen Saduak - Bangpae Road, Damnoen Saduak District, Rajburi Province, 70130.

Phone: (032) 745-180, Ext. 220/191

Fax: (032) 745-170

Websites: www.dhammadcenter.org

Email: bmi@dhammadcenter.org

**DHAMMAKAYA
BUDDHIST MEDITATION INSTITUTE**

President

His Holiness Somdej Phra Buddha-jahn:
Abbot, Wat Saket, Sangha Council & Chairman,
Acting Sangharaja Committee.

Vice-President

His Holiness Somdej Phra Mahà
Ratchamangkalajahn: Abbot, Wat Paknam
Bhasicharoen & Sangha Council Member.

General Manager and Meditation Master

Phra Rajyanvisith: Abbot, Wat Luang Phor
Sodh Dhammakayaram & Coordinator, Provincial
Meditation Institutes.

Financial and Property Management

Dhammakaya Buddhist Meditation Founda-
tion.

FOUNDING

- 21 May 1991 Registered as a Wat [a temple] by the Ministry of Education and recognized by the Sangha body
- 2 May 1992 Consecrated as a Temple by His Holiness Somdej Phra Buddhaghosajahn, Former Abbot of Wat Sampaya, Bangkok, and Sangha Council Member.

RECOGNIZED EXCELLENCE

- 1999 Recognized by the Sangha Body as Rajburi Provincial Pali Studies Center.
- 2004 Recognized by the Sangha Body as Rajburi Provincial Meditation Institute.
- 2005 Designated by the Sangha Body as an “Exemplary Development Temple with Noteworthy Success.”
- 2006 Established as Sangha Ecclesiastical Region 15 Academic Services Unit for Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (for four provinces).

- 2006 Wat Luang Phor Sodh Buddhist Meditation Institute established as an Associated Institution of the World Buddhist University.
- 2008 Elected the National Coordination Center of Provincial Meditation Institutes of Thailand.
- 2009 Established by the Sangha Body as the Center for Development of Virtues and Ethics for the Security of the Nation, Religion and Monarchy

OBJECTIVES

1. To help humans rid themselves of suffering and penetrate Nirvana.
2. To educate laity and monks to become knowledgeable, virtuous instructors spreading Lord Buddha's teachings.
3. To become a center of virtue supporting peace for all world beings.
4. To become a pilgrimage center for the faithful:

- Displaying sacred objects worthy of veneration.
 - Providing a clean, beautiful, serene environment for peaceful meditation and introspection.
5. To faultlessly manage and preserve the sacred treasures and offerings of the faithful.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS



The Ubosota Hall is a three-story building located on its own island, surrounded by trees. Like most Wat Luang Phor Sodh buildings, it is all white, with a white roof to indicate purity. Designed by the king's architect in the late Ayuthaya style, it won the award for Outstanding Preservation of Architec-

ture in 1996. The building features Buddha Relics and over forty Buddha images made of semi-precious gemstones or valuable metals, located at the front of the main assembly hall on the third floor. The second floor displays a large plaque listing major donors. The first floor, which can hold approximately one hundred people, has the history and rules of the wat displayed on the wall. Surrounding the main assembly hall are six small viharas or chapels, three on each side. The two middle viharas contain rare Buddha images and an image of Luang Phor Sodh. The others are used for breakout meditation groups.



The Information Center, situated at the central fork as the first building to receive visitors, is a white two-story enclosed pavilion with an extremely steep white roof. Its main Buddha image is in blessing position. There is also an image of Luang Phor Sodh where the laity can pay homage. Originally, this was a multipurpose hall for all temple activities. It has now become a museum filled with Buddha relics, Buddha statues, and related displays.



The Vihara of Luang Phor Sodh is located at the center of its own sacred island right by the central fork. It is surrounded by rare trees with historical significance for Buddhism. There are two images of Luang Phor Sodh, a large, ferocious standing image and a relatively small, approachable sitting statue that devotees love to honor with gold leaf and offerings.



The Two Twin School Buildings are three-stories high and constructed of red brick. They are located at the back, left of the campus, by the Dining Hall. These buildings get heavy use. Monks study Dhamma and Pali for the national exams. For Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, the Wat teaches Bachelors and Masters Degree programs in Buddhism. The buildings also service a continual stream of grade school and high school students coming for brief retreats. Most popular is the library with its Internet connection.



Sala Somdej Dining Hall is a three-story white building which can serve up to 500 monks and novices on the second level. The first level provides both dining hall and sleeping quarters for large numbers of Laity. The top floor is an assembly hall for up to 500 persons, used for morning and evening chanting, Sunday Dhamma practice, and major special events.



The Meditation Vihara, located in the lake, near the Abbot's residence, is the Wat's most beautiful building. Four equal wings join in sweeping upward curves into a tall central tower with an onion-shaped cap. Inside, one wing is devoted to Buddha statues and another to Buddha relics. The remainder seats about 130 meditators sitting cross-legged. Accessible from both banks of the lake by

two bridges, the hall is occupied twenty-four hours a day by shifts of advanced meditators cultivating world peace. It is open on weekends for visitors to pay homage to the large golden Buddha statue and Buddha Relics.



Phra Maha Cetiya Somdej, under construction, will be a huge, four-story cetiya-shaped pilgrimage and conference center displaying the wat's exceptional collection of Buddha relics. Four wings and connecting stairways come together to form a Cetiya shape. The first floor will provide space for up to 2,000 lay persons to attend conferences or meditate. It will also contain the administrative offices. The second floor will provide space for up to 2,000 monks to meditate. The third floor will be a

museum exhibiting Buddha statues demonstrating all the various poses as well as samples of meditation practices. The smaller fourth floor at the neck of the Cetiya is where the Buddha Relics will be displayed.



The grounds of the wat and institute campus are noteworthy in themselves. The first five years of site development were devoted to constructing the lake, rivers, forests and islands and planting rare and special trees from around the world. This effort won a royal award for turning the worn-out rice land back to nature. Most of the trees under which various Buddhas have become enlightened are represented.



F INTERNATIONAL MEDITATION RETREATS

MEDITATION GUIDANCE

Wat Luang Phor Sodh Buddhist Meditation Institute (BMI) offers Meditation Guidance or semi-private tutoring in English all year round, starting whenever you choose and lasting as long as you like. If you have the time, please try to come for 10 days to two weeks, for the best result. It generally requires 5-7 days to develop the inner calm necessary for rapid progress. But, individuals vary greatly, so all are welcome for either longer or briefer periods.

MEDITATION RETREATS

BMI offers three intensive retreats per year, May 1-14, August 1-14, and December 1-14. Retreats are similar to guided meditation, but more intensive, with a sunrise meditation at 05:30. They



usually involve 20-50 international meditators. Several hundred monks and laity attend the Thai retreat simultaneously in May and December. During retreats there is more access to the venerable Meditation Master in joint Thai-English sessions. This is especially useful for those who become advanced. There is also more chance to study Buddhist practices, Vinaya, Dhamma and Chanting. The large number of participants necessarily implies less silence.

BUDDHIST IMMERSION – EFL

BMI conducts year-round programs for international volunteers to contribute their services as teachers of English for monks, novices, hill-tribe workers and others while participating in and experiencing Thai temple life, learning meditation and studying Thai Buddhism. The program also includes orientation to Thai culture and a visit with villagers in a rural temple. Potential volunteers should Contact Global Service Corps of San Francisco at www.globalservicecorps.org.

CONTACT

Please see our website *dhammacenter.org*, where you can register online or **email** us at *bmi@dhammacenter.org* or call Phra Bart at (+66) 089-068-0521.

Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakayaram is 2 hours southwest of Bangkok by **#78** air-conditioned bus, which leaves from the left-hand sidewalk outside the Southern Bus Terminal, every 20 minutes 06:00-19:00. **Do not look for the bus inside the station and Do Not Take Any Other Bus!!!** Look for the bus in stall #1 or by the large blue sign in English towards the back of the sidewalk which says “**No. 78 Damnoen Saduak, FLOATING MARKET.**”

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Tel (Thai): 083-032-8907, 086-306-0920,
086-306-0921 or 086-306-0921

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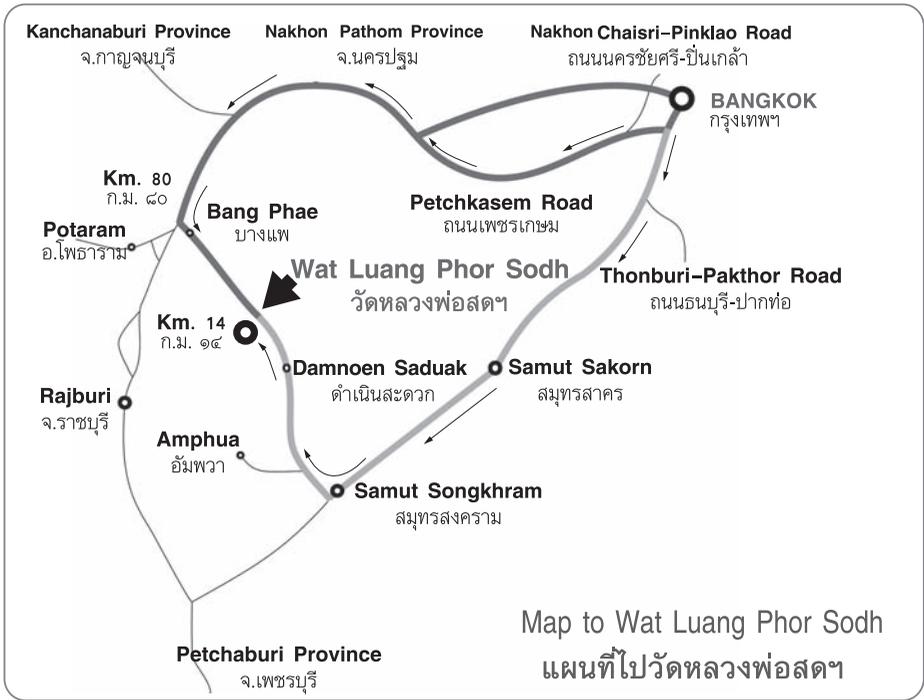
TRIBUTES FROM MEDITATORS AROUND THE WORLD

- **Rianne, Holland:** Extremely valuable; once in a life-time opportunity! I will take this with me back home and enjoy Buddhism the rest of my life.
- **Pablo, Chile:** Extremely valuable; made me feel one with the world. I feel love, peaceful love for everything and everybody.
- **Lieke, Holland:** This trip has been the best thing I've ever done in my life, and the things I've learned and seen out of meditation are a very important part of it. I want to thank you so much. Never in this life will I forget about this experience, and I will definitely continue meditating at home.
- **Richard, USA:** Extremely valuable; this all too short time, none-the-less did give me an entirely new awareness of an inner world of richness and resourcefulness that wants to be known and welcomed into conscious awareness.
- **Roosmarijn, Holland:** Very valuable; my meditation studies showed me a new world and that I was capable to get there – that was more than I expected.

- **Rachel, Canada:** Extremely valuable. As we say, I “straightened my head out” ...many illusions, veils were lifted and things were sorted out ... I realized a new way to live that I had really known all along.
- **Niels, Holland:** Extremely valuable. It let me put life in a much bigger perspective than I’ve ever seen it in before. It showed me what’s really important in life. And, it definitely encouraged me to live in a more altruistic way. *(Niels’s mother was so impressed with his meditation that she also came with her friend, and both meditated to experiencing Nirvana.)*
- **Anke, Germany:** Extremely valuable. In Nirvana I was overwhelmed. I knew I don’t have to doubt any more. Whatever I’ve seen and felt was real. I never meditated before and achieved quite much in such a short time. *(She declared herself a follower of the Buddha.*
- **Andrew, USA:** I didn’t know much about Buddhism and wasn’t sure what to expect. I tried to keep an open mind and couldn’t have followed a better approach. I was able to purify myself mentally and spiritually. The environment of the wat emanates peace and contentment. The monks were some of the most peaceful, respectful people I have ever met and led by example rather than proselytizing. Phra Bart

guided us with patience and a sense of humor. All in all, it's hard to think of a time better spent. I have become a more confident, clear-thinking person. I encourage anyone out there to give the Meditation Institute a try.

- **Steve, Singapore**: Extremely valuable! In Nirvana I saw Lord Buddha. In Heaven I felt very peaceful. In Hell I saw my grandpa. You can really experience things that you cannot see with the eye. It is very peaceful when you are in Nirvana.
- **Judith, Holland**: Very Valuable! In Heaven I saw celestial beings living on clouds and a mountain and felt peace and lightness. I've made a big step from no experience. Now I know I'm on the right way. I did not ever expect to be able to feel so calm and peaceful and happy while meditating, but also afterwards.
- **Teddi, USA**: Extremely valuable! In Nirvana I felt completely weightless, at peace and stillness. I reached a level of peace and stillness that I never had before. I'm not sure exactly what happened, but it was the most beautiful experience of my life. This is a wonderful program. Everyone was very kind and patient. The food was great! Just keep doing what you are doing!



The effectiveness of Dhammakāya Meditation derives from focusing attention at the center of the body and combining three meditation techniques simultaneously.

Meditators often debate the efficacy of concentration (Samatha) versus insight (Vipassanā). Dhammakāya Meditation employs elements of both. Higher and higher levels of concentration enable personal insight to progress from a more worldly view to Right Understanding and ultimately to supra-mundane Right Wisdom.

The real heart of Dhammakāya Meditation is practice. Academic learning can indicate the way, but direct experience through meditation is the path to purification and wisdom.

Phra Rajyanvisith

