



DHAMMAKAMI
BUDDHIST SOCIETY

ONE AND ONLY WAY TOWARDS PURITY

Summary of Dhamma Talk by Venerable K. Rathanasara on March 25, 2018

The Buddha has shown us the path - the only path - that leads us directly from our deep sleep of ignorance to enlightenment. Shrouded in ignorance, we cannot grasp the true nature of our sentient existence. We cannot free ourselves from the suffering which comes with each cycle of life and death. It is only by purifying the mind and breaking free from all defilements that we will be able see through our delusions and achieve perfect knowledge and wisdom; in other words, to become awakened.

The tool needed to accomplish these is within us, if only we know how to develop them. This tool is mindfulness.

Meditation practice in Buddhism trains us to become more mindful. In one Sutta, the Buddha directed our attention to the four bases within us for developing our mindfulness. These are the body, feelings, mind or thoughts, and our mental objects.

On the body as a base for building mindfulness, the core technique is Anapanasati or the mindfulness of breathing. For many, the breath serves as the most important object for meditation. Mindfulness is also built if you can incorporate it into your everyday activities; whether you are working, walking, cooking, or eating, for examples. A useful tip is to train your mindfulness on a single action a day.

Your feelings too can serve as a base for training your mindfulness. Watch your feelings rise and fall, just like the waves at sea rise and fall. It does not matter if the feelings are pleasant, unpleasant, or neither. Don't cling to the positive; don't try to modify the negative or neutral. Just watch - and do not let them carry you along.

The mind is itself a base to train our mindfulness. We are so busy with the world that we hardly pay attention to how we are conditioning our minds. Stopping and taking time off from the world gives us a chance to look inside. Watch our thoughts. Watch how they are often concerned with some gain or loss; praise or blame; pleasure or pain; and fame or disrepute.

Finally, applying the Dhamma to our mental objects is another way of developing our mindfulness. When we see our suffering or dissatisfaction, contemplate on what the Dhamma has taught us of the folly of attachment or impermanence. When defilements rise and fall, understand them as defilements rising and falling. The Dhamma offers a wealth of wisdom concerning the four noble truths, the five aggregates, the five hindrances and the six sense bases. Applying the Dhamma within the body and mind, contemplating and testing them out yourself, is part of the Buddhist training to purify our minds.