The Seven Bojjhaṅgas (Factors of Enlightenment)

by S. N. Goenka

The bojjhaṅgas are the seven factors of enlightenment or qualities that have to be developed to reach the final goal of full liberation.

The first bojjhaṅga is sati, awareness. Without it, further steps on the path cannot be taken. Sati, objective observation of reality, is the most important factor because it must be continuously present every moment with every other factor.

Dhamma-vicaya is the second bojjhaṅga. The word caya or cayana means “to integrate.” Apparent truth creates much delusion and confusion. Vicaya or vicayana means to divide, dissect, disintegrate. Initially, dhamma-vicaya is intellectual. The body is analyzed as just four elements, with no “I” about it. The mind is just the four aggregates. The six sense doors, their respective objects, the contact and process of multiplication are observed. The intellectual clarity gained gives guidance to start the actual practice of Vipassana and study the truth at the actual level.

The third bojjhaṅga is viriya (effort) as in sammā-vāyāmo in the Noble Eightfold Path. Great effort is required, but the effort is not to react, to let things just happen. Even if you have been victorious in a thousand battles against a thousand warriors, this inner battle of non-reaction is more difficult because the old habit is to do something, to react. Another extreme is not to work, not to observe at all, and just let things happen. Let things happen, but also know the reality as it is. A balanced degree of effort is necessary: either too much, or none at all, doesn’t work. For example, some pressure is necessary to drill a hole in a precious gem, but too much pressure will break it. Vipassana is a middle path.

Viriya is to just observe, understanding the impermanent nature of arising and passing: practising without reaction. The liberation is done by Dhamma, by the law of nature.

As you keep practising, the fourth bojjhaṅga, pīti, develops and grows: a flow of pleasant sensations in the body. However, if you develop attachment to this free flow of subtle vibrations throughout the body, if you look for it and cling to it, it is no longer a bojjhaṅga. If the understanding of anicca (impermanence) remains—that this is still the field of mind and matter, of arising and passing—then the impurity goes away, and pīti develops and becomes a factor of enlightenment.

Then, the fifth bojjhaṅga is experienced: passaddhi, deep tranquillity and calmness. The mind becomes peaceful. Although difficult to grasp at this high stage, a subtle oscillation remains, and this sensation is called adukkhasukha. In pīti, it was pleasant; now it is just peaceful, and the danger is that anicca is not experienced. Detachment from craving towards pleasant sensation or aversion towards unpleasant sensation is much easier than detachment from this feeling of peace. Be very attentive: with a very sharp mind, feel the subtle oscillation, check the six sense doors, and keep understanding that this experience is anicca.

The next enlightenment factor is samādhi—concentration or absorption. There were different types of samādhi before the Buddha became Buddha, as there are today. When eight jhānas are attained, there is a danger of feeling that the goal is attained, but this is only lokiya samādhi, which results in
repeated rebirth in one plane of existence or another. Sammā-saṁañña takes us out of all the planes and gives full liberation from the bondage of birth and death, and from every type of suffering. It is practised with sampajañña, the awareness of the mind-matter phenomenon and the realisation of its nature of arising and passing. The mind is concentrated on reality. Then it becomes lokuttara, beyond the planes. As the jhāna is attained, simultaneously the fruit of nibbāna is attained. With saṁañña, one after the other, the meditator attains the fruit of sotāpanna, sakadāgāmi; anāgāmi, and arahant. Then saṁañña becomes an enlightenment factor.

Upekkhā—equanimity is the seventh factor of enlightenment. Like saṁañña, it must be present from the beginning to the end, at every step. Whatever other factor is worked on, awareness and equanimity must always be there.

A pure mind has all these factors. Impurities, as they are observed, come to the surface and get eradicated; but these enlightenment factors, as they are observed, one by one, come on the surface, develop, multiply and become totally fulfilled until the final goal of full enlightenment is thus reached.

When the enlightenment factor of saṁañña is present the meditator understands, “Now saṁañña is present in me.” When it not present, the meditator accepts this reality, “Now saṁañña is not present in me.”

All the past accumulated enlightenment factor of saṁañña now arises. Having repeatedly arisen, it is understood with wisdom and multiplies till it become complete—totally and fully attained.

Similarly the enlightenment factors of dhamma-vicaya (analytical study of the truth), viṛiya (effort), pīti (rapture, while feeling pleasant sensation in the body), passaddhi (tranquillity), saṁañña (concentration) and upekkhā (equanimity) are understood as simply being present or absent. The past bojjha/FL1E45hgas, which had not arisen earlier, repeatedly arise from the depth of the mind and are observed: they develop to fulfillment and, as a result, one reaches the final goal.

Bhavatu sabba mangalam — May all beings be happy!
Hong Kong Course Information

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Remarks:

* 1-day and 3-day courses are only open to those who have completed a 10-day Vipassana Meditation course with S.N. Goenka or his Assistant Teachers.

** Old students must fulfill the requirements below to be qualified for the Satipatthana Course:
1. Have completed at least three full 10-day courses with S. N. Goenka or one of his appointed assistant teachers.
2. Have practiced this technique for at least one year.
3. Have not practiced any other meditation techniques since the last course with S. N. Goenka or his appointed assistant teachers.
4. Have tried the best to maintain daily practice. (One hour in the morning and evening)
5. Endeavor to undertake five precepts in daily life, and must undertake to observe in particular the 3rd precept (abstaining from sexual misconduct) and the 5th precept (abstaining from intoxicants) once registered for the course.

*** For new students, old students and dhamma workers, please submit your application form at least ONE week before the commencement of the course.

The existing Hong Kong Vipassana Meditation Centre is a temporary centre. We hope this precious facility can be fully utilized by your efforts in spreading the 10 day Vipassana course to your friends and family members, for the benefits of many, for the real happiness, real peace and real harmony!

★ Register on-line! Fast & convenient! Visit HK Vipassana Meditation Centre website at www.hk.dhamma.org. Choose your course by clicking the course date on the course schedule page. Fill in the on-line registration form and submit.

Help Needed!

The Hang Tau is looking for the following items:

- big refrigerator; and
- steel cabinet

In addition, we are also looking for old students:

- who have had experience as a water-pipe technician to assist in center maintenance work;
- who is able to cook (full-time or part-time) for the coming courses; and
- who can help with packing up on Day 11

If you are able to help, please call Eva Kwok at 9155 7688.
Latest Updates of the Hong Kong Vipassana Centre

1) **Group Sitting Venues**

From September 13, 2009 onwards, there is one group sitting venue opened for old students on every Sunday Morning from 10 am to 12 noon.

Address: 10/F., Flat A Valiant Industrial Building, Au Pui Wan Street.

Please call Eva Kwok 9155 7688 or Timothy Wong 90127697 for registration.

Please bring meditation cushion if necessary.

2) **Monthly Vipassana Trustee’s Meeting**

Old students who are interested in knowing more about the operation of the Hong Kong Centre and who are willing to help with the centre’s affairs are welcome to participate in the Monthly Trustee’s Meetings.

One-hour pre-meeting group sitting will start at 10:00am, and the Trustee’s Meeting will begin at 11:15am and end at around 1:00pm.

Meeting Schedule: Sep19, Oct24, Nov28, Dec19

3) **Protect the Environment, Save Paper / Update Your Contact Details**

Old students who would like to receive *Vipassana Newsletter* by email or who have changed the contact details, please email your name in Chinese and English, new address, email address and telephone number to info@hk.dhamma.org or fax to 8147 3312.

4) **Donation**

If old students wish to practice their dana paramis (donation), please:

a) **Direct Transfer**

Beneficiary Bank: Hang Seng Bank Ltd.

Bank Address: 83, Des Voeux Road Central, Central, Hong Kong

Beneficiary Account No.:

- 263-279812-668 (for HK Dollars account)
- 263-279812-201 (for US Dollars account)

Beneficiary Name:

Hong Kong Vipassana Meditation Centre Ltd.

Swift Code: HASEHKHH

b) **Via Cheque**

Please send your crossed cheque payable to “Hong Kong Vipassana Meditation Centre Ltd.” to Box 5185, GPO, Hong Kong.

We should be grateful if you would send relevant information after you made the donation to us via email: info@hk.dhamma.org or fax: (852) 8147 3312.

Hong Kong Vipassana Meditation Centre is a registered Charitable Organization. Please provide your full name and correspondence address. Receipt will be sent to you to claim for tax deduction.
DANA
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我願意捐款給香港內觀中心 I would like to make a contribution to the HKVMC:

- 以購買東灣土地及興建新中心 For purchase of land and development of the proposed Centre at Tung Wan
- 以作課程及日常營運經費 For course and operating expenses

姓名 Name: ___________________________  聯絡電話 Phone No. ______________________________
電郵 Email Address: __________________________________________________________
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捐款形式 Donation:

- 一次過捐款 One-off Donation HK$ ____________
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- 直接轉帳 / By direct transfer
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  - 帳戶 / Account No. : 228 261715 883
  - 受款人 / Beneficiary: 香港內觀靜坐中心有限公司 / Hong Kong Vipassana Meditation Centre Ltd

- 支票匯票 / By sending a cheque or money order
  - 拆頭: 香港內觀中心 / Payable to "Hong Kong Vipassana Meditation Centre Ltd"
  - 地址: 香港郵政總局信箱 5185 號 / Postal address: GPO Box 5185, Hong Kong

超過港幣100元之捐款在香港是可以銷稅的，請選擇本中心簽發收據之形式。
Donations of over HK$ 100 are tax-deductible in Hong Kong. Please tick the appropriate box if you wish / or do not wish to receive any receipts.

- 每六個月 Bi-annually
- 每年 Annually
- 不需要 Not Necessary

Please print clearly using BLOCK LETTERS and return to the above address.
Vipassana Websites

Vipassana introduction: www.dhamma.org
Contains information about Goenkaji, Vipassana centres worldwide, Code of Discipline, Application Form for ten-day courses, etc.

Dhamma Giri: www.vri.dhamma.org
Contains information about Vipassana Research Institute, Vipassana Newsletter, Indian Vipassana centres, schedule of courses, etc.

Vipassana (old students only):
www.dhamma.org/os
Contains information for old students of Vipassana.

Vipassana Newsletters: www.vri.dhamma.org/newsletters

Pili Tipitaka website: www.tipitaka.org
Contains the Chattha Sanghyana Tipitaka with commentaries in Unicode Roman script.

Global Pagoda website: www.globalpagoda.org
Contains updated information including facility for online donation.

Prison course website: www.prison.dhamma.org

Executive course website: www.executive.dhamma.org