



Buddhāloka

L I G H T O F T H E B U D D H A

Newsletter of the Buddhist Society of Victoria

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Spring 2009 / 2552

Katina Celebrations

The end of the Vassa (the Rains retreat) was celebrated at the BSV on Sunday, 18th October. A big crowd of between 100 and 150 members and friends took part in the offering of a robe to Ajahn Ariyasilo and listened to Ajahn's Paritta chanting and a short Dhamma talk on the life of a renunciant and the tradition of robe-giving at the end of the Vassa. It was a joyous day and we express our warm gratitude to Ajahn for his kindness and generosity to us all and his excellent teaching (and beautiful chanting!). We are very pleased that he will be staying on at the BSV until well into next year.



Dana with Ajahn Ariyasilo at the BSV →

The end of the Vassa at *Sanghamittarama* was celebrated on Saturday 10th October. Ayya Atapi received the Katina robe this year but Ayya Sucinta also received a robe. Chi Kwan Sunim from the Kinglake temple offered a very interesting talk on the importance of the robes in recent times following the tragedy of the February bushfires. Ajahn Ariyasilo offered a reflection on the end of the Vassa. Thanks go to the many people who helped prepare for these very happy occasions.

from Vice-president Cora Thomas

11th Sakyadhita Conference in Vietnam 2009

INFORMATION UPDATE

If you are already registered for the conference, we hope this advice will answer any questions you may have. The conference brochure, updated program, and registration form are available at <http://www.sakyadhita.org>.

WHAT: 11th Sakyadhita International Conference on Buddhist Women

WHEN: December 27, 2009 to January 3, 2010, with an optional tour from January 6 to 10

WHERE: Conference venue is the Universal Light Monastery, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (Chua Pho Quang, 64/2 Duong Pho Quang, P.2 Q. Tan Binh, T/P Ho Chi Minh City)

HOW TO REGISTER (**note that the deadline for registration [1 October 2009] is already passed, but you may wish to check whether late registrations will be accepted**): There are two ways to register: (1) Complete the registration form found on the *Sakyadhita* website and submit it electronically, or, (2) Print out the form, fill in the information, and mail to Sakyadhita, 923 Mokapu Blvd., Kailua, Hawaii, 96734. The registration fee is US\$50 per person. Payment for accommodations can be made directly to the hotels after arrival. Registration for the optional tour and payment for airfare on the optional tour may also be made after arrival. There are several ways you can make payment. Payment by credit card is not available. International money order or by Bank transfer as follows: Bank Name: Washington Mutual Bank, address: 3800 5th Ave., San Diego, CA 92103 USA: Account Name: Sakyadhita: Account Number: 393-470455-8: Bank Routing Code: 322271627: SWIFT Code: WMSBUS66.

VISA: To acquire a travel visa, please contact the Vietnamese Embassy in Canberra. A valid passport (with more than six months validity) and visa are needed to enter Vietnam. If a destination address is required, one hotel on our list is First Hotel, 18 Hoang Viet Street, Tan Binh District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Tel: (848) 3844 1199, 3844 1175.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Participants in the conference will stay at one of several hotels in the heart of Ho Chi Minh City. Most are within a five- to ten-minute walk of the Universal Light Monastery. Shuttles will be available for those who do not wish to walk. Please indicate your room preference on the registration form and we will make the hotel reservations. Participants will pay their hotels directly once in Vietnam. Room rates are approximately \$20, \$30, or \$40 per night and may be occupied singly or shared with another person. If you have paid *Sakyadhita* in advance for your room, that amount will be credited to you upon arrival. You may wish to arrive on December 26 to rest prior to the conference opening ceremony on the morning of December 28. It will be convenient to stay in your hotel while enjoying the local temple tours on January 4 and 5.

AIRPORT TRANSFER: Through the kindness of the Vietnamese Buddhists, airport transfer is free of charge. Please email your itinerary, flight number, date and time of arrival and departure to ktsomo@sandiego.edu.

MEALS: All meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner, and tea) will be strictly vegetarian and will be provided through the generosity of the Vietnamese Buddhists.

TEMPLE TOURS: The tour on January 4th and 5th is free of charge. On Jan 4th, we will tour Buddhist temples around Ho Chi Minh City. On January 5th, we will visit a Thien (Zen) monastery for women and Vungtau, a town on the coast with many Buddhist monasteries. We will return to our hotels in the evening. The optional tour will be from January 6th to 10th. We will travel to Dalat by bus (6 hrs), to Danang by bus (5 hrs), to the ancient capital of Hue (4 hrs), then fly to Hanoi. Our kind Vietnamese hosts will provide food, accommodation and bus transportation. Participants are responsible for the flights from Hue to Hanoi and from Hanoi to HCMC (~ US\$150). The tour will be an excellent way to learn more about Vietnamese Buddhism, especially women's roles and achievements. Accommodations will be in Buddhist temples and cuisine will be Vietnamese vegetarian. Participants may return to HCMC on January 11th or stay longer in Hanoi, as they like. Look forward to seeing you in Vietnam!

from the Co-coordinators, Sakyadhita Conference in Vietnam

Sangha

Ajahn Ariyasilo will be residing and teaching at the BSV until the end of April 2010, except for a month in Brisbane between 24th November and 22nd December 2009. Fortune is smiling on us.

We would like to express our gratitude to Ajahn Ariyasilo for offering us extra opportunities to develop our practice during the Vassa. The Sutta discussions, the last of which was held on Sunday afternoon, 11th October, were well attended and the Suttas discussed were of great interest and usefulness. Ajahn’s leading of meditation days and afternoons were also much appreciated.

Retreats

Ajahn Dtun will conduct a 10 day retreat at coastal ‘*Forest Lodge*’ in Anglesea during 12th to 21st March 2010 (application forms will be made available on our website). Ajahn Dtun is from Wat Boonyawad in Thailand and he has visited Melbourne many times previously and has conducted 9 days of other events & retreats.

Ajahn Succitto will lead a retreat at the Buddhāloka Centre (East Malvern). The details are yet to be finalized, but tentative dates are 26th November to 5th December.

Ajahn Sumedho is due to arrive in Melbourne in mid-December. He will stay at the BSV vihara on the night of December 16th and will give a public talk that evening at Monash religious centre. We will ask for donations to cover the cost of hiring the hall and will sell books and make DVDs available and encourage donations for those. The hall has been booked and for 6.30 pm to 10.30 pm.

Sayadaw U Lakkhana will lead a meditation retreat at Healesville from 10th to 16th December. The program is flexible and allows attendees to join in for 6 days/nights, 3 days/nights or 2 days/nights (program details, cost and application form are available from the web site, www.bsv.net.au). See the notice elsewhere in this newsletter edition.

Vesak 2009 / 2552



Public Talk at Monash Uni, Clayton



‘Overflow’ crowd in the new upstairs library



Book sales, plus our librarian (Yasmin Moore)



Books for free distribution

The Buddhist Society of Victoria
(www.bsv.net.au)
and
Dhamma Sukha Meditation Centre
(www.dhammasukha.org.au)

announce

a Meditation Retreat with the Burmese
monk **Sayadaw U Lakkhana**

6 days/nights: Thursday 10th to
Wednesday 16th December 2009:
\$410.00

3 days/nights : commencing 10th or 13th
December: \$210.00

2 days/nights: \$150.00

Members receive a discount (\$390, \$200
and \$140 respectively)

at

Maitripa Contemplative Centre
528 Myers Creek Road, Healesville
3777

(Melways Map Ref: 270 C1)

*It is suggested that beginner meditators who
wish to attend a short retreat, do so for the first
two or three days of the retreat.*

Contact: Gary Dellora, email.
g.b.dellora@bigpond.com

Application forms can be downloaded from:
www.bsv.net.au or www.dhammasukha.org.au

An experienced yogi at Sayadaw's last Healesville retreat said it was the best presentation of the Mahasi Sayadaw Burmese satipatthana Vipassana system of meditation she had met. A common comment was how quiet, calm and peaceful the whole retreat was - a reflection of the clarity and conciseness of instruction which motivated all. At the retreat start, and at each evening's Dhamma talk, yogis are progressively and clearly guided through the method so that many questions are automatically answered, so one is sure one is on the right track. At the finish we were each given an MP3 of the entire retreat's teachings for future reference. We are indeed fortunate once again to not only have access to such a senior teacher of a pure lineage, but also such an able translator/practitioner who can put into perfect English these high teachings. Teachers are aging, so are we, and Burma is not easy to get to! Grab this chance! Shoot for the fruit!...-or in Pali: "*magga phala nana*"!

from Committee member Gary Dellora

Sunday Forum

Is an interactive discussion session on topics of common interest lead by lay speakers. And will be held from time to time on Sundays at the BSV Library and the sessions are expected to go for about an hour starting at 12.30 p.m. For this year we have planned two sessions in November on the 1st and 15th Sundays and will have more sessions in 2010.

1st November '*The nature of Emotions & Techniques for Managing Negative Emotions: A Buddhist Perspective*' (*There is No Lotus without Cow Dung*)

15th November '*The place of Body in Emotional Experience & Meditative Insights*'

(With the use of material from the Suttas & recent research) by **Professor Padmasiri de Silva**. (interactive philosophical sessions lead by **Professor Padmasiri de Silva**)

from Secretary Sarath Weerakoon

From the Committee

Annual Membership fees – The Committee has decided that annual membership fees shall remain unchanged since last year.

Car Park Gate – Work on the top bar of the car park gate has been completed and the gate is now is fully functional.

Food Fair – The recent Food Fair made a surplus of nearly \$5000 (an approximate figure is indicated as the receipts to date amount to \$5094 from which certain minor expenses are to be paid off / claims to be received).

Interfaith Gathering - Committee members Padmini Perera and Cora Thomas represented the BSV at an interfaith gathering in the St Kilda town hall organized by the Prahran City Mission on Friday, 9th October last. The religions represented were Judaism, Christianity, Hari Krishna, Ba’hai and Buddhism. A minister from the Uniting Church presented the Christian message in mime; he was struggling to gain freedom from chains which constricted his hands and after a series of failures and much suffering, he found the true way and path and the chains fell off. It was easy for Padmini and I, who followed this stage enactment with a small presentation, to draw parallels as well as differences with the Christian spiritual message. We both decided that it was a worthy forum to attend so that Buddhism could have a voice.

Victorian Multicultural Commission Application - Response was received from the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) stating that our application for a Building & Facilities Improvement grant has not been successful as it did not fit in to the VMC priority criteria this time. However the VMC expressed appreciation of activities at the BSV and has requested the society send in applications in other future grants programs.

Working Bee at BSV

We will be having a working bee on Sunday the **8th November** after the morning session. The working bee is planned in order to clear up some unwanted items that are to be carried on to the nature strip ahead of Hard Rubbish day. Please join and give a helping hand.

Pali for Daily Reflection

A Pali Word a Day by the Mahindarama Sunday Pali School is a publication of the Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc. It aims to

assist new Buddhist students who are unfamiliar with some of the Pali words often used in Buddhism. An example excerpt follows –

Adiṭṭhāna – ... *decision, resolution, aspiration, self-determination, will*

Different to a vow, determination is based on wisdom, compassion and selflessness, and not promises that we have to pay back later.

It is also the key virtue required to achieve our spiritual path. Thru a strong determination one perfects his *pāramīs*.

Buddhists like to make their aspiration at the *Bodhi* Tree. Just like the *Bodhisatta* Gotama did before He attained His Enlightenment, we make our *adiṭṭhāna* by reciting,

“By the power of the merits that I have accumulated, may I ...”

Whenever one does a good deed, such as *dāna*, one should make an aspiration:

“May this dāna of mine be a condition for me to learn, practise and realize the Truth until I attain Nibbāna”

extracted from A Pali Word a Day – A selection of Pali Words for Daily Reflection pub. Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc, email <bdea@buddhanet.net>

New Members

The following new members are welcomed to the Society –

Padmasiri & Padmini Herath

Gregory Langbridge

Gyeong Hyong (Emma) Song

Asoka Wettasinghe

We hope they find that the Society is of real assistance in aiding their understanding of the Dhamma and of the value in permitting the Dhamma to guide our daily lives.

The person who gathers flowers (of sexual pleasure), whose mind is entangled and who is insatiate in desires, is overpowered by death.

Dhammapada 48

The *Dhammapada* ('Words of Truth') is a collection of 423 verses in Pali, uttered by the Buddha on some 305 occasions for the benefit of all. The stories about the circumstances in which the verses were uttered were added by the commentator Buddhagosa in the 5th century CE. It is generally believed that most of these stories associated with each *Dhammapada* verse have been handed down orally for generations since the days of the Buddha. The Buddha's teachings were not committed to writing until more than 400 years after his *Mahā Parinibbāna* (passing away).

Copies of the *Dhammapada* are available for loan or purchase from the library. We have also received many boxes of books for free distribution from *The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation* of Taiwan,

including copies of the *Dhammapada*. Contact our librarian, Yasmin, if you'd like a copy.

As a bee without harming the flower, its colour or scent, flies away, collecting only the honey, even so should the sage wander in the village (without affecting the faith and generosity or wealth of the villagers).

Dhammapada 49

This edition of *Buddhāloka* was edited by David Cheal. The views contained within do not necessarily reflect those of the Buddhist Society of Victoria. We welcome member contributions to the newsletter of the Society. These may include news of events, personal news, accounts of trips or retreats, happenings around the temple or comment on Buddhism as it unfolds in Australia or elsewhere. If you would like to make a contribution, please leave it in the library at the BSV or email it to the Society. Electronic contributions on disk or CD are particularly easy to incorporate, but typed or hand-written contributions are also welcome. The Newsletter is published quarterly. Deadlines for contributions are the end of the first weeks in July, October, January and April.

News from Ajahn Thanasanti ...

Ajahn has moved back to the United States and is committed to establishing a new monastic community - **Awakening Truth**. Details of how to find out more about **Awakening Truth** and to contact Ajahn are at the end of this notice.

Some excerpts from a recent letter from Ajahn Thanasanti ...

Awakening Truth will embody a vision that includes:

- *Creating training places for women monastics,*
- *Developing a community of like-minded people committed to Awakening,*
- *Practising and sharing the teachings of the Buddha in ways that both embody essential meaning and are relevant to contemporary society,*
- *Embodying for the wider community a lifestyle of ethics, compassion and renunciation appropriate to the level of commitment one undertakes,*
- *Continuing to investigate ways essential Buddhist principles take form in modern society,*
 - *Living with ecological awareness and respect for nature.*



The sisters who are part of the Saranaloka project have received the go-ahead, so they are also looking forward to coming and their project unfolding in the USA. It is a potent time of change and transformation, everywhere. For me I see it as a time to return to fundamental principles and allow forms to emerge that support our deepest aspirations.

.....

Many of you have been in contact and offered your good wishes and support in this transition and in this new endeavour. It has meant a lot, even if I haven't been able to respond to each of you.

For those of you who are interested in knowing more, participating or getting regular updates you are welcome to contact info@awakeningtruth.org

Love, Thanasanti

www.awakeningtruth.org

Colonel Olcott and the Buddhist Revival in Sri Lanka (4)

The progress made by the Buddhist educational movement in its early years, in the face of these numerous drawbacks was indeed remarkable. On 13th February 1881, the first Buddhist Sunday school was started at the Society's premises in Maliban Street. From May that year, C.W. Leadbeater, who had come to Sri Lanka with Olcott, was in charge of the Sunday school. On 1st November 1886, the same school in Pettah was converted into the Pettah Buddhist English School, which later became Ananda College. The school started with 37 pupils with Leadbeater as honorary head master. It is significant of the conditions of the times that at the public meeting held on 23rd October 1886 to inaugurate this venture, the invitations sent out contained words prominently printed in Sinhala to the effect that "*on this occasion no collection whatsoever will be made.*" Leadbeater records that on the memorable Sunday, just before school was started, *kiribath* and other delicacies were served. In the first year the Buddhist English School earned the very handsome grant-in-aid of Rs.359. By 1899 there were 194 Buddhist schools with 15490 children and of these 92 had been registered. At that time the Roman Catholics had 30425 children in their schools, the Wesleyans 22808 and the Church Missionary Society (Anglican) 14110. The grant received by the Buddhists was Rs.27430, while the expenditure incurred by the B.T.S. was Rs.34000, in addition to Rs.15000 spent by local managers and local committees.

Mention must be made, with due respect and gratitude, to early workers who gave of their best in the cause which brought them no glory or power, but only the satisfaction of having done their duty by their religion and their country. It would be impossible to give anything like a complete list. Some names have already been mentioned. But in the annals of the Buddhist educational movement, when its early career comes to be adequately recorded, tribute must surely be paid to other giants as well, like J.W.Bowles-Daly and Marie Musaeus Higgins, pioneers of Buddhist education in Ceylon; A.E. Bultjens, most distinguished alumnus of that very distinguished school, St. Thomas College; Dharmapala, missionary and fire-eater, yet the hardest working of the early workers, indefatigable, indomitable, nationalist, the value of whose services in numerous fields of activity, we have not fully recognized; Andrew Perera, B.T.S.'s first president; Muhandiram Dharma Gunawardena; John R. de Silva, secretary of the Buddhist Defence Committee; William de Abrew, Harry Dias, J. Munasinghe, C. Don Bastian and last, but not the least, C. P. Gunawardene, most lovable and self-effacing of men. None knew how much the Society owed its success to him, especially in its darker days when its very existence was threatened.

Olcott was in many ways eminently suited to lead the Buddhists of Sri Lanka. He was a distinguished scholar who had at one time been offered the chair of Scientific Agriculture by the University of Athens. He had served on the staff of a leading American newspaper as a journalist. On the outbreak of the

(American) Civil War he had joined the Northern army as an officer, and had a brilliant military record. His ability and integrity had been recognized and he had been appointed special commissioner for the War Department as well. Back in civilian life he had been called to the Bar and had built up a lucrative practice. He and Madame Blavatsky had already founded the Theosophical Society. The Buddhists in Sri Lanka could have found no better champion of their cause.

Before Olcott said goodbye to Sri Lanka he was able to see the fulfilment of the hopes he had had on the eve of his first landing on these shores. Of the many facets of his work, his achievement in the sphere of education is the brightest. There were when he left Sri Lanka, three first-class Buddhist colleges and two hundred schools to the credit of his movement.

Momentous indeed were the results of Olcott's visit, and in the old *Diary Leaves* he reviewed for posterity his contribution in the following words. "*For now we see the splendid harvest that has come from the sowing of the seed, schools springing up everywhere, 20000 Buddhist children rescued from hostile religious teachers, religion reviving, and the prospect brightening every year.*"

by M. P. Amarasuriya, Wheel no. 281, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy (1981)

Anger Management: A Buddhist Perspective

How could we forget those ancient myths that stand at the beginning of all races - the myths about the dragons that are at the last moment transformed into a princess? Perhaps all the dragons in our lives are only princesses waiting for us to act, just once, with beauty and courage. Perhaps everything that frightens us is, in its deepest essence, something helpless that wants our love.

So you must not be frightened if a sadness rises before you larger than you've ever seen, if an anxiety like light and shadows moves over your hands and everything that you do. You must realize that something has happened to you; that life has not forgotten you; it holds you in your hands and not let you fall. Why do you want to shut out of your life any uneasiness, any miseries or depression? For after all, you do not know what work these conditions are doing inside you. Rainer Maria Rilke, (1984)

Most people live, whether physically, intellectually or morally, in a very restricted circle of their potential being. They make use of a very small portion of their possible consciousness. We all have reservoirs of life to draw upon, of which we do not dream. William James (1962,).

NATURE OF ANGER AND PATHWAYS OF MANAGEMENT: INTRODUCTION

A recent analysis of anger management observes:

All of us get angry- although some people might not believe this. Anger is an emotion that can occur when there is a threat to our self-esteem, our bodies, our property, our ways of seeing the world, or our desires. People differ in what makes them angry. Some people will perceive an event as threatening, while others see no threat in the same event. Our responses to anger differ greatly. Some people are able to experience angry feeling and use them as a way of solving problems rationally and effectively. Others turn their anger inward and engage in self-destructive behavior. Other people strike out when they feel angry. And some refuse to acknowledge their anger—or they confuse with other emotions such as vulnerability or fear (Lehmann, 2006).

There may be multi-faceted reasons for getting angry but anger is suffering (*dukkha*) and as a state of mind, anger can affect our health and well-being. Recent discoveries in medicine and health indicate that anger, hostility, anxiety, repression and denial can affect the strength of the immune system and the robustness of our cardiovascular system, where as calm, optimism, joy and loving kindness are beneficial to our well-being. At the ethical level, anger is a *kilesa* (defilement) and is a road block on the path to

liberation and it emerges as *vyapada* (ill-will), one of the five hindrances. At the social level, anger generates conflicts and when this state deteriorates, there is confrontation and violence. Anger according to the *suttas* lie dormant—"the sleeping passions" (*patigha anusaya*) and this may emerge at the level of our thoughts or physical activity. Even a baby boy lying in the cot is attached to the body and has a proclivity to generate anger by sounds and physical expression.

We tend to ignore the simple fact that the origin of violence is in anger. The Buddha showed how anger can be very counter-productive, and he said getting angry with another person is like lighting a fire which burns within oneself and it harms oneself more than the other person. Repentance and guilt, as well as humiliation and punishment may follow what one does in an angry frame of mind. Anger also may be rooted in bias and prejudice and thus an inability to look at an issue with openness and impartiality. Though there may be a point in anger at an injustice (moral anger/righteous indignation), such anger rests on the fence between the wholesome and the unwholesome and at any time deteriorate into violence—history has proved this point in struggles against injustice. While moral silence at injustice, moral deafness at injustice (lack of sensitivity) are unwholesome, the response to injustice needs to take a positive and mature path

If anger is suffering, it is necessary to understand the causes of anger and the unhealthy and healthy ways of managing anger.

As I have mentioned in an earlier study, in the sermons of the Buddha, there are number of ways of dealing with negative emotions: Taking precautions through *restraint*; *abandoning* them once they have emerged, not leaving room for them to emerge in the future, develop positive emotions and stabilize the positive emotions once they have emerged; *remedying* them by *antidotes like loving kindness and forgiveness*; *transforming anger to endurance* and *understanding their true nature through insight* (de Silva, 2005).

Transformation of negative emotions like anger into positive insights and positive personality qualities is what Carl Jung called 'emotional alchemy', converting brass into gold. In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition this process is described through the metaphor of the peacock, though she eats poison, it is transformed into a spectacle of varied colourful feathers. In Buddhism, though we consider anger as a defilement (*kilesa*) at the level of the *sila*, at the level of insight meditation, anger is considered as just phenomena or *dhamma* that 'emerge, stay for a while and pass away'. At this level it is neither good nor bad, neither yours nor mine, it is an impersonal process. At the meditative level whether it is *samatha* or *vipassana*, anger emerges as *vyapada*. It can emerge in a subtle way, when one reacts to the fact that "today the meditation is not working well". One should shift gears into the impersonal mood (without personalizing), develop patience and persistence, generate energy but just let the process develop with its own momentum. Even in the emergence of boredom in meditation, there is a subtle form of anger. Anger in such contexts is a form of 'reactivity'. Refraining from identifying oneself with anger is referred to as de-centering in mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (de Silva, 2008).

Thus we do not throw away the anger, jealousy and remorse but convert them into positives without being imprisoned in negativities. The Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh has captured this transformation in a beautiful phrase: "No lotus without cow dung"!

A technique, I used in my clinical practice is based on the use of the "componential theory" of emotions, breaking an emotion like anger, fear and sadness into different facets and taking these aspects one by one: **the body, feelings, thoughts, desires and social contexts**. I also use the framework of the *satipatthana* in working on emotions. The initial obstructions come from those who refuse to acknowledge the presence of anger, those who repress them, find escape routes, react to them without knowing that this is occurring and use various types of 'defence mechanisms' (a concept introduced by Sigmund Freud). Those who are subject to moral anger and describe it as 'righteous indignation' add another layer to the negativities of anger, as they have found a way of justifying anger. Freud would refer to this feature as 'rationalization'. Other relevant defence mechanism linked to anger are repression, identification, reaction formation, projection (of responsibility on others), while sublimation may take a wholesome

turn, converting the energy of anger to a positive turn: a boy who is angry at the extremely unexpected failure at an examination may take to music or sports, like channelling a river that floods for cultivation.

Acceptance and seeing their anger with clarity is the first step in a sound therapeutic approach. Self-deceptions, facades, rationalizations and worst of all denying responsibility are the initial targets of awareness on the road toward recovery. Such deceptions prevent one from seeing one's true nature, and this condition is described as a state of self-alienation and lack of authenticity or sincerity in one's being. The Buddha advised Rahula to consider his mind as a mirror, and that is the path to self-knowledge.

THE EMOTION PROFILE OF ANGER

First let us look at the emotion profile of anger and then explore ways of managing anger. Simple anger is a reflex of reacting when something obstructs our plans; for example we kick the ground in a mood of frustration. Anger proper is based on a belief that there is an offence committed to oneself and the desire to set the offence right or retaliate. Indignation is the anger over a moral principle we cherish, like not keeping to a promise and violating the essential ingredient of a good friendship or on a more objective scale, seeing the injustice done to an innocent man, whose cheap labour is exploited. If you look at the range of angry feelings, there is a whole range from slight annoyance to rage; sulking is passive anger; exasperation is outliving one's patience. Revenge takes time for reflection and holding a grudge is long-standing resentment.

Hatred compared with anger is an enduring, and intense feeling. It is also a cumulative condition, and also may go underground till it comes out or becomes distorted into forms like sarcasm and cynicism. Anger may take a superiority stance, feelings like disgust and contempt towards the hated person. Hatred is more a disposition or an emotional attitude than a moving emotion. Anger also becomes blended with other emotions like fear and suspiciousness.

Envy and jealousy are blend emotions but depending for their existence on anger. Malicious envy is unjustified hatred directed towards some one's good fortune, and also to pray that this good fortune collapses, even if one does not get it. Admiration envy is different—it is the desire to emulate others. Jealousy is a blend emotion with the flavour of anger: fear of losing something one cherishes, like one's girl friend; shame, as one's self-image is being threatened by a third party; sadness, as we are losing something closer to our heart; ambivalence-love and hatred towards your girl friend or beloved. Another subtle inroad of anger into an emotion is in boredom. It is because of this all pervading quality of anger, that some one compared anger to the quality of salt while cooking a curry, as almost all negative emotions have the flavour of anger or a more subtle form of aversion. Aversion (*dosa*) is found in boredom, pathological sadness/depression, and is a quiet partner in the pathologies of greed and of course in sadism and masochism.

There is a subtle form of anger which lies at the bottom of general depressive moods, strange enough among affluent people—and this theme is the subject of a lively television drama by Alan de Bottom, *Status Anxiety*: it is a restlessness in the midst of plenty, and emerges specially in a society that overvalues external goods that generates envy and competition rather than compassion. He observes, “*it is a strange melancholy often haunting inhabitants of democracies in the midst of abundance*” (Bottom, 2004, pp. 52-53). Studies of the politics of emotion indicate that such emotions like envy coupled with pathological greed generate an epidemiology, that needs treatment, observed the philosopher Ameli Rorty.

One of the most powerful causes of immediate anger release is physical interference, and here the role of the body in anger is crucial but psychological insults of a denigrating nature may have a greater hold of the mind. We need some restraint at the level of verbal expression, as this is an immediate route for anger behaviour. Thoughts are more tangible and therapies like cognitive therapy focus on the thoughts. During recent times many therapeutic traditions in the west have integrated the contemplative approach to therapy focused on mindfulness. Mindfulness techniques may be focused on the body, specially breathing patterns, feelings, thoughts and desires.

Paul Ekman, perhaps the world's foremost exponent of emotion studies says that it is harder to be attentive and mindful when one is angry, but if we have cultivated mindfulness, it is possible to step back, and then it is possible exercise a choice as to how you may respond; for instance you may try to understand why and excuse the person who provoked you due to some stress of the person (Ekman, 2003, 73).

Also, we can be aware of negative techniques like stonewalling: "More often shown by men than women, in whom the stonewaller won't respond to his partner's emotions". Not communicating and registering silence may turn out to be a form of anger.

One of the western traditions using mindfulness techniques defines their practice: "*Consciously bringing awareness to you here-and-now experience with openness, interest and receptiveness*" (Harris, 2006).

The facets of mindfulness include:

- Living in the present; engaging fully in what you are doing rather than getting lost in thoughts; allowing your feelings to be what they are, letting them come and go rather than trying to control them. When we observe our private experiences in this manner even painful feelings appear to be less threatening and such practice may transform our relationship with painful feelings and thoughts. This is a transformative education of the emotions. The following verse has been displayed in the office room/living room of some of my clients who came for counselling:

The Guest House

*This human being is a guesthouse
Every morning is a new arrival
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
Some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
Who violently sweeps your house
Empty of it's furniture
Still treat each guest honourably.
He may be clearing you out
For some new delight.*

*The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
Meet them at the door laughing,
And invite them in.
Be grateful whoever comes, because each has been sent
As a guide from beyond*

(Rumi)

There is a kind of clarity that is precise and the direct experience of what comes and goes in our minds, our feelings, thoughts and also to some extent our bodily experience. We have a habit of pushing out of awareness what we dislike and repressing them or finding escape routes. There is also a method Krishnamurti used called "choiceless awareness", as described in the poem, "The Guest House", where the mind is able to open itself, and instantly know and recognize what is arising, and incessantly discern its true nature, non-conceptually by the mind., observe the flow of mental images and sensations just as they arise, without engaging in criticism or praise.

Also compassion, forgiveness, acceptance and openness add a new sense of space to the mind. This process, frees us from constantly judging others and oneself, with a whole range of categoricals, of what people ought and should do.

BUDDHISM & ANGER MANAGEMENT: THE SUBTLE INROADS OF AVERSION

The Buddhist discourses have a whole range of anger words: some of these terms are ill will (*vyapada*) is one of the hindrances, *kodha* (anger), annoyance (*upaghata*), malice (*upanaha*) and fret (*parilaha*). But *dosa* is one of the roots of all unwholesome states along with *lobha* (greed) and delusion (*moha*), and *dosa* refers to all states of aversion. It may be observed that fear, judgment and boredom are also forms of aversion: although we generally don't think of them as such, fear and judgment are all forms of aversion. When we examine them, we see that they are based on our dislike of some aspects of experience. With the mind full of dislike, full of wanting to separate or withdraw from our experience, it is difficult to explore the present moment in a state of discovery. Just as we react to physical pain we react to unpleasant psychological feelings and emotions. Thus it appears that anger or reactivity colours almost all negative emotions. But one of the problems as Joseph Goldstein points out is that often we are not aware as to what emotion is present and whether it is wholesome or unwholesome. In his book, *Insight Meditation*, Goldstein (1993) mentions a number of steps in the right direction:

- Firstly, as the emotions that appear in the mind have no clear boundaries and no definite sense of beginnings and endings, it is necessary to take care to recognize each emotion as it arises and to learn to distinguish among subtle differences.
- Secondly, as the negative emotions are unpleasant we do not acknowledge them, and clear recognition has to be followed by acceptance, as the emotions often do not emerge as a single emotion but in constellation, both of these skills are necessary.
- Thirdly, the most difficult thing to learn is to open ourselves to the whole range of feelings/emotions without identifying with them. Thus there is a point of paradox that a collection of negative emotions provide raw material for insight meditation.

Important thing first is to take responsibility for what emerges in the mind and body, change perspectives and as you move into deep meditation to cut through the chains of identification. The change from accepting responsibility for one's emotions and then shift to a process of disengaging from mechanisms of identification is one of the deepest shifts in the practice of insight meditation. In concluding this most insightful description and analysis of the transition from emotional bondage to emotional liberation, Goldstein says that the practice of *vipassana* can be a wonderful experience, as this gives us the power to observe our own mind.

Ven.Nyanaponika discussing the value of bare attention says that, "*The greater part of man-made suffering in the world comes not from deliberate wickedness as from ignorance, heedlessness, thoughtlessness, rashness and lack of self-control. Very often a single moment of mindfulness or wise reflection would have prevented a far-reaching sequence of misery or guilt*" (Nyanaponika, 1975, p. 39). Exercising the inner breaks of self-control and slowing help us to free ourselves from our constant reactivity to unpleasant situations and experiences.

MEDITATION TECHNIQUES

The term *samatha* refers to a state of mind which has been brought to a rest and is focused for instance on breathing and limited to that without allowing it to wander. It is a state of calm and clarity, which prepares the ground for gaining insight (*vipassana*). The insight meditator uses his concentration as a tool to deal with the encountering of illusory constructs, which prevent him from seeing reality. With the practice of insight meditation you gradually move away from thoughts of "me" and "mine", and see anger as an experience that emerge and cease. It is a process, which does not belong to you or me. This helps us to refrain from concealing anger, get obsessed with, rationalize it or for that matter even to escape. As venerable Nyanaponika points out, there is a twilight world of frustrated desires, suppressed resentments,

vacillations, ambivalence—all drawing nourishment from subliminal tendencies described by the pali term *anusaya*: at the level of negative emotions *patigha* (aversion), *raga* (lust) and *mana* (conceit) are important character traits out of seven *anusayas* (Nyanaponika, 1986, p. 7). Techniques of insight at a deeper level make us see anger as ‘construction’.

During regular meditation sittings, if these disturbing thoughts and feelings intrude, the method of naming and identifying negative feelings and emotions is a useful technique. We can also make them objects of meditation. The *Satipatthana* (Fourfold Mindfulness Practice) offers number of entry points to deal with anger: body and breath; feelings; thoughts. Anger as a negative emotion first manifest via the body and breathing patterns, then as painful feelings, and then with the admixture of thoughts, desires, memory etc we see a full-blown emotion. It is fed by the subliminal proclivity of aversion (*patigha anusaya*).

BODY & BREATHING IN ANGER

Breathing is controlled by the autonomic nervous system and so generally does not come within average consciousness, unless we develop awareness of the breath as a special exercise. The central nervous system functions when we receive and process messages and makes conscious choices. When we are stressed or experience sudden anger, breathing patterns change. Evolution has developed ways to manage ‘emergency reactions’ of flight (fear) and fight (anger), which may convey useful messages. But when the alarm bells ring, a celebrated boxer is supposed to have bitten his rival’s ear! Joseph Ledoux a neuroscientist working on such emergency reactions says that at that time the emotional brain hijacks the rational brain. According to him in impulsive reactions, the part of the brain called the *amygdala* is active and begins to respond before the *neocortex* processes the information and makes a finely tailored response.

The practice of regular mindfulness, observing the breath in quiet moments of meditation, helps the breathing patterns to get habituated into a rhythmical, quiet and steady flow, a pattern that is both healthy and wholesome. Thus instead of engaging in ‘damage control’ after developing a violent character, it is better to take preventive remedies by developing mindfulness as a routine activity in one’s daily agenda. *Anapanasati* when blended with compassion helps to reduce blood pressure, stress and tension, minimize the adrenal release, the dilation of the pupils, sweating, rapid respiration and in general irregular breathing patterns. Thus regular mindfulness practice is able to restore the even rhythms of our lives as a whole. As the breath stands at the threshold between voluntary and involuntary bodily functions, this practice helps us to be mindfulness of lot of our mechanical and automatic acts. The recent discoveries in *psychoneuro-immunology*: that the body is a second brain has added a new dimension to mindfulness of the body meditation. (work of Candace Pert, *Molecules of Emotion*); Joseph Ledoux, *The Emotional Brain*).

FEELINGS

As we are dealing with anger, I wish to direct attention to the role of feelings in emotional experience, for mindfulness of feelings (*vedananupassana*) provides a basic key to unravel crucial emotional issues:

This therefore, is a crucial point in the conditioned origin of Suffering, because it is at this point that **Feeling may give rise to passionate emotion of varying types**, and it is, therefore, here that one may be able to break that fatuous concatenation. If in receiving a sense impression, one is able to pause and stop at the phase of Feeling, and make it, in its first stage of manifestation, the object of Bare Attention, feeling will not be able to originate Craving or other passions. (Nyanaponika, 1975, p. 69).

The germinal sate of what later develops into an emotion with great speed is found in pleasurable, painful or neutral feelings. When experiencing a pleasurable feeling, the monk knows: “I experience a pleasurable feeling”, when experiencing a painful feeling, he knows “I experience a painful feeling”, and when experiencing a neutral feeling, he knows “I experience a neutral feeling”.

Pleasurable feelings have a tendency to rouse subliminal lust, and painful feelings to rouse subliminal aversion. So, if you just notice a pleasurable or a painful feeling without attachment or aversion you

prevent them from getting converted into lust, anger, fear etc. Three very important and interesting suttas shed further light on this issue: *Culavedalla sutta*, *Bahuvedeniya Sutta* and the *Salayatana vibhanga sutta* (Middlelength Sayings, 44, 59, 137).

Pleasurable feeling is pleasant when it persists and painful when it changes; painful feeling is painful when it persists but pleasurable when it changes. The *Bahuvedaniya sutta* analyses 108 types of feelings; *Salayatana vibhanga* 36 kinds of feeling;

- six kinds of joy based on household life;
- six kinds of joy based on renunciation;
- six kinds of grief based on household life;
- six kinds of grief based on renunciation;
- six kinds of equanimity based on household life and
- six kinds of equanimity based on renunciation.

THOUGHTS

“Herein a monk knows the mind with lust (raga), as with lust; the mind without lust (vitaraga) as without lust; the mind with hate (dosa) as with hate; the mind without hate (sadosa) as without hate; the mind with delusion (moha) as with delusion, the mind without delusion (samosa) as without delusion, and ...the shrunken mind, distracted mind, undeveloped etc

CONTEMPLATION OF MIND OBJECTS

When anger is present, he knows, anger is present. He knows how the arisen of non-arisen comes to be; he knows how the rejection of non-arisen anger comes to be, and he knows how the non-arising in the future of the rejected anger comes to be.

ANGER MANAGEMENT AND EQ

Today, exponents of emotional intelligence (EQ) point out that the way we handle emotions needs a special kind of intelligence. Daniel Goleman in his work, the best seller, *Emotional Intelligence* outlines the nature of the concept, and below is a Buddhist adaptation of his criteria.

- 1. The ability to access one’s own emotions, discriminate different emotions, and understand their nature.
- 2. Empathize and understand the emotions of others.
- 3 The ability to distinguish between morally wholesome and unwholesome emotions in one self and others.
- 4. The ability to regulate one’s emotions.
- 5. The ability to be motivated by healthy emotions.

In Buddhism emotional intelligence is supplemented by contemplative intelligence. Though ‘emotional intelligence’ is now recommended for training professionals, as well as being incorporated in a school curriculum, twenty six centuries back, the Buddha has provided a comprehensive theory and practice for the education of emotions, in life, liberation and therapy. Anger management is only one area of his skills in managing emotions without repression, deception and disguise (*vancaka dhamma*), escape and avoidance.

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from Professor Padmasiri de Silva

Activities at Sanghamittarama

Regular Program

Chanting and silent meditation - Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, 7:30 pm

Chanting, meditation with guidance and Dhamma teaching - Every Friday, 7:30pm

Sutta discussion - 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month from 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Meditation and Dhamma discussion for Young Adults (age 18-35) - July 4th and every following second Sunday, 6:15 pm

Dhamma teachings for Children (age 6-12) - Every last Sunday of the month, at 3:00pm, with Ayya Athapi

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- Tuesday** 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm Meditation for beginners & experienced meditators with Ajahn Ariyasilo
- Thursday** 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm Meditation for beginners & experienced meditators with Sayadaw U Pandita
 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm Dhamma talk for all by Sayadaw U Pandita
- Sunday** 8:30 am – 9:30 am Silent Meditation.
 9:30 am- 10:30 am Dhamma talk
 11.00 am Offering of dana to the Sangha followed by a shared meal. All are welcome to enjoy the food brought by members and friends. You may bring some food, as you wish.

The **Dhamma School** is held on Sundays from 9:30 am – 10:30 am during the school term.
 For enquiries contact Suzanne Palmer-Holton on 9776 4425

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