

# UNIVERSAL MEDITATION

Soe Win Htut

**THE PRACTICE &  
INSIGHTFUL  
KNOWLEDGE  
OF PURIFICATION,  
HAPPINESS,  
LIBERATION,  
PEACE AND  
HARMONY**

# UNIVERSAL MEDITATION

*The practice & insightful knowledge  
for purification, happiness, peace and harmony*

*Based on the teaching of  
ThaBarWa Sayadaw Ashin Ottamasara*

[www.thabarwa.org](http://www.thabarwa.org)

*Cover Design - Soe Win Htut*

*This book is from Dhamma Educational Publications  
of ThaBarWa Centre (ThanLyn) in 2015.*

**D** "Dhamma Educational Publications" **Y**  
*ThaBarWa Tayar Yeik Tar (ThaBarWa Centre)  
Between Kyaik Khauk Pagoda and TarWa University,  
Than Lyn township, Yangon, Myanmar.*

*In September 2015, published @ Lin Let Ein Press, 36th St  
(Upper Blk), Yangon, Myanmar, under the arrangement of  
"Dhamma Educational Publications".*

*This book presents the truth of the way of the end of physical  
and mental sufferings which is labelled as universal  
meditation in it according to the teaching of ThaBarWa  
Centre Sayadaw Ashin Ottamasara.*

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## Preface

This book is intended for those who want to be free from the mental defilements such as stress, miseries, worries, fear, jealousy, craving and hatred, which are the original causes of problems and conflicts in our lives. All over the world, everyone wants peace and harmony, internally and externally. So why does our world continue with problems, conflicts, miseries and wars? It is because we do not realize the original cause and the right way of ending of them.

Without practicing the universal meditation, everyone's mind is full of mental defilements. The mind with mental defilements cannot realize the truth, or the right means of problem-solving and right understanding. Without right understanding (right means of problem-solving), our actions, speech and solving ways tend to result in problems, conflicts and disharmony within ourselves and our environment, again and again.

For the true peace, happiness, harmony and freedom for oneself and our world, it is necessary for everyone to practice the universal meditation, regardless of religion, race or nationality.

**Soe Win Htut**

## Contents

- What is Universal Meditation?	6
- Why Everyone Should Practice Universal Meditation	8
- The Practice of Morality	9
- The Practice of Concentration	11
- The Practice of Right Understanding	14
- Understanding the Truth of <i>Dukkha</i>	23
- Understanding the Truth of Origin of <i>Dukkha</i> ,	37
Understanding Defilements	38
Understanding <i>Kamma</i>	42
- Understanding <i>Nibbana</i> , the Truth of the End of <i>Dukkha</i>	51
- How to Practice Universal Meditation	
for 15 minutes For Beginners.	70
- Guidelines for Universal Meditation	77
- Universal Centre and Universal Teacher	84

Note: Words in Italics are *Pali* words which the Buddha used.

## UNIVERSAL MEDITATION

Universal meditation is not just sitting on a cushion without moving. It is the three practices of morality, concentration and right understanding, which will purify all our wrong actions, speech, distractions, attitudes and views.

These three practices are universal because they are concerned with everyone, every race, every nationality and every religion. This is the path of purification, the middle way that brings realization of the original reality, which can result in true peace, happiness and the harmony of true nature.

There are Four Original Realities, the Four Noble Truths. Universal Meditation is the Truth of the Way of the End of *Dukkha*, stress. The universal meditation is the fourth of these Noble Truths, which brings realization of the first three.

The four noble truths are:

1. the Truth of *Dukkha*, stress.
2. the Truth of Origin of *d\Dukkha*,
3. the Truth of the End of *Dukkha*,
4. the Truth of the Way of the End of *Dukkha*.

The Universal meditation, the path of purification for actions, minds and views includes the following;

1. Right Understanding

2. Right Contemplation

(These are Wisdom factors, which will purify the wrong views)

3. Right Speech,

4. Right Action,

5. Right Livelihood

(These are Morality factors, which will purify wrong physical and verbal actions).

6. Right Effort

7. Right Mindfulness

8. Right Concentration

(These are Concentration factors, which will purify wrong attitudes, minds or thinking)

1 and 2 are the practice of **right understanding** (wisdom).

3, 4 and 5 are the practice of **morality**.

6, 7 and 8 factors are the practice of **concentration**.

## **WHY EVERYONE SHOULD PRACTICE UNIVERSAL MEDITATION**

There is no one who does not want peace, happiness, liberation and harmony. Everyone needs mental development and cultivation. Everyone is responsible to realize the universal truth, which will be eternally true regardless of time, situation, nationality, religion or region. The wise will never reject the benefits of cleaning the mental impurities and defilements such as worries, miseries, anxieties, agitation, hatred, animosity, jealousy, craving and delusion etc, which will surely be harmful to oneself and others.

Thus, everyone, every race, every nationality and every religion is concerned with the Universal Meditation, which means abstaining from bad deeds, doing good deeds, and purifying the mental impurities. It is the only way that will give rise to harmony and mental developments such as peace, happiness, tranquility and liberation. So everyone should practice universal meditation, which will result in realizing the Original truth or Ultimate truth, and will bring about universal peace, harmony, purification and liberation.

## THE PRACTICE OF MORALITY

Morality means abstaining from deeds that are harmful to yourself, others, and the environment. Without the practice of morality, which is universal, we cannot live peacefully, happily and harmoniously in our environment.

What are harmful deeds to yourself, others and your environment? There are five harmful deeds which will harm ourselves and our environment.

They are - 1) killing, 2)stealing, 3)sexual misconduct, 4) telling lies, abuses, gossip, and divisive speech to break others' good friendship and 5) taking intoxicants. Abstaining from these five harmful deeds is known as practicing five precepts (*Sila*).

If most of the people all over the world are doing these five harmful deeds widely, we cannot live peacefully and harmoniously in our environment.

We are wasting time by doing unnecessary deeds with unnecessary desires so we cannot give time for what we should do or wholesome deeds.

In order to discard the unnecessary desires and deeds, we should take eight precepts which includes the five precepts as well as

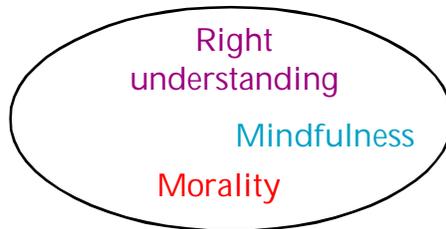
6) abstaining from eating after mid-day,

7) abstaining from dancing, singing, listening or playing music, going to see entertainment, using perfume, and beautifying the body.

8) abstaining from using luxuries or cozy beds.

We are committing harmful and unnecessary deeds endlessly on account of mental defilements such as craving, hatred and delusion.

In order to take precepts correctly and completely it is necessary to be free from the mental defilements.



Universal Meditation

## THE PRACTICE OF CONCENTRATION

The practice of concentration means being mindful continuously from moment to moment on the same object or different objects. The practice of concentration is just the practice of mindfulness.

Concentration does not refer to how long the mind can stay on one object, but to how often mindfulness arises at the present-moment happening of mind and body.

There are three factors included in the practice of concentration: right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

Right effort is the effort to be mindful or alert for developing mindfulness (attentive awareness). Right effort conditions right mindfulness. Right mindfulness gives rise to right concentration.

In the beginning, we choose the breathing as the object of mindfulness or attentive awareness.

While the breathing comes in, the mind needs to be mindful of it. While the breathing goes out, the mind needs to be mindful of it. At the moment of inhaling, it is necessary just to be aware of it. At the moment of exhaling, just be aware

of it.

It is important to understand that inhaling and exhaling are just to be used for developing mindfulness. There is no need to **attach and reject** to these actions.

In the beginning of the practice, mind needs to be mindful of the breathing as it is. Later, any present momentary happening in our mind and body such as pain, pleasure, thought, feeling, emotion, sensation, or desire can be used for developing mindfulness.

To develop mindfulness, we must make use of the six sense bases: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body skin and mind. These six sense bases will come in contact with their respective objects such as visual objects, sound, smell, taste, tangible objects and mental objects.

At the moment the eye sense base makes contact with a visible object, seeing consciousness appears and then disappears.

At the moment the ear sense base makes contact with a sound, hearing consciousness appears and then disappears.

At the moment the nose sense base comes in contact ... with a smell, smelling consciousness appears and then disappears.

At the moment the tongue sense base ... with a taste, tasting consciousness appears and then disappears.

At the moment the body sense base ... with tangible object, touching consciousness appears and disappears.

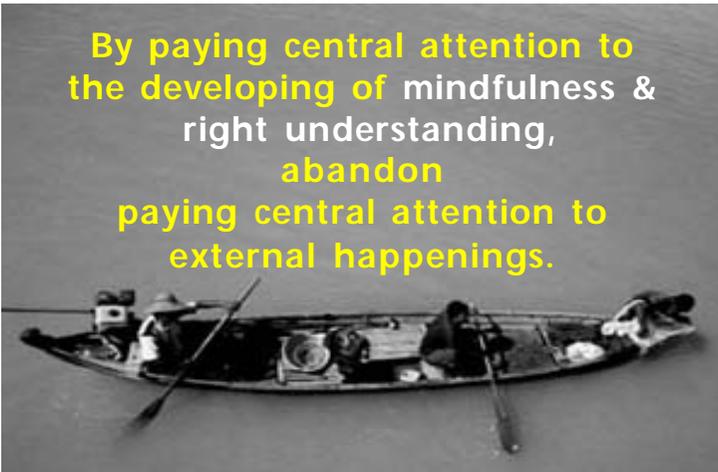
At the moment the mind sense base makes contact with a mental object (ideas or thoughts etc.) mind consciousness appears and then disappears.

Then, mental judgment of good or bad, right or wrong, pleasant or painful, likeable or dislikable, comfortable or uncomfortable, etc, will happen. According to mental judgment, feelings good or bad, will continue, and thus volitional action will happen endlessly.

Mindfulness should be on the present momentary happening such as feeling, mental judgment, volition and consciousness, according to the condition of contact of the sense organs with their respective objects.

Mindfulness should be on the natural happening. Mindfulness should be internal. Continuous mindfulness will condition right concentration.

**By paying central attention to  
the developing of mindfulness &  
right understanding,  
abandon  
paying central attention to  
external happenings.**



## THE PRACTICE OF RIGHT UNDERSTANDING

The practice of right understanding is intended to develop detachment power. The more there is right understanding, the less there will be attachment to created truths, or relative truth. The less attachment to the created truths, the greater the power of detachment will be, which will give rise to enlightenment.

The scope of right understanding is wide. It includes enlightenment and insightful understandings (knowledges). It knows correctly about the created truths as well as the original truths, or Four Noble Truths:

- 1) the truth of *Dukkha*, unsatisfactory nature
- 2) its causes,
- 3) its cessation, or *Nibbana* Nature and
- 4) the path to the cessation of *Dukkha*.

For the practice of right understanding, it is necessary to understand what is real as real, and what is unreal as unreal. Right understanding realizes the Created Truth as Created Truth and Original Truth as Original Truth. Right understanding knows right view as it is and wrong view as it is. It is without the false idea of something, someone, self or individual.

## WHAT IS CREATED TRUTH?

Something, everything, someone, everyone, individual, self, entity, I, you, and the mind and body that we currently know are Created Truths.

Something that is not always true depending on time, situation, mental judgment or relativity is Created Truth or Relative Truth. That which changes according to time, situation or mental creation, is Created Truth.

Dualistic nature – hotness/coldness, softness/tightness, hardness/softness, rising/falling, pain/pleasure, like/dislike, yin/yang, male/female, sick/healthy, young/old, life/death, near/far, long/short, black/white, which will change according to time, situation, mental relativity or mental judgment, is Created Truth or Relative Truth.

Thus, the impermanence of something such as life, breathing, sensation, feeling, thought, emotion etc, is just Created Truth as well. Created Truths are just conventional or relative. Created Truths are limited and imperfect. They do not really exist. Thus they will change according to time or situation and will not be true anymore when mental judgement changes.

Created truths appear to be true temporarily but will change after some period.

Created truths are not real but they seem to be real because of not knowing of the Original Truth, Ever-new Impermanent nature.

## THE TRUTH OF CREATED TRUTHS

Created truths are not true in comparison with the Original Truth, Ever-new Impermanent Nature, but their truth is constantly true in every moment.

The truth of Created Truths is that they are **just to be used-only, to be experienced-only, to be done-only and to be mindful-only.**

Created truths are neither to be rejected nor attached to with the misconception of them as reality, mine, yours, someone or something, because Created truths are not truly existing.

Created truths are not true but the truth of them is constantly true for any moment, any place, any religion, any race, any nationality or any universe.

## NOT THE SAME ONE FOR CONTINUOUS TIME

Let's see in one simile, the flame of a candle. Our eyes perceive that one single flame is existing for one hour or two hours above a wax rod.

That is not true. In reality, many heat energies or flames are renewing and being replaced at every moment. Heat energies, or flames, are renewing and vanishing consecutively and repeatedly due to the condition of support from the wax fuel.

So, it is not one single flame. One single flame is not existing even for one second. It is not something or one single

flame but the renewing and vanishing of heat energies at high speed. In reality, many heat energies appear and disappear rapidly within a second.

So are the happenings of pains, pleasures, feelings, sensations, seeing, hearings, smellings, knowing, thinkings etc. They are not lasting for a certain time but just the image of Ever-new Impermanent Nature but they appear to be existing for some period because of perceptual distortions. Our perception can never see the truth without the practice of the middle way, universal meditation, the way of seeing the truth.

## **RELATIVITY**

In our common perception, knowing or noting the pain as “pain” or pleasure as “pleasure” is just a perceptual distortion.

One who has experienced a very hot desert won't take sunny days of Kuala Lumpur as severe heat. But if one is from Canada, the weather of KL will be so hot for him.

A normal girl at the age of ten will take a punch from a boxer as severe pain, but a heavy\_weight boxer won't take the punch from that boxer with such the same intensity.

If you compare yourself with your neighbours, you think you're handsome or beautiful, but you won't take handsome or beautiful relative to the Hollywood stars such as Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt or Angelina Jolie.

In the same way, when identifying time as long or short, the mind will identify the time as long for the difficult or painful situation, but short for the pleasant situation, even though these two periods are equal.

If one has not had many experiences of chilli or spicy food, he will take these tastes as unpleasant, but if one has had many experiences of them, he will take it as pleasant taste.

**It is necessary to know correctly about the mental judgement of perceptual distortion.**

For another example, you drink half of a cup of sweet milk, and then you eat a spoon of sugar. Then, you drink the last half cup of milk. You will feel it is not so sweet as in the previous moment of tasting. The mind identifies the same degree of sweetness of milk differently at two different time intervals.

Mental identification or judgment of something, someone, somewhere, sometime, "good" or "bad", "pain" or "pleasure", "long" or "short", "ugly" or "beautiful", "hot" or "cold", "sweet" or "bitter", are just relative and unreal in comparison to **Original Truth, Ever-new Impermanent Nature.**

In order to attain the right insightful understanding, noting or ascribing "pain" as pain or "pleasure" as pleasure with the idea of reality is not complete.

In the insightful meditation or right understanding,

it is most important to realize that the mind judges “pain” as pain or “pleasure” as pleasure with the idea of reality because of Ignorance of the Original Truth, Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

The opposite natures, dualistic natures such as pain or pleasure, good or bad, and liking or disliking -etc, which we currently know are just Created Truths. They are just the image of Ever-new Impermanent Qualities.

Because of NOT understanding Ever-new Impermanent Nature as Ever-new Impermanent Nature, the misunderstanding of opposite or dualistic natures as reality will happen continuously.



***Grasping Makes Mind Unfree.  
Non-grasping Makes Mind Free.***

*Sayadaw Ashin Ottamasara*

## THE MIDDLE WAY

Universal Meditation should be known as the middle way, which is free from the two extremes: hatred (rejecting) and craving (attaching).

The middle way is neither rejecting nor attaching to the Created Truths. It is free from disliking (desire to reject) and liking (desire to attach). It is free from thinking the Created Truths as reality or real existence.

The middle way is “seeing-only”, “hearing-only”, “smelling-only”, “tasting-only”, “touching-only” and “thinking-only” without the wrong view of self, and without attachment. That means understanding of the truth, “to use-only”, “to know-only” and “to experience-only” about the Created Truths.

The middle way is just the practice of mindfulness, with the right understanding, which realizes Created Truth as Created Truth and Original Truth as Original Truth.

In order to follow the middle way correctly, it is necessary neither to reject nor attach to the Created Truths, and the mind should be free from thinking them as reality or real importance.

Mindfulness of the meditation object with the idea of an existence for a certain period is known as Concentration meditation (*Samatha*).

Noting “pain” as pain, “pleasure” as pleasure, “good” as good, and “bad” as bad with the idea of reality, will only

establish Concentration. Mindfulness without right contemplation is Concentration meditation. Mindfulness with right contemplation is Insight meditation, universal meditation.

## RIGHT CONTEMPLATION

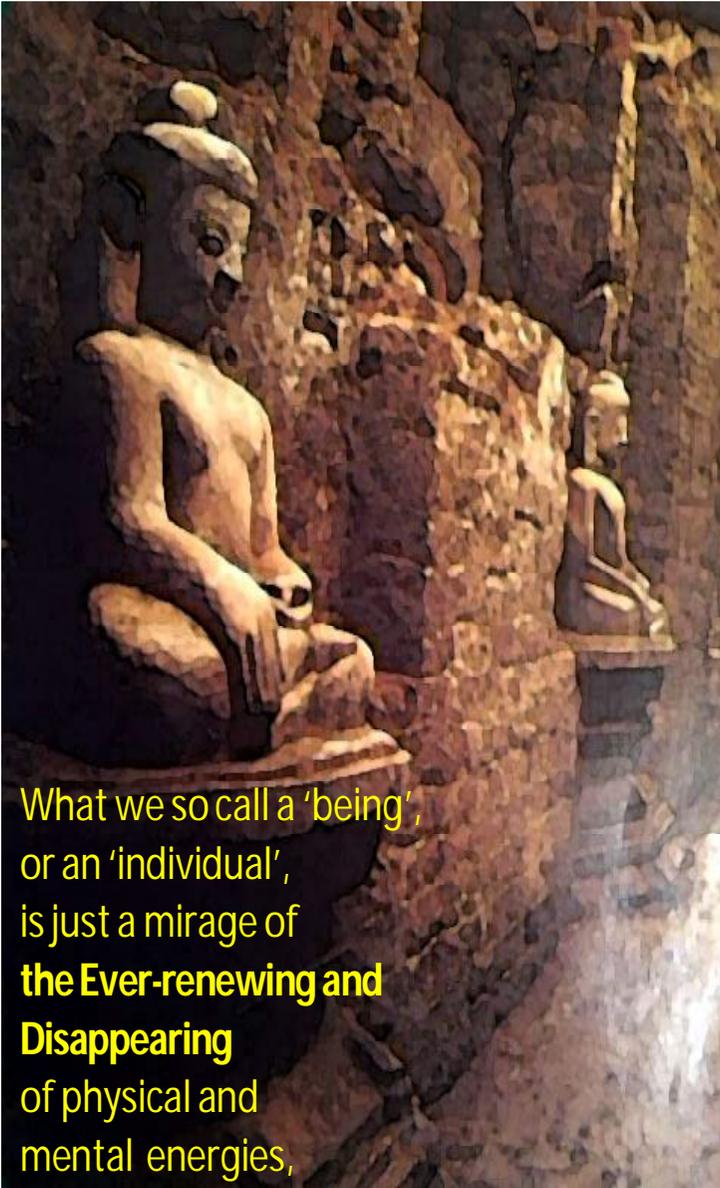
Right contemplation is contemplation of the Truth. It realizes both the Created Truth, what is unreal, and Original Truth, what is real.

There are two kinds of right contemplation. One is contemplation of the Created Truth as Created Truth, as we discussed in previous chapter. The other is contemplation of Original Truth as Original Truth, or what is truly happening.

It contemplates correctly -

- 1) the truth of *Dukkha*, unsatisfactory nature as it is and
- 2) its causes as they are.





What we so call a 'being',  
or an 'individual',  
is just a mirage of  
**the Ever-renewing and  
Disappearing**  
of physical and  
mental energies,

## UNDERSTANDING 'THE TRUTH OF DUKKHA'

Contemplating the truth of *Dukkha* correctly is the universal meditation which is the path of purification or liberation.

The truth of *Dukkha* is one of Original Truths. It is Ever-new Impermanent Nature, the Constant Arising and Disappearing of Physical & Mental Energies.

The truth of *Dukkha* is unsatisfactory nature because it is appearing and disappearing here and now constantly and eternally, regardless of time, situation, nationality, religion, race or cosmos.

The Truth of *Dukkha* is the first Noble Truth (*Dukkha-ariyasacca*).

It is true that the Pali word *Dukkha* in ordinary usage means 'suffering', 'pain', 'sorrow' or 'misery', as opposed to the word *Sukha* meaning 'happiness', 'comfort' or 'ease'. The term *Dukkha* as the First Noble Truth represents a deeper meaning.

The term *Dukkha* in the First Noble Truth contains the common meaning of 'suffering', but it also includes deeper

ideas such as 'imperfection', 'impermanence', 'unreliable', or 'unsatisfactoriness'.

Here this book explains the meaning of the truth of *Dukkha* is "Ever-new Impermanent Nature" or "the Constant Appearing and Disappearing of Physical and Mental Energies which are truly happening at every moment, regardless of time, situation, religion, nationality or individual.

Even calm spiritual states, awareness, concentration, happiness, as well as the state of pleasant feeling or zest in the practice of meditation, are included in *Dukkha* or unsatisfactory nature because they are 'impermanent and subject to change' according to time, situation or mental judgment.

Notice that the word *Dukkha* is explicitly used. It is *Dukkha*, not because there is 'suffering' in ordinary sense of the word, but because 'whatever is impermanent is *Dukkha*, unsatisfactory nature'.

When you see a pleasant, charming and beautiful person, you like him or her, you are attracted, you enjoy seeing that person again and again, you derive pleasure and satisfaction from that person. This is enjoyment. It is a fact of experience. But this enjoyment cannot stay forever. Just as that person and his or her attractions are not permanent either.

When the situation changes, when you cannot see that person, when you are deprived of this enjoyment, you

become sad. You may become unreasonable and unbalanced. You may even behave foolishly. This is the evil, unsatisfactory and dangerous side of the picture. This, too, is a fact of experience.

Now if you have no attachment to the person, if you are completely detached, that is freedom or liberation. From this it is evident that it is no question of pessimism or optimism, but that we must take account of the pleasure of life as well as of its pains and sorrows, and also of freedom from them, in order to understand life completely and objectively. Only then true liberation is possible.

The concept of *Dukkha* may be viewed from three aspects: (1) *Dukkha* as ordinary suffering (*dukkha-dukkha*), (2) *Dukkha* as produced by adaptation according to situation (*veparinama-dukkha*) and (3) *Dukkha* as ever-new impermanent nature conditioned on misunderstanding of self and attachment (*samkhara-dukkha*).

The first and second kinds of *Dukkha* are concerned with the Created Truths and the third kind of *Dukkha* is concerned with Original Truth, Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

All kinds of suffering in life such as births, aging, sickness, death, association with unpleasant persons and conditions, separation from beloved ones and pleasant conditions, not getting what one desires, grief, lamentation, distress - all such forms of physical and mental suffering,

which are universally accepted as suffering or pain, are included in *Dukkha* as ordinary suffering (*dukkha-dukkha*).

A situation of "hotness or coldness," "comfort or discomfort," "good or bad," and "pain or pleasure" etc, is not permanent, not everlasting. It changes sooner or later according to time, situation or mental judging. The body and mind are needed to adapt according to time and situation.

(e.g. The body needs to move after sitting for a long time. After long walking, the body needs to sit and rest. The body needs to wear a coat when it gets cold. When it gets hot, the body needs to make it cool. When hungry, the body needs to eat something. After eating, it needs to digest the food.)

If the body does not or cannot adapt according to the changing situation, there will be pain or discomfort. This type of suffering is called *viparinama-dukkha*, stressful nature which needs to be adapted according to the changing situation and is commonly known as to everyone.

This aspect of the suffering or unsatisfactory nature is popularly known because it is easy to understand. It is common experience in our daily life.

## DUKKHA IS FIVE AGGREGATES

But the third form of *Dukkha*, Ever-new Impermanent Nature which is continuously and constantly being conditioned(caused) by the **misunderstanding of self and attachment** (*samkhara-dukkha*) is the most important insightful aspect of the First Noble Truth. It requires some analytical explanation of what we consider as a 'being', as a 'self', as an 'individual', or as 'I'.

What we call a 'being', or an 'individual', or 'I', is only an illusive projection or mirage of **ever-renewing and disappearing** of physical and mental energies, which may be divided into five groups or aggregates. 'In short these five aggregates conditioned(caused) by attachment are *Dukkha*'.

Here it should be clearly understood that *Dukkha* and the Five Aggregates are not two different things; the Five Aggregates themselves are *Dukkha*, Ever-new Impermanent Nature. We should understand this point that the so-called 'being' or 'self' is **an illusive image** of the Five Aggregates, which is Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

Now, what are these five? **The first is the Aggregate of Physical Energies** which is **ever-renewing and vanishing**.

In this term 'Aggregate of Physical Energies' are included the traditional Four Great Elements or Energies,

namely, solidity, fluidity, heat and motion, and also the Derivatives (*upadaya-rupa*) of the Four Great Elements.

The term 'Derivatives of Four Great Elements' indicates our five material sense-organs, i.e., the faculties of eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body, and their corresponding objects in the external world, i.e., visible form, sound, odour, taste, and tangible things, and also thoughts, ideas or conceptions which are in the sphere of mind-objects. Thus the whole realm of physical energies, both internal and external, is included in the Aggregate of Physical Energies or Matter.

**The second is the Aggregate of Feelings, which is ever-renewing and vanishing.**

In this group are included all kinds of feeling, pleasant or unpleasant or neutral, experienced through the contact of physical and mental organs with the external world. They are of six kinds: the feelings experienced through the contact of the eye with visible forms, ear with sounds, nose with odour, tongue with taste, body with tangible objects, and mind with mind objects, or thoughts or ideas. All our physical and mental feelings or sensations are included in this group.

A word about what is meant by the term 'Mind' may be useful here. It should clearly be understood that mind is not eternal spirit, as opposed to matter, as accepted by most other systems of philosophies and religions. Mind is only a faculty or organ like the eye or the ear, which all are just the Ever-renewing and Disappearing Nature (Ever-new

Impermanent Nature).

Mind can be controlled and developed like any other faculty. We should understand the value of controlling and disciplining these six faculties. The difference between the eye and the mind as faculties is that the former senses the world of colours and visible forms, while the latter senses the world of ideas, thoughts and mental objects.

We experience different fields of the world with different senses. We cannot hear colours, but we can see them. Nor can we see sounds, but we can hear them.

Thus with our five physical sense-organs - eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body – we experience only the world of visible forms, sounds, odours, tastes and tangible objects. But these represent only a part of the world, not the whole world. What about ideas and thoughts? They are also a part of the world, but they cannot be sensed, or perceived by the faculty of the eye, ear, nose, tongue or body. They are perceived by another faculty, which is mind which is just the image of Ever-new Impermanent Nature. Now ideas and thoughts are not independent of the world experienced by these five physical sense faculties.

**The third Aggregate is that of Perceptions or Mental Judgment**, which is ever-renewing and vanishing.

Dependent on past experiences, Perception or Mental Judgment decides what is good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant. According to this mental judgment of good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant feelings are produced through the contact of our six faculties with the external world. It is the perception that recognizes and judges objects, whether physical or mental.

**The fourth Aggregate is that of Mental Formations (volitions),** which is ever-renewing and vanishing.

In this group are included all volitional activities, both good and bad, which are dependent on the **misunderstanding of self and attachment**. What is generally known as *kamma*, the potential that will result in *dukkha*, unsatisfactory nature at future. Dependent on good or bad feeling and attachment with the wrong idea of self, volition (*kamma*) arises again and again.

**The fifth Aggregate is that of Consciousness,** which is ever-renewing and vanishing.

Consciousness is a reation that has one of the six faculties (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind) as its basis, and one of the six corresponding external phenomena (visible form, sound, odour, taste, tangible things and mind-objects, i.e., an idea or thought) as its object.

For instance, visual consciousness has the eye as its basis and a visible form as its object. Mental consciousness

has the mind as its basis and a mental object, i.e., an idea or thought as its object. So consciousness is connected with other faculties. Thus, like feeling, perception and volition, consciousness also is of six kinds, in relation to six internal faculties and corresponding six external objects.

It should be clearly understood that consciousness does not recognize and judge an object. It is only awareness. There is no recognition or judging at this stage. The term 'visual consciousness' is a philosophical expression denoting the same meaning as the ordinary word 'seeing'. Seeing does not mean recognizing. The same applies to the other forms of consciousness as well.

In reality, there is no permanent, unchanging spirit that can be considered 'Self', or 'Soul', or 'Ego', as opposed to matter. Consciousness should not be taken as 'a spirit or an entity', existing for a certain period. This point has to be particularly emphasized because the idea of consciousness as a permanent self has persisted strongly from man's earliest history until today.

The wrong notion of **the appearing and disappearing process of consciousness** as Self or Soul, continuing as something permanent through life, has continued from the earliest time to present day.

One of the Buddha's own disciples held the view that 'It is the same consciousness that transmigrates and wanders

about.' The Buddha asked him what he meant by 'consciousness'. His reply is classical: 'It is the same one that which expresses, which feels, which experiences the results of good and bad deeds here and there'.

'To whomever, you stupid one', remonstrated the Buddha, 'have you heard me expounding the doctrine in this manner? Haven't I in many ways explained consciousness as arising out of conditions: that there is no arising of consciousness without conditions.'

The Buddha went on to explain consciousness in detail: 'Consciousness is named according to whatever condition through which it arises:

- on account of **eye and visible forms** arises a consciousness, and it is called visual consciousness;
- on account of **ear and sounds** arises a consciousness, and it is called auditory consciousness;
- on account of **nose and odour** arises a consciousness, and it is called olfactory consciousness;
- on account of **tongue and tastes** arises a consciousness, and it is called gustatory consciousness;
- on account of **body and tangible objects** arises a consciousness, and it is called tactile consciousness;
- on account of **mind and mind-objects** (ideas and thoughts) arises a consciousness, and it is called mental consciousness.'

Then the Buddha explained further by an illustration:

A fire is named according to the material on account of which it burns. A fire may burn on account of wood, and it is called wood-fire. It may burn on account of straw, and then it is called straw-fire. So consciousness is named according to the condition through which it arises.

Dwelling on this point, *Buddhaghosa*, the great commentator, explains: '... a fire that burns on account of wood burns only when there is a supply, but dies down in the very place when it (the supply) is no longer there, because then the condition has changed, but (the fire) does not cross over to splinters, etc., and become a splinter-fire and so on; even so the consciousness that arises on account of the eye and visible forms arises in that gate of sense organ (i.e., in the eye), only when there is the condition of the eye, visible forms, light and attention, but ceases then and there when it (the condition) has changed, but (the consciousness) does not cross over to the ear, etc., and become auditory consciousness and so on...!'

The Buddha declared that consciousness depends on matter (physical energies), sensation, perception and volitional action, and that it cannot exist independently from them.

Very briefly these are the Five Aggregates, which are appearing and disappearing constantly and continuously, according to conditions of previous Five Aggregates of attachment and wrong understanding of self.

A so-called 'being', 'individual', or 'I' is only a convenient name or label given to the combination of these five groups. They are all impermanent, all constantly disappearing, changing or renewing.

"Whatever impermanent is *Dukkha*. This is the true meaning of the Buddha's words: 'In brief the Five Aggregates of Attachment and Wrong View of self are *Dukkha*.'

They are not the same for two consecutive moments. Here 'A' is not equal to there 'A'. 'A' now is not equal to 'A' then. But they appear to be the same. They have the same qualities. The qualities of the first are similar to that of the second. They are in a flux of momentary arising and disappearing.

'It is like a mountain river, which has no single water drop that represents or stands for it. At every moment, the same water is not existing in a place because a new collection of water is arriving and passing away at every place along the river. So life is like a mountain river.'

'So-called living and non-living things are just the mirages of Ever-new Impermanent Nature or a continuous flux.'

Physical & Mental Energies appear & disappear constantly and continuously, each conditioning the arising of the next in a series. There is no unchanging substance or no same one in the series. There is nothing behind them that can be called a permanent Self, individual, entity or anything

that can in truly be called 'I'.

Neither matter, nor sensation, nor perception, nor any of those mental activities, nor consciousness, which is constantly and continuously renewing and disappearing, can be really taken as 'I' or 'soul'. But when these five physical and mental aggregates (qualities) are working together in combination as a physio-psychological machine, the wrong idea of 'I' or 'soul' appears.

But this is only a false idea, a mental formation, the idea of self (*sakkhaya-ditthi*).

Constant Appearing & Disappearing of Five Aggregates together, which is so-called a 'being' are *Dukkha*, unsatisfactory nature itself. There is no other 'being' or 'I' or 'self' standing behind these five aggregates that experiences *Dukkha*.

This in short is the meaning of the Noble Truth of *Dukkha*. It is extremely important to understand this First Noble Truth clearly because, as the Buddha says, 'he who sees *Dukkha* sees also the origin of *Dukkha*, sees also the cessation of *Dukkha*, and sees also the path leading to the cessation of *Dukkha*.'

Knowing of a situation with the false idea of 'self' or 'a being' aggravates and causes it troublesome and disagreeable.

What is necessary in a disagreeable situation is not anger or impatience or distraction, but the understanding of *Dukkha*, the unsatisfactory nature in the right way, 'how it

comes about', and 'how to get rid of it', and then to work accordingly with mindfulness, patience, right understanding and diligent effort.



*Sayadaw Ashin Ottamasara*

On account of wrong understanding of self or something for a certain period as reality, 'thirst' to attach or to reject arises.

## UNDERSTANDING 'THE TRUTH OF THE ORIGIN OF DUKKHA'

Right understanding (contemplation) means realizing the truth of the origin of *Dukkha* correctly. It is the Second Noble Truth "*Samudaya*", which is the origin of *Dukkha*, unsatisfactory nature, Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

Generally, we know the origin of *Dukkha*, is '**thirst or clinging**'. But we do not understand well the origin of thirst or clinging. Its origin is Ever-new Misunderstanding of something or someone as reality.

The origin of *Dukkha*, unsatisfactory nature, ever-new impermanent nature is -

**1) *Kilesa*, Mental Defilements and**  
**2) *Kamma*, Potential Power** that will result in *Dukkha* in future.

***Kamma*, Potential Power** that will result in *Dukkha* in future. arise on account of *Kilesa*, mental defilements. (Note: *Kamma* is translated as volitional actions by scholars as well,

because they will cause 'Potential Power that will result in *Dukkha*' in future.)

Ever-new Impermanent Nature, *Dukkha*, which is unsatisfactory nature arises, dependent on *Kamma*, volitional action, 'Potential Power that will result in *Dukkha*'. *Kamma*, volitional action conditioned by mental defilements of 'delusion and thirst' causes the birth of Ever-new Impermanent Nature, *Dukkha*, Unsatisfactory Nature.

## UNDERSTANDING DEFILEMENTS

Defilements are **the misunderstanding of self and the thirst to attach and reject.**

Understanding the defilements as defilements without the idea of mine, yours, individual or self is the right understanding, which is the most important role in universal meditation.

In Original Truth, except *Nibbana* nature, there is only Ever-New Impermanent Nature, which is the constantly arising and disappearing of physical and mental energies.

Misunderstanding of ever-new impermanent nature as something, someone, self or an existence for some period is mental defilement, which is the root of suffering, worries, and miseries.

Created Truths are not real but they appear to be real because of ignorance of the Original Truth, Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

Created Truths are not true constantly and they will change according to time or situation, but misunderstanding them as reality is constantly happening in mental nature.

Constant arising and vanishing of misunderstanding is one of Original Truths. Right understanding realizes the **misunderstanding** of the Created Truths as reality as it is.

**Misunderstanding** is constantly happening **until enlightenment**. Right understanding understands the misunderstanding as misunderstanding, the origin of mental defilements.

For example, if sadness arises, be mindful of it. Contemplate “the misunderstanding that the existence of sadness for some period is truly happening”. While any thing arising, be mindful to it and contemplate it.

When a problem arises in your mind, be mindful of that situation, and then understand that the problem appears in the mind because the mind takes it as a problem.

Paying central attention to Created truths with the false idea that they are reality or mine or yours, and with thirst to attach or reject them, causes problems, disharmony and miseries.

Continuous understanding **“the wrong identification of self or entity as reality”**, is the practice of right understanding.

The idea of self or entity or Created Truth as reality, and the thirst of attaching or rejecting it are mental defilements (*kilesa*).

The wrong understanding of Ever-new Impermanent Nature as individual, someone, something or existing for some period, gives rise to the thirst of attaching or rejecting.

**Misunderstanding Ever-new Impermanent Nature as something good gives rise to “the thirst to attach” or “the clinging”.**

**Misunderstanding Ever-new Impermanent nature as something bad gives rise to “the thirst to reject” or “aversion” or “fear”.**

Then, clinging to something good or bad appears. These are the defilements that are the roots of stress, fear, worries or miseries. Mental defilements, wrong understanding and thirst to attach or reject are the origin of *Dukkha*, Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

On account of the **wrong understanding** of self or something or an existence for a certain period as reality, the **thirst to attach or to reject** arises.

**The thirst** arises continuously on account of **the wrong understanding** of self or something as reality, out of ignorance of Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

All the troubles and conflicts in world, from little personal quarrels in families to great wars between nations and countries, arise out of the **selfish thirst** based on the wrong understanding of self or mine or yours or individual.

From this point of view, all economic, political and social problems are rooted in the **selfish thirst** based on ignorance of Ever-new Impermanent and selfless nature. Great statesmen who try to settle international disputes and talk of war and peace only in economic and political terms touch the superficialities, and never go deep into the real root of the problem.



**Any kind of thirst to cling and reject with misunderstanding of self will cause worries, fear, stress and miseries.**

## UNDERSTANDING *KAMMA*

*Kamma* means the **Potential Power** that will cause the effects in the future.

Mental defilements that are the **misunderstanding** Ever-new Impermanent Nature as self or something, and the **thirst** to attach or reject, give rise to *kamma*, the potential power that will cause the effects in the future.

The effect is nothing but Ever-new Impermanent Nature, which is the **constant appearing & disappearing** of physical and mental energies. But on account of not knowing the real effect, Ever-new Impermanent Nature, the relative results of "something good or bad", "feeling good or bad", "emotion good or bad", "hearing good or bad", and "tasting good or bad", etc, appear to be real and existing.

As long as there is the happening of mental defilements, *Kamma* that will result in *dukkha*, Ever-new Impermanent Nature, will happen continuously and constantly.

*Kamma* should also be understood as the **attentiveness (paying central attention)** of the mind with the wrong understanding of self or something as reality, and with the thirst to attach or reject it.

As long as there is *Kamma*, mental action of attentiveness (paying central attention) with misunderstanding and thirst, there is rebirth of Ever-new Impermanent Nature, which appears to be living beings or

non-living things.

Living beings or non-living things are merely the visible manifestations of Ever-new Impermanent Nature. They are dependent on this invisible *Kamma* force that appears from the conditions of **misunderstanding** of the Created Truths as reality and **thirst** to attach or reject them.

Rebirth and death of living being is just the beginning and end of a life process which is just the visible manifestation of Ever-New Impermanent Nature (constant arising and disappearing of physical and mental energies), which are being conditioned by *Kamma* forces through misunderstanding of self or something as reality and thirst to attach or reject.

Death is not the complete annihilation of so-called living beings. A life appears to be existing and ceasing because of ignorance of Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

Thus the terms 'thirst', 'volitional action' or '*kamma*' all denote the same thing: the Potential Power that will result in *Dukkha*, Ever-new Impermanent Nature, the flux of physical and mental energies. It appears to be so called 'a being' or 'an individual' or 'Self'.

The terms, "Ever-new Impermanent Nature", "the appearing and disappearing process of physical and mental energies", "the flux of Five Aggregates", or "Conditioned Arising" all denotes *Dukkha*, unsatisfactory nature.

Here is one of the most important and essential points in the right understanding. We must therefore clearly and carefully mark and remember that the cause, the germ, of the arising of *dukkha*, is within *dukkha* itself, and not outside; and we must equally well remember that the cause, the germ, of the cessation of *dukkha*, of the discarding of *dukkha*, is also within *dukkha* itself, and not outside.

Thus *dukkha* (the flux of Five Aggregates or Ever-new Impermanent Nature) has within itself the nature of its own arising, and has also within itself the nature of its own cessation.

Volition may relatively be good or bad, just as a desire may relatively be good or bad. So *kamma* may be good or bad relatively. Good *kamma* produces good effects, and bad *kamma* produces bad effects. 'Thirst', 'volition', '*kamma*', whether good or bad, has the potential to cause its effect to be continued in a good or bad direction in future.

**Whether good or bad we realize, it is just relative, and it is within the continuity of arising of Ever-new Impermanent Nature.**

Good or bad existence lasting for a certain period we understand currently, is just the "**projection**" of Constant appearing and disappearing of five aggregates, Ever-New Impermanent nature.

The theory of *kamma* is the theory of cause and effect,

of action and reaction; it is a natural law, or universal law which has nothing to do with the idea of justice or reward and punishment which arises out of the concept of a supreme being, a God.

Every volitional action, which are conditioned by mental defilements produces its results good or bad. The good or bad results that we currently understand are just relative.

If a good action produces good effects and a bad action bad effects that is merely the **visible manifestation** of Ever-New Impermanent Nature.

## UNDERSTANDING LIFE AND DEATH

In original reality, birth of a being is just a visible **projection** of a process of physical and mental forces (ever-new impermanent nature).

What we call 'death' is the total non-functioning of the physical body. Do all these mental energies and forces conditioned by "wrong understanding and thirst" stop altogether with the non-functioning of the body? 'Impossible' in reasoning as we can see clearly here and now the results of mental energies, forces and actions conditioned by "wrong understanding and thirst"

Will, volition, desire, thirst to be something, or thirst not be something with the idea of something or someone as reality, are tremendous forces which do not stop with the non-functioning of the body, the so-called death. Actually it

continues manifesting itself as Ever-New Impermanent Nature, which appears in the form of re-existence, or so-called rebirth.

Now, another question arises: If there is no permanent, unchanging entity or substance like Self or Soul, what is it that can re-exist or be reborn after death?

Before we go on to the subject of life after death, let us consider what this life is, and how it continues now. So-called "life", as we have so often repeated, is the Constant Appearing and Disappearing of physical and mental energies, the flux of Five Aggregates, which are dependent on **misunderstanding** of self and **thirst** to grasp or reject.

These Five Aggregates are constantly vanishing and renewing; they do not remain the same for two consecutive moments. Every moment they are born and they die.

As soon as the Five Aggregates, Ever-new Impermanent Nature, arise, they die. In every moment the so-called 'you' or 'someone', which is just Ever-new Impermanent Nature, is born, decays and dies.

Thus, even now during this life time, every moment the so-called 'I', only Ever-new Impermanent Nature, is born and dies, If we can understand this very life, the present momentary happening correctly, we can understand that the so-called 'life', which is just Ever-new Impermanent Nature

can continue without a permanent, unchanging entity like Self or Soul. Thus, why can't we understand that those forces themselves can continue without a Self or Soul behind them after the non-functioning of the body?

When this physical body is no longer capable of functioning, mental energies are not annihilated with it, but continue as Ever-new Impermanent Nature, taking some other visible shape or form, which we call another life or rebirth. In a child all the physical, mental and intellectual faculties and potential are tender and weak, but they will result in producing a full grown faculty and potential according to conditions of his experiences and efforts sooner or later along his present life.

Physical and mental faculties and potentials appear to be a so-called 'being', have the power to be developed by themselves within to take a new form and gather forces to result in full growth.

**As there is no permanent substance or self, nothing passes from one moment to the next.**

Nothing permanent or unchanging can pass or transmigrate from one life to the next. It is a series of physical and mental energies (the Five Aggregates) that continues consecutively, but renews in every moment.

It is like a flame that burns through the night: it is not the same flame nor is it another. No single flame nor the same one is existing for a certain period. It is just Ever-New

Impermanent Energies of heat which are appearing and disappearing, depending on the fuel of the wax.

Similarly, a child grows up to be a man of sixty. Certainly the man of sixty is not the same as the child sixty years ago, nor is he another person. No single person nor the same entity lives for sixty years. It is just **Ever-New Impermanent Nature, constant appearing and disappearing of Five Aggregates**, which are dependent on the wrong view of existence, clinging, nutrients and physical conditions.

A man who dies here and is reborn elsewhere is neither the same person, nor another. It is the continuity of a series of Ever-new Impermanent Nature, the constant arising and disappearing of physical & mental energies (the Five Aggregates).

The difference between death and birth is only a thought-moment: the last thought moment of this life conditions the first thought-moment in the so-called next life, which in fact, is the continuity of a series of physical and mental qualities.

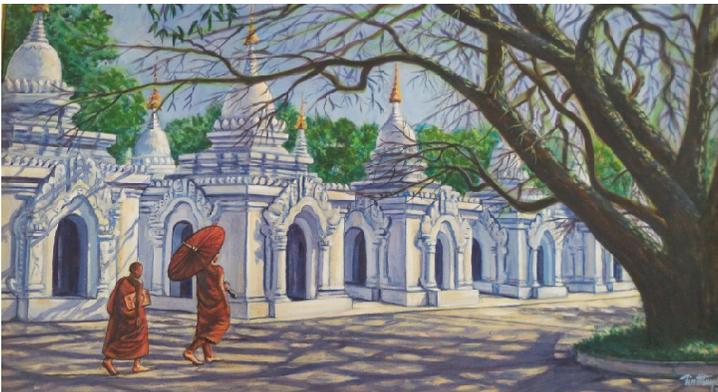
(Note: The power of clinging and delusion at the last thought-moment of this life will condition to arise the first thought-moment at a physical nature, which may be in a near or far distance).

During this very life itself, too, one thought-moment conditions the next thought-moment to arise consecutively.

So, from the view of original reality, the question of life after death is not a great mystery, and even a current life and coming death in our manifest vision is the illusive image of Ever-new Impermanent Nature, the process of physical and mental energies which are conditioned by **ignorance** of ever-new impermanent nature and **volitional actions of thirst** to attach or reject.

As long as there is this volitional action of 'thirst' to be or not to be, the vicious cycle of appearing and disappearing of Ever-new Impermanent Nature goes on.

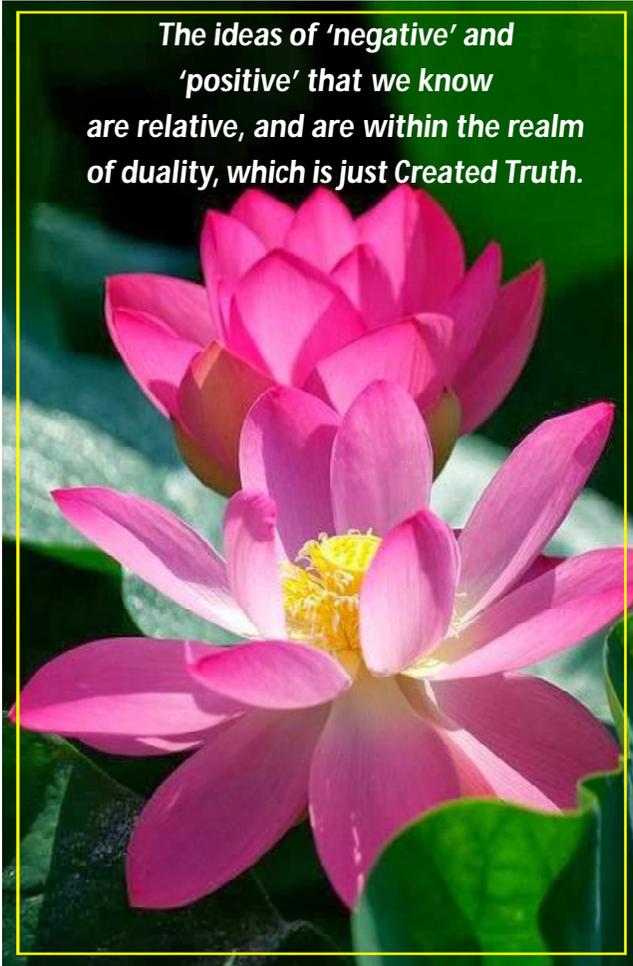
It can stop only when its driving force, this 'thirst' to attach or reject, is cut off through mindfulness with right understanding which realizes Original Impermanent Nature, *Dukkha* and Original Permanent Nature, *Nibbana*.



**Good or bad existence we understand currently, is just the "projection" of Ever-New Impermanent nature.**

***Kamma***, volitional action is the potential that is conditioned by misunderstanding of self and thirst to attach or reject.  
Action-only without misunderstanding & thirst leads beyond *Kamma* or *dukkha*.

***The ideas of 'negative' and 'positive' that we know are relative, and are within the realm of duality, which is just Created Truth.***



## UNDERSTANDING 'THE TRUTH OF CESSATION OF DUKKHA'

This Truth is the final goal of universal meditation, the middle way which is path of purification.

It can be realized by enlightenment.

In *Abhidhamma*, higher teachings of the Buddha in original reality, there are only three kinds of reality:

- (1) Physical energies (*Rupa*)
- (2) Mental energies (*Nama*)
- (3) Permanent Nature (*Nibbana*)

The first two are **Constant Impermanent Nature**, the Five Aggregates which are **conditional nature** described in the previous chapter, and the third one is **Only Permanent Nature**, which is **Unconditional Nature**.

The Third Noble Truth is that there is emancipation, liberation, or freedom from the continuity of *Dukkha*. This is called the Noble Truth of Cessation of *Dukkha*, which is *Nibbana*.

To eliminate *Dukkha* completely, it is necessary to eliminate the main root of *Dukkha*, which is 'thirst' with wrong

understanding of self, as we saw earlier. Therefore *Nibbana* is known also by the term 'Extinction of Thirst and Wrong Understanding'.

Now you might ask : But what is *Nibbana*? Volumes have been written in reply to this quite natural and simple question. The only reasonable reply to give to the question is that it can never be answered completely and satisfactorily in words, because human language is inadequate to express the true nature of the Original Truth or Ultimate Reality that is *Nibbana*. Language is created and used by masses of human beings to express things and ideas experienced by their sense organs and their mind. A supramundane experience like that of the Original Truth is not of such a category.

Therefore there cannot be words to express that experience, just as the fish had no words in his vocabulary to express the nature of solid land. The tortoise told to his friend (the fish) that he (tortoise) just returned to the lake after a walk on the land. 'Of course' the fish said, 'You mean swimming.' The tortoise try to explain the one couldn't swim on the land, that it was solid, and that one walked on it. But the fish insisted that there could be nothing like it, that it must be liquid like his lake, with waves, and that one must be able to dive and swim there.

Words are symbols representing things and ideas known to us; and these symbols do not and cannot convey the true nature of even ordinary things. Nevertheless we cannot

do without language. But if *Nibbana* is to be expressed and explained in positive terms, we are likely to immediately grasp an idea associated with those terms, which may be quite the contrary.

Therefore it is generally expressed in negative terms—a less dangerous mode perhaps. So it is often referred to by such negative terms as 'Extinction of Thirst', *Asamkhata*—'Unconditioned', *Viraga*—'Absence of thirst', *Nirodha*—'Cessation', *Nibbana*—'Extinction'.

Let us consider a few definitions and descriptions of *Nibbana* as found in the original Pali texts: 'It is the complete cessation of that very 'thirst', giving it up, renouncing it, emancipation from it, detachment from it.' 'Calming of all conditioned nature (Ever-new Impermanent Nature), giving up of all defilements, extinction of 'thirst' and 'wrong view of self or soul or individual', is *Nibbana*.'

What is the Absolute Unconditioned Nature, *Asamkhata*? It is, the extinction of 'thirst', the extinction of hatred, the extinction of illusion is called the Absolute or Original Nature. The extinction of 'thirst' is *Nibbana*.'

Whatever there may be conditioned things, among them detachment is the highest.

This is to say, *Nibbana*, freedom from conceit, destruction of thirst, the uprooting of attachment, the cutting off of continuity of the arising and disappearing cycle of physical & mental energies, the extinction of 'thirst', cessation

of *Dukkha*, Ever-new Impermanent Nature, unsatisfactory nature.

The reply of *Sariputta*, the chief disciple of the Buddha, to the direct question, 'What is *Nibbana*?' is that *Nibbana* is the extinction of desire, the extinction of hatred, the extinction of wrong understanding. 'The End of wrong understanding and craving for these Five Aggregates of Attachment: that is the cessation of *Dukkha*.'

'The cessation of Continuity of becoming (Ever-new Impermanent Nature) is *Nibbana*.' *Nibbana*, Buddha says, is unborn, ungrown, and unconditioned. Since there is the unborn, ungrown, and unconditioned, so there is escape for the born, grown, and conditioned.'

*Nibbana* is thus expressed in negative terms, and thus there will be a wrong notion that it is negative, and expresses self-annihilation.

*Nibbana* is definitely no annihilation of self, because there is no self to annihilate. If at all, it is the annihilation of the illusion, of the false idea of self.

The idea of 'negative' and 'positive' we know are relative, and are within the realm of duality, which is just Created Truth. These terms cannot be applied to *Nibbana*, Original Truth, which is beyond duality and relativity or Created Truths.

One of the well-known synonyms for *Nibbana* is 'Freedom'. Nobody would say that freedom is negative. But

even freedom has a negative side: freedom is always a liberation from something which is obstructive, which is evil, which is negative. But freedom is not negative. So *Nibbana*, *Vimutti*, the Absolute Freedom, is freedom from all evil, freedom from craving, hatred and ignorance, freedom from all terms of duality, relativity, time and space.

What is so-called a man is just **the mirage of Ever-new Impermanent Nature of Five Aggregates: matter, feeling, perception, volition and consciousness**. A wise man analyses them and finds that none of them is 'mine', or 'me'; or 'my self'. He understands how matter, feeling, perception (identification), volition and consciousness appear and disappear correctly.

In this way, he neither mentally creates nor wills continuity and becoming (*bhava*) or annihilation (*vibhava*) of physical and mental nature.

As he does not hate nor cling to anything; as he does not hate nor cling, he is not anxious; as he is not anxious, he is completely calmed within. He will be using-only, experiencing-only and knowing-only all physical and mental activities.

And thus, he knows: 'Finished is birth, lived is pure life, what should be done is done, nothing more is left to be done.'

Now, when he just experiences a pleasant, unpleasant or neutral sensation, he knows that it is just the mirage of

Ever-new Impermanent Nature, that it does not bind him, that it is not experienced with passion. Whatever may be the sensation or feeling, he just experiences it without being bound to it. He understands that all those sensations or feelings pleasant or unpleasant, and occurrences good or bad are just the images of Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

The understanding of the extinction of all *dukkha* is the absolute noble wisdom. Absolute wisdom is endowed with this Absolute Truth, Original Truth, *Nibbana*, which is Original Permanent Nature.

Something, everything, someone or everyone we perceive is just relative, and mentally created, and there is no unchanging, everlasting, absolute substance like Self, Soul Entity or Atman within or without.

**Created Truths appears to be existing on account of the ignorance of Original Truth, Ever-new Impermanent Nature (*Dukkha*) & Original Permanent Nature (*Nibbana*).**

The realization of this Original Truth, i.e., to see the true nature as it is, is the extinction of 'thirst' and 'illusion'. It is also the cessation (*Nirodha*) of *Dukkha*, which is *Nibbana*. *Nibbana* is not a result nor an effect. It is not produced like a mystic, spiritual, mental state, such as *samadhi*. *Nibbana* is Original Truth that is Ultimate reality.

There is a path leading to the realization of *Nibbana*.

But the *Nibbana* is not the result of this path. You may get to the mountain along a path but the mountain is not the result, not an effect of the path. You may see a light, but the light is not the result of your eyesight.

## JUST CONTINUOUS THINKINGS BUT NO THINKER

There is another popular question: If there is no Self, who realizes *Nibbana*? Before we go on to *Nibbana*, let us ask the question: Who thinks now, if there is no Self? In original reality, continuous appearing and disappearing of thinking (thought) that thinks, that there is no thinker behind the thinking or thought. Continuous appearing and disappearing of feeling that feels, that there is no one who feels. In the same way, there is the continuity of the process of realization, that realizes. There is no other self behind the realization.

In the discussion of the origin of *Dukkha* –the so called being, or thing which is an image of Ever-new Impermanent Nature or the process of the Five Aggregates - if it is of the nature of arising, it has within itself the nature, the germ, of its cessation, its destruction. Now *Dukkha*, the cycle of the process of Ever-new Impermanent Nature, is of the nature of arising; it must also be of the nature of cessation.

*Dukkha* arises because of **misunderstanding** the relative truths as reality and **thirst to cling or reject** to them, and it ceases because of wisdom which knows the Five

Aggregates, Ever-new Impermanent Nature in the right way.

'Thirst' and 'Wisdom' are also within the Five Aggregates, Ever-new Impermanent Nature. Thirst arises due to misunderstanding the process of Five Aggregates as something, someone, individual, self or ego.

Thus, the germ of their arising as well as that of their cessation are both within the process of Five Aggregates, Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

When mindfulness and right contemplation are developed and cultivated according to the Fourth Noble Truth, it sees the true secret of life, or the Truth of living beings and non-living beings as it is.

The true secret of life, or the Truth of living beings and non-living beings is just the process of Five Aggregates that is Ever-new Impermanent Nature. It should be understood by knowledge, contemplating and then finally by direct experience. When understanding the true secret of life, or the



- Dependent on the misunderstanding of something good as reality or real existence for some period, thirst to attach arises.

- Dependent on the misunderstanding of something bad as reality or real existence for some period, thirst to reject arises.

Truth of living beings and non-living beings, we can help others' difficulties more and more and cultivate good deeds, without the attachment and the false idea of self or ego.

When the Secret or the Truth is seen, all the forces (*kamma*) which feverishly produce the continuity of the cycle of Five Aggregates, Ever-new Impermanent Nature, the stressful nature become calm and incapable of production, because there is no more illusion, no more **thirst** for **Continuous appearing and vanishing of the Five Aggregates**. It is like a mental disease that is cured when the cause or the secret of the malady is discovered and seen by the patient.

*Nibbana*, Original Truth, or Ultimate Reality can be realized in this very life; it is not necessary to wait until you die to 'attain' it. He who has realized the Original Truth, *Nibbana*, has the true happiness. He is free from all complexes and obsessions, the worries and troubles that torment others. His mental health is perfect. He does not repent the past, nor does he brood over the future. He lives fully in the present.

Therefore he can appreciate and enjoy things in the purest sense without the wrong idea of self. He is joyful, exultant, enjoying the pure life, peaceful and free from anxiety. As he is free from selfish desire, hatred, ignorance, conceit, pride, and all such defilements, he is pure and gentle, full of universal love, compassion, kindness, sympathy, understanding and tolerance.

His service to others is of the purest attitude, for he has no thought of self. He craves nothing, accumulates nothing, not even anything spiritual, because he is free from the illusion of Self and the created truths or relative truths.

*Nibbana* is beyond all terms of duality and relativity, which are Created Truths. It is therefore beyond our conceptions of good and evil, right and wrong, existence and non-existence.

The word 'happiness', when used to describe *Nibbana*, has an entirely different sense here. *Sariputta* once said: 'O friend, *Nibbana* is happiness! *Nibbana* is happiness!' Then *Udayi*, his friend asked: 'But, friend *Sariputta*, what happiness can it be if there is no feeling or sensation?' *Sariputta's* reply was highly insightful and beyond our ordinary comprehension: '**That there is no feeling itself, is happiness**'.

*Nibbana* is beyond the logic and reasoning of our current perception. *Nibbana*, Unconditioned Nature, is beyond the vicious cycle of the arising and disappearing of physical and mental energies, Ever-new Impermanent Nature, *dukkha* that is conditional nature.

However much we may engage, often as a vain intellectual pastime, in highly speculative discussions regarding *Nibbana*, Ultimate Reality, Original Truth, we shall never understand it that way. A child in the kindergarten should not quarrel about the theory of relativity. Instead, if he

follows his studies patiently and diligently, one day he may understand it.

*Nibbana* is to be realized by the wise within themselves. If we follow the Path patiently and with diligence, train and purify ourselves earnestly, and attain the necessary spiritual development, we may one day realize it within ourselves – without taxing ourselves with puzzling and high-sounding words.

## TO REALIZE THE PERMANENT NATURE

We will never understand the Permanent Nature (*Nibbana*) without understanding the Ever-new Impermanent Nature (*dukkha*) and the origin of it (*samudaya*) in the right way.

Permanent Nature and Ever-new Impermanent Nature is beyond the impermanence of something or someone.

In order to understand the Permanent Nature, *Nibbana* correctly, it is also necessary to understand correctly the second Noble Truth (*Samudaya sacca*), **mistaking** the process of Five Aggregates (the constant arising and disappearing of physical and mental energies) as something or someone or self.

## THE PRESENT MOMENTARY TRUTH, THE TRUE LIFESPAN OF MIND & MATTER,

In *Dhatukatha*, the “Discourse on Energies,” Buddha said, “the Physical and Mental Energies are Void of Beings or Something”. These energies do not possess the characteristic functions of living beings.

They arise and cease within an exceedingly short period of time. In the blink of an eye or a flash of lightning, which lasts for a microsecond ( $10^{-6}$  second), the mental elements arise and cease a trillion ( $10^{12}$ ) times (1,000,000,000,000 times). This is just an estimate.

The subcommentary takes the higher figure of  $10^{15}$ . Thus the mental elements/energies arise and cease  $10^{15} \times 10^6 = 10^{21}$  times per second. Their extremely short duration is also mentioned in the *Anguttara Nikaya*.

As regards the material energies, since they endure for 17 thought-moments. they arise and cease  $10^{21}/17$  (app= 58,823,530, 000,000, 000,000) times per second.

But because the functions of the energies give rise to the concepts of continuity, collection and form, the ideas arise of (1) the initial effort that has to be exerted when a deed is about to be performed and (2) the care that has to be taken while the deed is being performed to its completion. And this leads to the subsequent ideas (3) “I can perform” and (4) “I can feel”,

These 4 imaginary characteristic functions of being have brought about a deep-rooted belief in their existence. But the energies do not have the time or span of duration to carry out such functions. (From *Dhatukatha*, Pali Text Society).

Our common sense can't perceive the true nature of these Ever-new Impermanent Energies. The Truth can never be seen by mental defilements such as greed, anger and ignorance. It can be understood by perfect purification, non-greed, non-hatred and perfect wisdom.

So, our normal sense with defilements can detect only the fake or unreal nature, on account of incorrect knowing of the nature of mind and matter, Ever-new Impermanent Nature (*Conditioned nature*) and Original Permanent Nature (*Unconditioned nature*).

Thus, the misunderstanding of what we see, hear, smell, taste, sense, touch, feel or think as entity, self or soul, is recurring continuously and constantly.

Six sense bases and their corresponding objects are only the images of Ever-new Impermanent Nature. However, ignorance of the Ever-new Impermanent Nature creates the deception that something, someone, sometime or somewhere etc, is existing.

So, dualities such as "pain or pleasure", "good or bad", "like or dislike", "hotness or coldness", "hardness or softness",

“calmness or agitation”, “feeling or numbness”, or “rising or falling” etc, seem to be real. It is because of the **misunderstanding** of Ever-new Impermanent Nature **as something** or the action of mental relativity, comparing one thing to another.

Meditators often ask what they should do when their thoughts are wandering while meditation. Most of the meditators misunderstand that they can be mindful of the mind or the mental factors that the Buddha taught as Original Truths.

They misunderstand that the mind they are aware of is the mind the Buddha taught as Original Truth. But it is not exactly as same as the mind defined by Buddha as Original Truth.

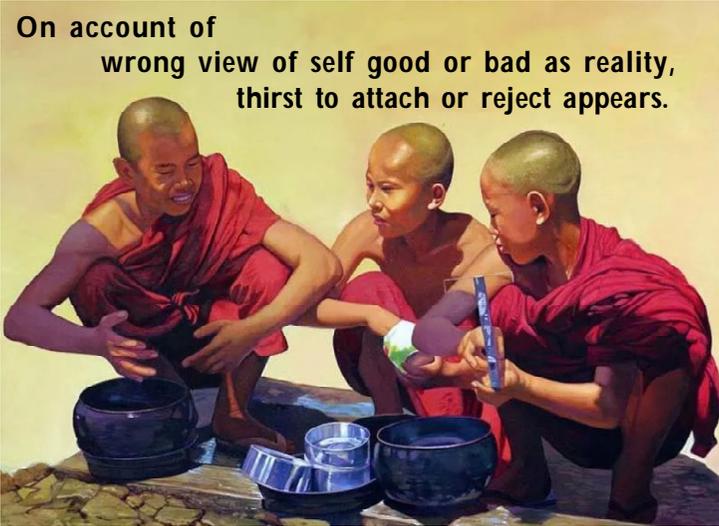
In fact, mind or *citta* is arising and ceasing a trillion ( $10^{12}$ ) times in the blink of an eye or a flash of lightning, according to the Buddha's teaching. One example is a fire flame in a candle. Visions are being deceived; it seems that one single flame is existing for one or two hours above a wax rod and then it is gone. That is not true.

In reality, **impermanent heat energies** are renewing and vanishing consecutively, repeatedly and immediately very fast due to the condition of the wax fuel, at every moment.

It is not one single flame existing. One single flame is not existing even for one second. It is not a same one which is

continuing. Only Ever-new Impermanent heat energies are arising and vanishing continuously at every moment. Ignorance of Ever-new Impermanent heat energies creates the illusion of one single flame existing continuously.

**On account of  
wrong view of self good or bad as reality,  
thirst to attach or reject appears.**



## WRONG VIEW OF CONTINUITY

In the case of the candle flame, at the cycle of renewing and vanishing of heat energies, thinking that the heat energy of the first moment is the same energy as the second moment, is **the wrong understanding of continuity**.

It is necessary to realize that the energy of the first moment that appeared, has already disappeared totally at that very moment. It will never appear again. The energy of the second moment is totally different. The first moment's energy and second's moment energy are not exactly the same.

Similarly, in the so-called body and mind, the Five Aggregates of the first moment are not the same as the Five Aggregates of the second moment.

Thinking that the Five Aggregates of the first moment are the same as the Five Aggregates of the second moment is **the wrong view of continuity**, which causes the false idea of self, entity or individual.

- Because of Mental Defilements, Volitional actions (*kamma*) arise.
- Because of Volitional actions (*kamma*), Ever-new impermanent natures arise.

## **WRONG VIEW OF NO RELATION (OR) NO EFFECT.**

In the case of the candle flame, thinking that the heat energy of the first moment is totally different from (unrelated to) and does not effect the energy of the second moment, is **the wrong view of no relation or no condition.**

The energy of the first moment has already disappeared totally at the very moment it appears. It will never reappear again. The energy of the second moment is totally different from that of the first moment, but the qualities of the first moment are similar to those of the second one. The disappearance of the first one conditions and supports the second one to arise.

Their arisings have the same condition of fuel-wax and oxygen.

Similarly, in the so-called body and mind, the Five Aggregates of the first moment are not the same as the Five Aggregates of the second moment.

Thinking that the Five Aggregates of the first moment are totally different from and not related at all to the Five Aggregates of second moment, is **the wrong understanding of no relation or condition.** It causes the false idea of no cause in the past conditioning the present, and no cause in the present that will result in the future.

Yesterday's happening (actions) will condition today's or tomorrow's happening (actions). Today's happening

(action) is the result of yesterday's or the previous days' happenings (actions). Today's happening (actions) will condition tomorrow's or the future's happening (actions), regardless of time, situation, religion or death.

The Five Aggregates of the first moment, which have disappeared totally, will never appear again. The Five Aggregates of the second moment are totally different from those of the first moment, but the qualities of the first moment are similar to those of the second moment. Thus, the Five Aggregates of the first moment appear to be the same as those of the second.

The disappearance of the Five Aggregates in the first moment conditions and supports the Five Aggregates, which are totally new, to arise in the second moment.

The Ever-new Impermanent Nature, or Five Aggregates appear and disappear constantly and repeatedly depending on the same qualities (causes) of 'wrong understanding' and 'thirst to attach or reject', which are themselves Ever-new Impermanent Nature as well.

**- Mindfulness with right understanding will result in action-only, knowing-only or experiencing-only.**

**- Action-only, knowing-only or experiencing-only will lead to the end of Ever-new Impermanent Nature.**



**CONTEMPLATE THAT  
CREATED TRUTHS ARE NOT  
TO BE REJECTED NOR ATTACHED  
WITH THE IDEA OF  
REALITY  
OR  
REAL IMPORTANCE  
OR  
SELF.**

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**HOW TO PRACTICE  
UNIVERSAL MEDITATION,  
“THE WAY TO THE END OF STRESS”  
FOR 15 MINUTES FOR BEGINNERS**

Step 1:

**THE PRACTICE OF MINDFULNESS**

Choose a suitable position for your hands, legs and body, for sitting without moving, on a cushion on the floor, or a the chair. Close the eyes and relax the body and mind. Straighten your body, head and neck.

Be mindful of the breathing in and out for the first 5 minutes. At the moment of breathing in, just be mindful of it. At the momement of breathing out, just be mindful of it.

At the beginning of the practice, attention should be on the breathing at the present moment.

**We will use the breathing for developing mindfulness.** Later we can make use of any happening such as feeling, emotion, sensation, volition or perceptions -etc as meditation objects for developing mindfulness.

What kind of meditation object you use is not important, but only the arising or development of mindfulness using a meditation object.

Developing mindfulness, attentive awareness is intended to understand **the present momentary attention of the mind and its true nature.**

It is necessary to be **using-only** the meditation object such as breathing, feeling, touching, thinking or sensation etc, for the arising of mindfulness. We need to pay central attention to the arising of mindfulness by abandoning attention to external happenings. We need to change attention of the mind from external to internal.

Note: Mindfulness can be developed in sitting posture but also in standing, walking or lying position.

For walking and standing posture, instead of the meditation object of breathing in and out, we can be mindful of the movement of the left and right legs, without mental noting, or we can be mindful of the pressing forces of the body weight upon the legs and/or touching of the soles of the feet with the floor.

Understand that mind is not  
entity, self or individual  
but the image of  
**Ever-New Impermanent nature.**

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Step 2:

**THE PRACTICE OF RIGHT UNDERSTANDING**

For the remaining minutes, we need to develop right contemplating or understanding. If we can develop mindfulness, we can understand that the objects of mindfulness, and the mindfulness(attention) itself are impermanent or changing from moment to moment.

They are not the same one in a continuous period. Thus, they cannot be taken as permanent or important or real existence. They are just the illusive images of ever-new impermanent nature.

The present happening such as feeling, sensation, emotion, volition, perception good or bad, hot or cold, hard or soft, tight or loose and pleasant or unpleasant etc, are not constantly true.

They will change according to time, situation or mental judgement (relativity). Thus, we should not think of them as reality, real existence, real importance, or mine or yours. They are just the images of Ever-new Impermanent Nature. They are just Created Truth, which will change depending on time, situation, or metal judgment.

The Created Truths are not real, but they appear to be

real because of **the continuous ignorance** of Ever-new Impermanent Nature, which is constantly true regardless of time, situation, religion, nationality, race or region etc.

Created Truths are not truly existing but appear to be so because of the creation of ignorance of Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

Created Truths are neither to be rejected nor attached to with the false idea of reality, entity, self or something. Contemplate and realize that Created Truths are not to be rejected nor attached to with the idea of reality, entity, self or something.

But they are just to be mindful of only, used-only or experienced-only for the arising or development of mindfulness and right understanding or contemplating.

*The Created Truths are not real  
but they appear to be so  
because of  
ignorance of  
Ever-new Impermanent Nature.*

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Step 3:

### **ABANDONMENT OF PAYING CENTRAL ATTENTION WITH MISUNDERSTANDING**

Not only in sitting meditation but also in daily activities, we need to apply the practice of abandoning central attention with thirst and misunderstanding of something, someone, or occurrence for a certain period as reality or an existence.

Understand that the developing of mindfulness and right understanding is important, but abandon the thinking of other unnecessary actions **as importance**.

Understand that the origin of stress is the misunderstanding of self, or taking the Created Truths or Relative Truths as reality and clinging to them. Abandon thinking of other causes of problems or stress as reality or real importance.

(Note: The other causes of problems or miseries are neither to be rejected nor attached to with the idea of reality. They are just to be mindful-of-only and used-only. They should not be taken as constant reality because other causes of

problems or miseries are not constantly true. They will change according to time, situation or mental judging.)

Understand that the action of paying mental attention (of the mind) is happening constantly here and now, because of the ignorance of Ever-new Impermanent Nature (taking the relative good or bad as reality or importance), although the objects of paying mental attention (of the mind) change according to time or situation.

The objects of mindfulness change according to time or situation. Abandon the idea of the different meditation objects, which are dependent on time or situation, as original existence or reality.

Understand that Ever-new Impermanent Nature is constantly and truly happening regardless of time or situation, but abandon the taking of something, someone, soul or self as happening or an existence.

**-Go Beyond the limited time.**

**-TRUTH is beyond time.**

**- Truth is at every moment.**

**- Now is at every moment.**

**- Now is ...**

*Ever-new Impermanent Nature.*



## What is NOW?

- **TRUTH** IS AT EVERY MOMENT.
- EVERY MOMENT IS **NOW**.
- **PAST** HAS ALREADY GONE.
- **FUTURE** IS NOT COMING YET.
- **NOW** IS CURRENTLY HAPPENING.
- UNDERSTND 15 MINUTES IS JUST A CONCEPT.
- ONE MINUTE IS JUST THE SERIES OF 60 SECONDS.
- ONE SECOND IS JUST THE SERIES OF 60 MILLISECONDS.
- ONE MILLISECOND IS JUST THE SERIES OF 60 MICROSECONDS.
- ONE MICROSECOND IS JUST THE SERIES OF 60 NANOSECOND.
- ONE NANOSECOND IS JUST THE SERIES OF ..... ?
- WHAT IS ONE? HOW LONG IS NOW? WHAT IS NOW?

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## GUIDLINES FOR UNIVERSAL MEDITATION

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1. Universal Meditation is the middle way, which is free from two extremes, thirst to reject and cling.
2. Don't focus too hard, don't control too much. Neither force nor restrict whatever you can feel. Just be action-only, just be mindful-of-only, just be using-only the present happening good or bad, in our mind and body.
3. Desire to grasp something *is greed*.  
Desire to reject what is happening *is aversion*.  
Believing that something or someone is existing for some period is *delusion*.
4. Don't cling to anything, and don't reject what is happening now.  
Just be mindful-only of the Present Truth, Ever-new Impermanent Nature, which appears to be something worthy of attachment or rejection.
5. First, change the attention from external to internal objects such as breathing, feeling or thought. Secondly, understand any happening in our mind and body is just to be used-only for developing mindfulness and the understanding of Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

6. **W**hy do you focus hard in meditation? Do you want something to happen? Do you want something to stop happening .... with the idea of something or someone as reality? Understand that the idea of something or someone as reality is wrong understanding.

7. **A**re you trying to make things turn out the way you want them to happen? Your attempt may be successful but it is nonsense if it is without developing mindfulness and right understanding, which is understanding the Created Truth as it is and Original Truth as it is.

8. **R**ight understanding understands the Created Truths as Created Truths, which will change according to time, situation, judgment and mental relativity.

Wrong understanding understands the Created Truths as real existence or importance.

9. **R**ight understanding understands EVER-NEW IMPERMANENT NATURE as IT IS.

Wrong understanding understands EVER-NEW IMPERMANENT NATURE as something, someone, individual, self or entity.

10. **T**he Five Aggregates, the Ever-new Impermanent Nature, which are matter, feeling, memory, consciousness and volition, are arising and disappearing constantly 50 billions times or a trillion ( $10^{12}$ ) times per blink of an eye.

Matter, feeling, memory, thought and volition of our common perception appears to be existing for some period.

11. **W**hat is the mind doing? Thinking? Being aware? Worried? Calm? Any kind of mind cannot last forever. It will change according to time, situation or mental relativity. Thinking or not, is not a problem, but only taking the thinking or not, as real existence or importance.

Contemplate that whatever kind of mind (feeling, memory, volition, thinking or knowing) we currently understand is just the mirage of Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

12. **W**here is the mind now? Inside? Outside? Is the mind properly aware or only superficially aware? On account of ignorance of Ever-new Impermanent Nature, the mind/ thinking inside or outside or still or agitated appears to be real.

13. **U**nderstand that both good and bad experiences are the same nature of impermanence. You want only good experiences? If so, you are expecting the impossible, forgetting the truth that good and bad are just relative, and the truth that are just to be mindful-of-only, experienced-only and used-only. Good and bad experiences are what we surely encounter in life as images of Ever-new Imperment Nature.

14. **D**on't feel disturbed by the thinking mind. You are not practising to prevent thinking, but rather to make use of the present thinking, for developing mindfulness and wisdom, knowing that thought or thinking is just the image of Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

Thinking or thought cannot be ended totally. It will continue as just the image of the cycle of Ever-new Impermanent nature.

15. **W**hen meditating, the mind and body may be sometimes comfortable and sometimes may be getting tired. Whatever situation, comfortable or tired, is not important.

To contemplate the truth, any situation 'good or bad', 'comfortable or tired', is just to be mindful-only, used-only and experienced-only without the idea of real existence or importance, mine or yours.

16. **W**e should be mindful of breathing or sensation or feeling or thinking etc, to abandon the attention on external objects.

In sitting meditation, we should try not to move, not because we desire stillness but to abandon the clinging to moving. When following the eight precepts, we should try not to take food after mid-day, not because we desire slimness but to abandon clinging to dinner or unnecessary eating.

17. **M**isunderstanding the Original Truth, Ever-new Impermanent Nature **creates** relative truths such as good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, hot or cold, something or someone or self etc, **appear to be real**.

18. **M**editation is not just noting upon the different happenings one by one but contemplating that different things are just the illusive image of Ever-new Impermanent Nature.

Different happenings in our mind and body are just to be used-only, mindful-of-only and experienced-only, but not to be taken as real existence or importance.

19. **I**n original reality, there is no "I", "someone", "something", "self", "soul", -etc, but **the misunderstanding** of "I", "someone", "something", "self", "soul", "entity", etc, as reality.

20. **E**very meditator can understand that something or someone, having arisen, will have to pass away at a certain time. We always talk about the impermanence of something or someone.

But we seldom realize that Ever-new Impermanent Energies cause the noticeable appearance of someone, everyone, something, everything, thinking, feeling, emotion, good or bad, etc, and the impermanence of something or someone.

21. The past has already gone. The future has not come yet. Only the Present Moment is truly happening Now. Our goal should be at the Present Moment. The Present moment, Now, is not to be rejected not attached with the idea of entity or self. Now is just to be mindful-of-only, experienced-only and used-only for spiritual development.
22. **Understanding** the **misunderstanding** as **misunderstanding** is **right understanding**
23. **Understanding** the **misunderstanding** as **right understanding** is **wrong understanding**.





# Universal Centre & Universal teacher



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## THABARWA CENTER, A UNIVERSAL CENTRE

*Good Deeds Support Meditation  
Meditation Supports Good Deeds*

Thabarwa Centre was established by Ashin Ottamasara, the abbot of the centre, in 2007, for all. In Thabarwa centre anyone can do good deeds as he or she wishes. Anyone can help others according to the situation. The Centre is trying to help the people in need, the old aged, the patients, and the homeless people. This place is now well-known for offering help to anyone in need.

In the centre, we provide the people food, offer shelter and educate their children. Then they can also help others as they can. This is a home for all, for the whole family.

The centre was established to teach people about the benefits and the good results of doing good deeds. Here we are doing good deeds all the time, all kinds of good deeds, including meditation.

People can participate in the centre's activities according to their own wish, for right understanding and good benefits. In this way everybody can learn about meditation and doing good deeds by direct practice and experience. Everyone will be satisfied with doing good deeds and meditation. All dreams will come true as a result of doing wholesome deeds with a right attitude.

What we have done before and what we are doing now will condition and effect of what is happening to us now and what will happen in the future. If there is cause, there will be effect. Causes in the past and the present time will result in the present and future happening in our life. So if we do good, there will be good results. If we do bad, there will be bad results, now and in the future. Everyone can understand that cause and effect very easily by staying and living the centre. This place is especially for doing good deeds and meditation, not for frivolities. In the society you can do anything, good or bad, but here, we do only good things - we do good, we speak what is right, we think about what is true.

Meditation is the mental practice of mindfulness and right understanding.

Through meditation, the mind will be happy, peaceful and powerful. Without meditation, the mind will

be miserable and full of defilements such as fear, worry, anger, jealousy, craving, misunderstanding, etc.

Here most of the people are not healthy, not young, not rich, but most of the minds here are healthy and clean, with less attachments than people in the society. This is the place of healthy and spiritual wealthy minds. We are doing good deeds and meditation every day, every time. This place is the centre of full-time meditation and doing good deeds for spiritual development.

### **GOOD DEEDS TAKING PLACE IN THABARWA CENTER, THANLYIN TOWNSHIP, YANGON, MYANMAR:**

- Refuge provided not only for meditators but also for the old aged, homeless, orphans, loners, and patients with physical and mental difficulties. All aid and support is offered free of charge.

- Providing food, shelter, water wells for cooking and drinking, health care, clothing, etc, and solving day to day problems for centre residents and visitors. This entails organizing into teams and utilizing the help of outside charities, non-profit organizations and philanthropists from Myanmar and abroad.

- Daily Insight Meditation and *Dhamma* Talks.

- Retreats in the traditions of famous meditation masters such as *Ledi Sayadaw*, *Mogok Sayadaw*, *Mahasi Sayadaw* and *The-Inn Gu Sayadaw* (Myanmar language teaching).
- All meditation methods are utilized without attachment to any particular method.
- Daily and weekly courses in *Abhidhamma*, Buddhist theory and scripture study (Myanmar language).
- Sound editing and free distribution of *Dhamma* recordings by meditation masters such as *Mogok Sayadaw*, *AungMingala Sayadaw* and *The-Inn Gu Sayadaw*.
- Establishment of a *Pariyatti* (Buddhist Theory) Institute.
- Creation of a *Dhamma* Library with free distribution of DVD's, books, and portraits of *Thabarwa Sayadaw Ashin Ottamasara* and other famous Sayadaws.

## **GOOD DEEDS OUTSIDE OF THE UNIVERSAL CENTRE, THABARWA CENTER:**

- Establishing new meditation centers or new branches of ThaBarWa Centre across Myanmar and abroad.
- *Cetana* ("Good Will") villages are being created one after another for the families with financial and social difficulties.
- Good Will villages include meditation halls, schools, hospitals, Buddhist study institutes and market places.

# D WAYS TO PARTICIPATE AT THE CENTRE

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1. Meditation classes, discussion and guidance available from Thabarwa Sayadaw, and other meditation teachers.
2. Monthly five day meditation retreats at Shwe Chaung Thabarwa Center in Pyin Oo Lwin, near Mandalay or other quiet and peaceful places.
3. Translating or video editing of interviews and Dhamma talks
4. Teaching English to monks, nuns, yogis and children, or training local English teachers.
5. Helping monks collect food in their daily alms round at 7:00am.
6. Helping in the kitchen or in Cleaning.
7. Helping with patients.
8. Sharing and implementing your knowledge of engineering, construction, landscaping, plumbing, electric, computer, internet, photography, or medicine.
10. Any idea or skill you can offer to help others can be implemented here.

## UNIVERSAL CENTRE'S CARE (NUMBERS AS OF MAY 2015)

Established 2008, Land Size: 58 acres

Residents in total: 2545

Monks: 337

Novices: 27

Nuns: 246

Children: 70

Volunteers: 140

Meditators: 532

Patients: 526

Diabetes: 100

Cancer: 4

Stroke: 92

HIV: 27

Tuberculosis: 31

TB+HIV: 4

Mental Patients: 60

Aged above 60: 747

Number of Buildings: 112

Dormitories: 42

Single Yogi Houses: 29

Meditation Halls: 3

Medical Buildings: 3

(dental clinic, traditional Burmese clinic and western clinic)

Schools: 2 (novices and nuns)



Kitchens: 3

Public Toilets: 60

**"SETNGABE" (15 FEET) GOOD WILL VILLAGE  
(10 MINUTE WALK FROM THANLYIN THABARWA CENTER)**

Est. 2012, Land Size: 28 acres

Residents: ~ 8600

35+ years: 4600

18 to 35 years: 1500

Students: 600

Children not in school: 1900

Housing units/huts: 2450

Schools: 1 (for grades 4-7)

Hospitals/Clinics: 0

Community Halls: 1 (presently functioning as a school  
for grades 1-3)

Markets: 1 (small shops: 192)

Public toilets: 126



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## UNIVERSAL TEACHER, SAYADAW ASHIN OTTAMASARA THE FOUNDER OF THE CENTRE

ThaBarWa Sayadaw Ashin Ottamasara was born in Sagaing Division, Upper Myanmar, on 26th October 1969. His parents are U Tin Maung and Daw Khin Khin Myint.

He passed the Matriculation examination with flying colours in 1986. After completing a B.A (English, Honours) at Yangon University, he became a young entrepreneur and successful businessman within a short period of time.

In 1999 his business declined and he became greatly depressed over his failed business ventures. As suggested by one of his friends, Sayadaw started to learn and practice Insight Meditation under the guidance of Mogok Teachers.

Sayadaw first encountered the teachings of Buddha and the Original Truth of mind and matter at the age of 29.

Subsequently, he went for retreats at the International Meditation Centre and the Dhamma Joti Meditation Centre

in Yangon. After the retreat at Mogok Insight Meditation centre in Yangon, Sayadaw successfully realized and abandoned the original cause of stress, sadness, attachments and grasping completely.

Through the right practice, a deep realization of Truth was born and he realized he was not just to live his life for one family, one nation, or one religion or race, but universally.

He encourages anyone to practice the path of purification (liberation) regardless of race, religion or nationality. He now helps anyone in need and teaches universal meditation to any of those who would like to learn the path of purification (liberation) in various institutions, schools, hospitals, prisons, and individual residences in Myanmar and overseas.

With the intention of sharing of the path, universal way, Sayadaw totally abandoned his business ventures and properties, and founded "From Avijja to Vijja" Wisdom Sharing Foundation in 2002.

In 2002, he was ordained in Yangon by Sayadaw U Nayyasagara and started to teach the path, a form of Insight Meditation that is universal.

In 2005, Sayadaw became famous for a series of VCDs recounting the events of the tsunami and the lessons that it taught human kind.

In 2007, Sayadaw established the ThaBarWa

Meditation Centre on 45th street in downtown Yangon and, in 2008, in ThaBarWa Centre (Thanlyin).

For their spiritual development and physical needs, Sayadaw saved many terminally ill patients who were given up by doctors and specialists.

Through his teachings, many people, young and old, sick and healthy, rich and poor around the world are learning how to change from ignorance into right attitude, from greed into generosity, from hatred to compassion and from the misunderstanding of self to the right understanding of selflessness.

Presently, Sayadaw is planning and establishing new branches of ThaBarWa Centres, Good-will villages and Helping Centres (Bank of Meritorious Deeds) all over Myanmar and beyond.

**Understand that developing  
mindfulness and  
right understanding  
is important, and  
abandon  
thinking that other matters  
are important.**

# D *About the Author* Y

- *Born in 1977 from the parents of U Than Swe & Daw San Yin.*
- *Learned from the school of S.H.S No.(1) Dagon.*
- *Passed the Matriculation exam 1994 and received the International Diploma in Computer Studies from NCC, UK in 1997.*
- *Graduated with the Degree of B.E (Electronics) from the Yangon Technological University in 2002.*
- *Worked in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia as draftman from 2008-2012.*
- *Learned and practiced meditation since 1996 in the methods of Mahasi, Mogok, Tee Inn Gu and Maha Myaing Sayadaw U Jotica.*
- *In 2011, under the guidance of ThaBarWa Centre, discovered universal meditation, the Middle Way that is free from two extremes, "attaching & rejecting".*
- *Currently practicing and teaching universal meditation, the Path of Purification to others at ThaBarWa Centre (ThanLyin) and helping the centre's activities of meritorious deeds.*

## Acknowledgements

Great thanks to ThaBarWa Sayadaw Ven. Ashin Ottamasara and all spiritual teachers show me the universal meditation, which is the way of the end of stress.

Special thanks to my spiritual friends who makes editing the book to be a complete one, my parents and those help and support me in publishing the book.

### Ref:

- *Dhatukatha*, Pali Text Society
- *What the Buddha Taught* (Walpola Rahula)
- *The teaching of ThaBarWa Sayadaw Ashin Ottamasara*



*- For more information and explanation about the universal meditation or to join the Universal Meditation centre,*

*Please Contact :*

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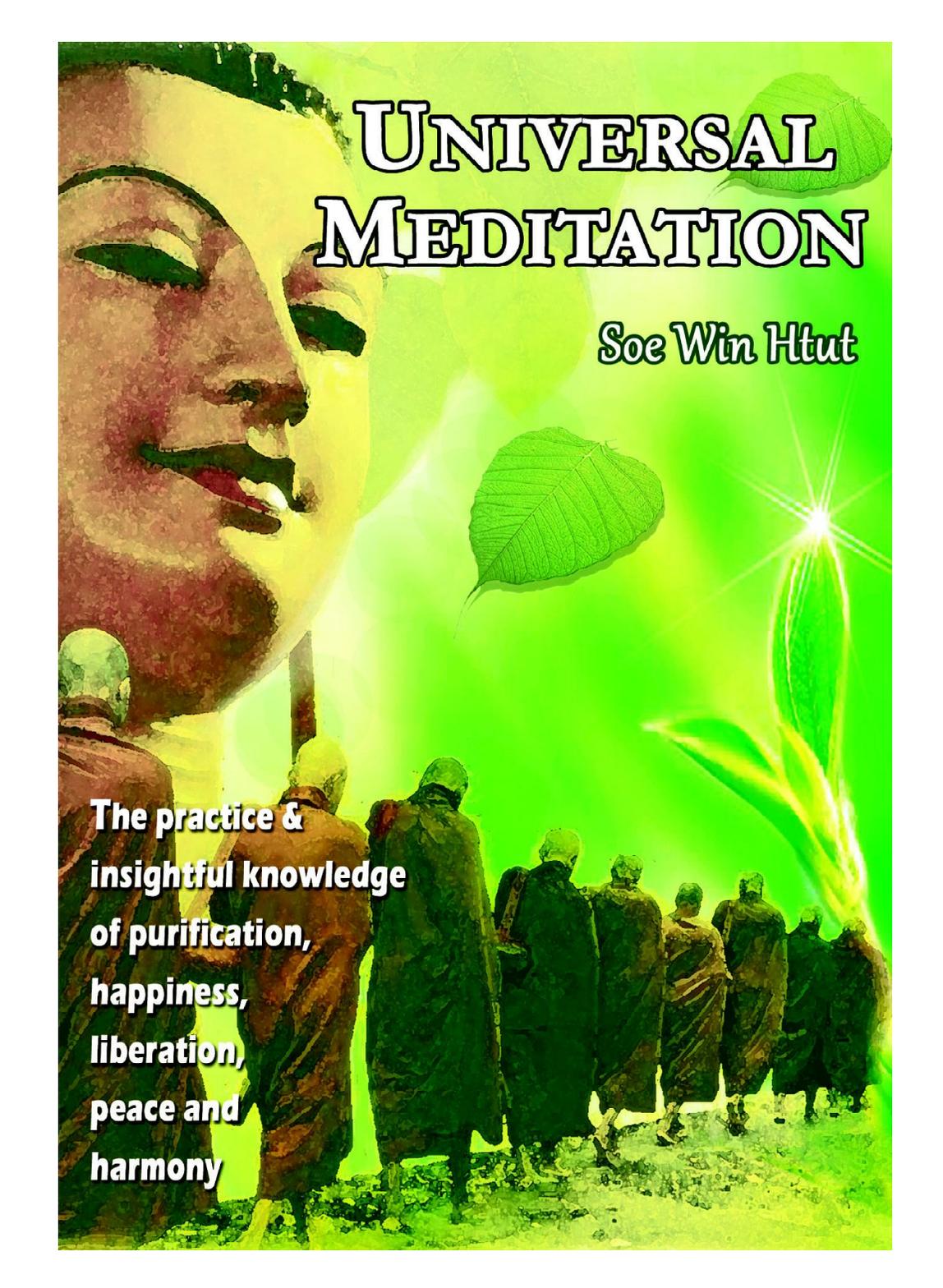
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# UNIVERSAL MEDITATION

Soe Win Htut

**The practice &  
insightful knowledge  
of purification,  
happiness,  
liberation,  
peace and  
harmony**