

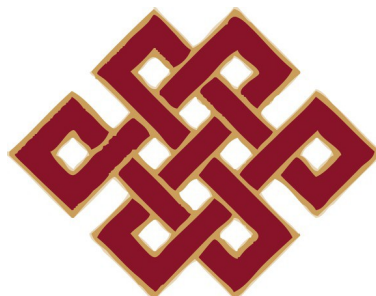
# Mindfulness Meditation Seminar

## A Brief Study Guide

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# I

## Human Happiness and Mindful Breathing

Happiness arises from your present mind state.

—Adzom Paylo Rinpoche

All the buddhas, *mahasiddhas*, saints and sages of our great Primordial Wisdom Tradition have told it. Mindfulness meditation (*shamatha, sati, smriti*)—deep contemplative prayer—provides a *relative* powerful immediate antidote and an *ultimate* cessation to the bewitchment of the natural intelligence of our innate original love-wisdom Buddha mind by the colossus of obsessive discursive conceptual mind—the notorious 'wild horse of the mind'. How shall we recognize, and realize this great truth in our busy lives?

We begin by *choosing* conscious 'placement of attention/awareness' upon our 'innermost' love-wisdom mind Presence of the primordial ground in whom this all arises. We do this upon the mindful *prana/lung* spirit wind (*lungta* windhorse) breath in the belly. Our peace and happiness arise from where, and when we chose to consciously place our awareness! No mystery here. We do have this conscious choice. Mindfulness meditation is the assiduous practice of that moment to moment choice. We train unruly mind in such *awareness management*.

We may use our conceptual mind to self-reflexively critique its own inherent limit. We establish a bit of healthy skepticism as to our own well defended biases, our skeptical 'global web of belief'. This includes our choice to establish a meditation practice in the first place. Through mindful attention upon the breath in the body we move beyond this habitual web of concepts and beliefs with their negative, judgmental thinking and emotion, into the already present peaceful Presence of our non-conceptual indwelling love-wisdom mind. Bright indwelling primordial Presence of That (*tathata*).

*A View of Mindfulness.* As you engage this Guide please consider, and remain present to these two basic principles of mindfulness meditation: 1) Mindfulness of breathing bestows the gift of observing your thoughts as the selfless natural play of the mind, without identifying with them, or judging them 'good' or 'bad'. Thoughts are after all merely an impermanent natural arising of the relative mind within vast boundless ultimate ground that is the very Nature of Mind itself. Thoughts randomly come and go in dependence upon your present mind state. They have only the power we *choose* to bestow upon them. 2) Mindfulness of breathing is an 'already accomplished' act of love, received from deep within to which you gradually awaken

breath by mindful breath. Its benefits are spontaneously given again and again to all living beings in your sphere, including our precious Mother Earth.

How is it that such mindful, non-conceptual attention to the breath is an act of love? Through the 'placement of awareness' upon your 'already present' indwelling love-wisdom buddha mind Presence of the primordial ground, you *are* That! Both happiness and unhappiness naturally arise from your present mind state. We shall see that your present *mind state* in due course creates your present developmental *life stage*. Love-wisdom mind states beget happy compassionate mind traits. With a bit of practice mindfulness places you in the mind states you choose. You are now learning to *choose* your present realities! And that is a profound love-wisdom benefit to all living beings in your sphere.

Thus does mindfulness practice beget personal transformation. It does so by purifying—however imperfectly, breath by mindful breath—your obsessively thinking stressed out conceptual 'monkey mind' revealing that numinous Presence naturally abiding deep within, just prior to the conceptual chaos of anxiously busy self-ego-I.

### **What is Mindfulness Meditation? The Four Foundations**

'Mindfulness' has many meanings. It may be construed as secular breathing practice to quiet the hyperactive thinking mind and heal its anxiety; or as a contemplative meditative 'spiritual' practice to open the heart and mind and connect to its numinous Spirit ground, by whatever grand name or concept. We shall herein consider it in its contemplative context as mindfulness meditation—deep contemplative prayer as it has risen in our primary wisdom traditions—Eastern Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, and the Western Abrahamic monotheistic traditions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—the 'mystical' noetic contemplative voice of these three great traditions.

Mindfulness meditation—the Buddha's 'mindfulness of breathing' (*shamatha*, Pali *sati*)—arose from the ancient Hindu Vedic *Sanatanadharma*, was adapted by Gautama the Buddha for training the minds of his disciples, and codified in the 1st century *Pali Canon*. In the West a parallel contemplative tradition began in the Hebrew mystical tradition and continued in Hebrew-Christian Hermetic Mysticism.

'Mindfulness' in the West is now mainstream. We find it in its secular raiment in all of our primary institutions: education, medicine, government, business, corrections; and in its spiritual meaning in organized Western religious practice, and in our Eastern contemplative traditions that have flourished on Western ground.

Well then, what is mindfulness actually good for? Why bother?

The essence of mindfulness meditation is the inward directed wisdom of seeing clearly, both conceptually and non-conceptually, the actual nature of what Gautama the Buddha of this present age called in his lapidary *Satipattana Sutra The Four Foundations*

of *Mindfulness*; or the 'four objects of meditation'. These four 'objects' are indeed the very *process* of 'original awakening', realization of the spiritual Path to human internal happiness, liberation, and enlightenment. Told the Buddha, "Mindfulness is the direct path for purification of the minds of beings...for overcoming sorrow...for the disappearance of pain...and for realization of nirvana."

That human happiness is what mindfulness meditation is good for.

In Buddhist tradition *The Four Foundations of Mindfulness* are, with Buddha's *Anapanasati Sutra* (On the Full Awareness of Breathing), the basis of all the love and wisdom that was to come from the teaching of the Buddha. The Four Foundations are:

1) *Mindfulness of Body* is immediate awareness of our physical body, direct awareness of being here embodied in relative material form; our human body, just as it is now. "The body in the body...It is selfless (*anatman*), impermanent (*anitya*), and subject to suffering (*duhkha*, Pali. *dukkha*)." Here we learn to ground the busy mind—the urgent 'grounding relation' of Contemplative Science—firmly in this great gift of our earth body—this precious physical vessel for the 'heart-mind of enlightenment'. We are here and now physically embodied in that present vast aboriginal awareness Spirit ground.

2) *Mindfulness of Feeling* is being present, mindful, and aware of "the feeling in feelings", just prior to our emotional responses to being. Here we learn to ground the mind in loving acceptance of our natural feeling nature, the 'felt sense' of our *buddic* love-wisdom mind, just prior to the arising of concept and belief. As with the body, feeling is also selfless, impermanent, and subject to suffering.

That selfless human feeling capacity is as well the mode of feeling our gratitude for the precious gift (*jinlob*) of our life, just as it is now; and our devotion to the treasured 'Three Jewels' of the Path: the spiritual master seen as the Buddha; the dharma or teaching of the Buddha; and the crucible of the loving *sangha* or spiritual community. For Christianity these Three Jewels are the Christ, the teaching of the Christ as expressed in both canonical and non-canonical Old and New Testament scripture, and the Church in its many holy vestments.

3) *Mindfulness of Mind* is mindful awareness of and non-identification with our adventitious, fleeting egocentric thoughts and the myriad negative and positive emotions that ride them. Our mind too is ultimately selfless, impermanent, and disposed to human suffering.

Our scattered diaphanous thoughts randomly come and go. Mindful *rigpa* awareness does not take them too seriously. Nor does it judge them harshly. We learn to find humor in the comedy-drama of our precious lives. Are you really always right? Are you the center of the universe? Are you really superior to everyone else? Mindfulness of mind is 'letting it be as it is'. Buddha told, "Rest your weary mind and

let it be as it is; all things are perfect exactly as they are." That is the ultimate view. Incredulous indeed to those of us stuck in the narrow egocentric relative view.

4) *Mindfulness of Phenomena (dharmas)* that appear to the mind and body is bringing mindful awareness to any and all arising phenomenal experience, moment to moment, at the instant of its arising in and to our human mind. With practice we learn to let such ultimately illusory relative appearing phenomena 'self-liberate' at or near the very instant of its arising, before it sweeps us away in the thought, intention and action that creates 'negative karma'. That is the ultimate View and its dharma practice.

These Four Foundations of Mindfulness are the key to understanding the priority of objective Science and its nondual perfectly subjective Spirit ground. [Boaz 2023]

All arising phenomena are but the play of the aboriginal awareness ground of our bright love-wisdom mind Presence—our Buddha mind—inherently pristine and 'primordially pure' from the very beginning. We observe such arising phenomena like a loving mother watches her child at play. You are that mother. And you are that child.

In Mindfulness of Phenomena we learn that the phenomenal experience of mind, and indeed the very Nature of Mind itself (*dharmakaya*) is selfless, impermanent, and utterly interdependent (*pratitya samutpada*) and interconnected; embracing all of us. Such an inclusive view changes everything. From that expansive View arises 'The Meditation' of 'The Path' that results in 'The Fruition' that is inner freedom from adventitious suffering, and of authentic compassionate human happiness. View, Path and its Fruition are always already a prior yet present invariant one truth unity. Padmasambhava Guru Rinpoche revealed that "The only way to realize Ultimate Truth is through Relative Truth; practice these two as a unity."

This *ultimate* interdependent nature of arising phenomena (*dharmata*) is none other than vast empty space of the boundless primordial awareness *dharmakaya* whole itself, basic space (*chöying, dharmadhatu*) of all appearing *relative* form, and our mindful contemplative grounding practices that realize, then compassionately actualize it in our busy lives via *bodhicitta*—the thought, intention, and engaged love-wisdom action for the relative and ultimate benefit of all living beings, and our great Earth itself.

All Four of these *Satipattanas* are seen to be unified and even realized through the Buddha's practice of 'mindfulness of breathing'. Thus may we see clearly the wisdom of the prior and present noetic nondual ultimate unity of all the relative phenomena appearing to mind—beyond the relative duality of a subjective knower and its separate objects of experience; beyond the proverbial mind-body subject-object split. Relative 'mindfulness of breathing' is as well the contemplative foundation of ultimate *Dzogchen*. Shamatha is indeed the first of the *Four Dzogchen Yogas*, as we shall soon see.

Thus is mindfulness meditation (*shamatha, sati*) the basis of 'penetrating insight', the clear seeing of *vipashyana* (Pali. *vipassana*) that together reveal the absence and



emptiness/*shunyata* of any *ultimate* intrinsic existence in *relative* spacetime form; and the selflessness, and impermanence of all such appearing yet apparitional phenomena.

Just so, mindfulness meditation cultures wisdom and love—our indwelling original love-wisdom mind—luminous Buddha heart Buddha mind Presence of primordial awareness ground itself, vast whole in whom this all arises and participates.

Mindfulness meditation bestows upon our human mind the capacity to approach, connect to, recognize, then realize this always present *ultimate* primordial awareness Nature of Mind itself—Happiness Itself—in whom ordinary *relative* mind and its experience arises. Because these two seemingly separate dimensions of mind—relative and ultimate—are utterly indivisible, this miracle of realization is always "Already accomplished from the very beginning...To remain here without seeking more is the true Meditation." [Middle Way Madhyamaka founder Nagarjuna] Human happiness is the already present Result/Fruition. Yes, the Buddha's Two Truths are already an ontologically prior and phenomenally present 'innermost secret' one truth unity, invariant throughout all human reference frames. *Emaho!* How Wonderful!

Therefore, our scattered 'ordinary mind', because it is perforce already embraced and subsumed by the perfectly subjective primordial awareness ground itself—our 'supreme source'—is inherently lucent, limpid, and open, like the vast empty space of sky. That is the ultimate 'Fruitional View'. And this 'ordinary mind' naturally, spontaneously brims with compassionate thought, intention, and engaged action for the benefit of living beings—even as it still clings to its narcissistic sense of self.

In the great Buddhist Mahayana tradition such compassionate skillful means (*upaya*) is known as *bodhichitta*, literally the 'heart-mind of enlightenment'. In the Buddhist Theravada tradition this 'wisdom of kindness' is known as 'purity of heart'. That Buddha heart Buddha mind pervades all three Buddhist tenet systems, and all three of the Buddha's providential Three Turnings of the Wheel of Dharma. *Emaho!*

So, that is our natural vivid, timeless indwelling love-wisdom mind, by whatever grand name or concept. It furthers one to settle into, then rest in that mindful, always present Presence of freedom and bliss. What does love-wisdom mind look and feel like? Compassionate equanimity in the face of inevitable human adversity. But don't believe it. It is beyond belief. As Buddha told, "Come and see (*ehi passika*)."

Thus it is, this prodigious process of phenomenal form arising within its primordial awareness emptiness ground or base (*gzhi rigpa*) is, in a word, *good*. That great *cosmic* process is for human beings the 'basic goodness' that is this wondrous cosmic gift of spacetime reality; great gift (*jinlob, euengelion*) of our body and mind in space and time. It is this embodiment in ultimately illusory but relatively real spacetime in which we learn to open and receive this open secret of human happiness. Indeed, there is here no time to lose. If there is any time at all.

Yes. *The Four Foundations of Mindfulness* are the skillful means or method for awakening to such selfless love and wisdom happiness. It is both relative and ultimate

remedy for the terrible human suffering caused by primal ignorance (*avidya, ajnana, marigpa, hamartia/sin*)—the adventitious Attraction-Attachment (grasping desire, greed, pride), and Aversion (fear, anger, hostility, hatred) that mortal flesh is heir to.

Our indwelling love-wisdom mind disperses the dark clouds of unknowing and ignorance that obscure the all-illuminating sun of our actual nature, the very 'clear light' Nature of Mind (*dharmakaya-Adi Buddha Samanthabhadra*).

Those who know have told it well. *There is no cessation of human suffering without mindfulness meditation practice.* Meanwhile, a little of it goes a long way.

Such a wisdom understanding of the unity of these Four Foundations of Mindfulness is at once the realization of the prior and always present invariant *one truth unity* of the Buddha's Two Truths, relative and ultimate—relative phenomenal form and its ultimate primordial awareness emptiness 'groundless ground'. 'Groundless' because it too is absent and empty of any whit of intrinsic absolute existence. How then does it exist? "Emptiness itself is established by conceptual minds." [H.H. Dalai Lama] Just so, Buddha taught the *Four Profundities*: "Form is empty; emptiness is form. Form is not other than emptiness; emptiness is not other than form."

From the Buddha's own enlightenment realization of the indivisible one truth unity of the Two Truths—relative form and its ultimate awareness emptiness ground—arises his teaching on the prior unity of the Four Noble Truths, the Fourth of which is the Noble Eightfold Path to liberation from the suffering of *samsara* and the endless painful cycle of rebirth. Here, the 'skillful means' of the Four *Satipattana* Foundations of Mindfulness represents the penultimate 7th stage wisdom yoga, the 'Right Mindfulness' of the Eightfold Path, which opens into the final 8th stage 'Right Wisdom/Samadhi', which itself has four stages of mindful *dhyaana* meditation resulting in equanimity (*upeksha*) and the final fruition of changeless 'unborn, uncreated' buddhahood—ultimate liberation and enlightenment that is human Happiness Itself. [Boaz 2020 Ch. V]

How then do the Four *Satipattanas* relate to the Four Noble Truths? Mindfulness of Body, and Mindfulness of Feeling realize both *The Truth of Suffering*, both physical body and mental-emotional suffering; and *The Truth of the Cause of Suffering*. Mindfulness of Mind realizes *The Truth of The Cessation of Suffering*. And Mindfulness of Phenomena, the selfless (*anatman*), impermanent (*anitya*), and empty interdependent nature (*pratitya samutpada*) of phenomena realizes the unified *Eightfold Path* to the cessation of suffering and our ultimate buddhahood. [Boaz 2020 Ch. II]

*The Buddha's Example.* By his own accord Gautama the Buddha received his full *bodhi* love-wisdom mind enlightenment while 'sitting quietly' and practicing mindful *shamatha* and subtly chanting the primordial Hindu mantra *OM*. After many trials he finally realized the ultimate unity of the Two Truths of reality itself—Ultimate Truth and Relative Truth—the utter one truth unity and indivisibility of the ultimate

primordial awareness selfless, formless emptiness ground, and the relative conventional form and we beings that arise within it; and are never separate from it.

Siddhartha Gautama realized with perfect clarity of the nondual primordial wisdom (*jnana, yeshe, gnosis*) that relative form and its nondual ultimate awareness ground abide in an ultimate intimate relation of identity, equality, or sameness (*samatajnana*). As Nagarjuna told 500 years later, in such a nondual ultimate view, "There is not the slightest difference between *samsara* and nirvana." Upon this vast perfect realization Gautama, now the Buddha, gently touched our Mother Earth and exclaimed, "Earth is my witness." His 'mindfulness of breathing' brings that *cosmic* love-wisdom mind down to earth and providentially grounds it in our earth body and mind.

What does this mean for all of us being here in space and time? What indeed. It means that we relative conditioned human beings and our selfless, formless, ultimate awareness source-ground—by whatever hallowed name—are not in any way separate from That (*tathata*)! Who am I? That I Am! *Mahasukaho!* Yogi's bliss. Great joy!

Just so, in his first teaching following his enlightenment Buddha taught, in the little Deer Park at Sarnath, the 'First Turning of the Wheel of Dharma'. Here he transmitted his Four Noble Truths, the profound way of happiness for those who would be noble of body, mind and spirit.

These are, all too briefly: 1) The Truth of Suffering; 2) The Truth of the Cause of Suffering; 3) The Truth of the Cessation of Suffering; and 4) The Noble Eightfold Path that ends human suffering. In short, life is filled with suffering; human suffering has a cause, namely, egocentric ignorance (*avidya*) of the way; human suffering has a cure, namely freedom from ignorance; and that cure is the practice of the eight yogas of the Path. Then told the Buddha, "The Noble Eightfold Path is accomplished by living mindfully." [Boaz 2020 *Ch. II*]

Indeed, such a mindful compassionate life is both origin and aim of the entire Primordial Wisdom Tradition of humankind—spiritual archetype of a life well lived.

We can now see how it is that mindfulness meditation with its Four Objects of Mindfulness is the very foundation of the entire Buddhist love-wisdom Path to psycho-emotional wholeness, the end of suffering, and real human happiness.

Thus it is, from Gautama Shakyamuni the Buddha's final realization of the ultimate one truth unity of the Two Truths—ultimate and relative—arises his early 'First Turning of the Wheel of Dharma', the Hinayana or Shravakayana teaching vehicle that includes the Four Noble Truths. The Fourth Noble Truth is of course the Eightfold Path to ultimate human liberation and happiness. And yes, this relative Path to ultimate enlightenment is grounded in the compassionate wisdom of mindfulness with its Four *Satipattana* Foundations, and its *Anapanasati* full awareness of breathing.

Then arises the Second Turning of the Wheel, near Rajagaha on Vulture Peak—Buddha's Mahayana teaching on emptiness/*shunyata*, and compassionate *bodhichitta*. From this teaching arises the Mahayana teaching vehicle with its many schools, among

them the Middle Way *Prasangika* Madhyamaka school. And from this relative conceptual mindful foundation arises definitive ultimate nondual *Dzogchen*, the Great Perfection view and highest *Ati Yoga* practice. *Dzogchen* is sometimes classified by Tibetan Buddhists as a Fourth Turning of the Wheel of Dharma.

The Third Turning of the Wheel gives us Buddhist Idealism, the *Yogachara* Madhyamaka 'Mind Only' school, and the Buddha's teaching on our always already present Buddha Nature (*tathagatagarbha*). The Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhist tantras are often included, with the *definitive* sutras, in the Third Turning; and are sometimes seen to constitute a Fourth Turning. All of this grounded and made real via Buddha's Nine Stages of *shamatha/sati* 'mindfulness of breathing' meditation. [Chapter VI below]

The Buddha was physically present only at the First Turning of the Dharma Wheel. The Second and Third Turnings are *buddic* love-wisdom transmissions from the 'cosmic Buddha' in his spirit form to realized Buddhist wisdom masters via his omnipresent Buddha mindstream. Shamatha connects us to That (*tathata*).

From the Tibetan Buddhist Third Turning of the Dharma Wheel naturally arises the *Four Dzogchen Yogas*: Mindful *Shamatha*, penetrating *Vipashyana*, *Kadag* primordial ground, and *Lhundrub* primordial Presence of that ground.

Compassionate mindfulness meditation, of whatever wisdom tradition is, on the accord of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, "The great hope of humankind."

Thus does the assiduous practice of mindfulness of breathing transform negative human emotion into our always already present *buddic* love-wisdom mind awareness Presence—the very cause of human happiness. Mindfulness of breathing awakens us to our own always already present 'innermost secret' luminous numinous Buddha mind Presence—breath by mindful breath. Yes. That is who we are—our 'supreme identity'.

Jesus the Christ also taught foundational mindfulness practice as mindful *kenosis*—'self-emptying' through deep contemplative mantra prayer upon the selfless mindful breath. Here the troubled self takes refuge in the "I Am That I Am Presence" of Moses and the Prophets, selfless *pneuma-prana* 'breath of life', Holy Spirit, divine breath of *Abba*, nondual God the primordial Father. Indeed, all of the masters of our wisdom traditions have taught this great truth of mindfulness meditation—by whatever name—as a means to recognize, then connect to the nondual Spirit Presence of the Primordial Deep that is our divine origin, aim, and destiny.

We shall learn in these pages to gradually relax into, then profoundly rest in that trans-conceptual happy mindful mind state/emptiness/space—the very mindstream of all the buddhas, the Christ, saints and sages of our great Primordial Wisdom Tradition. The overall result of such practice is deep inner subjective and outer objective peace of mind; the happiness that passes rational understanding; the happiness that cannot be lost. Yes. That is what mindfulness meditation is good for.

## II

### Mindful Shamatha Becomes Dzogchen Mind Training

*Mindfulness Meditation: Shamatha Calm Abiding.* In the East shamatha (*sati, smrti*) arose from the ancient Hindu Vedic *Sanatanadharmā*. It is present in one of its contemplative variations throughout the noetic primordial wisdom traditions of our species—Eastern Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, and Western Abrahamic monotheism—esoteric 'mystical' Judaism, Christianity, Islam. Mindfulness in the Western Tradition emerged mainly from 12th century Theosophical Kabbalah, mainly the foundational mystical *Zohar* that explicates the mystical basis of the Torah. *Zohar* is a spiritual guide to the infinite emptiness of monistic pantheistic primordial *Ein Sof*, unmanifest Hebrew nondual Godhead, ultimate spirit ground prior to its emanation into spacetime form that are the Ten Sefirot of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.

Kabbalah and *Zohar* were accepted by many Christian theologians of the time to become the Hermitic Reformation with its mystical Christian Kabbalah tradition that is the source of present Hermitic Hebrew-Christian mysticism.

Be *Ein Sof* as it may, Gautama the Buddha adapted mindfulness meditation from his Hindu Vedic tradition as "mindfulness of breathing". It pervades the entire buddhadharma; all three Buddhist Tenet Systems (Hinayana, Mahayana, Tibetan Vajrayana), all three Turnings of the Wheel of Dharma. Mindfulness is the very foundation of his Two Truths and his Four Noble Truths with the Eightfold Path to liberation; and the *Dzogchen* "Seven Mind Training Steps to the Great Perfection".

How then shall we approach *Dzogchen*? Before *Dzogchen* foundational *ngöndro* practices can begin it is wise that the practitioner engage basic *shamatha* mindfulness meditation—the 7th and 8th yogic disciplines of Buddha's Eightfold Path—to tame the wild horse of conceptual mind. Without a foundation in basic *shamatha* mindfulness to pacify concept-mind, *Dzogchen* view and practice may remain more or less conceptual.

Gautama Shakyamuni, the Buddha of this age, began his teaching of the path of meditation and the wisdom of selfless (*anatman*), impermanent (*anitya*) emptiness/*shunyata* in his *Satipatthana Sutta*, the *Foundation of Mindfulness Sutra*, as we have seen. These Four Foundations of Mindfulness (Four Objects of Mindfulness) form the 'two limbs' of Buddha's teaching—compassionate love and wisdom, both relative discriminating *prajna* and ultimate wisdom of *jnana/yeshe/gnosis*. All four *satipatthanas* embrace compassion, selflessness, impermanence, and are subject to suffering.

Yes. Here Buddha teaches the conscious "placement of attention", our non-conceptual 'bare' awareness upon the rhythmic rising and falling of the breath in the

body. Our attention is here gently focused upon the life giving *prana* spirit wind (*lung, c'hi, pneuma*) in the belly. From here we move our focused attentional awareness to our feelings, our mind, and our sense perceptions of arising phenomena with their corresponding chakra centers upon the 'central vertical axis' in the body. Thus arises, breath by mindful breath, mindful awareness of these Four Foundations of Mindfulness or The Four Objects of Mindfulness, great gift of our *body, feeling, mind, and phenomena* arising to the feeling body-mind.

All that through a 'progressive' refinement of attention of our "mindfulness of breathing"; surrender of the egocentric '*Five Hindrances*' to liberating enlightenment.

*The Five Hindrances, and the Seven Factors of Awakening.* These five obstructing factors to the full *bodhi* of enlightened buddhahood are: grasping sense desire; ill will (anger, hostility); sloth and torpor (laziness); fear/anxiety; doubt or lack of faith. *The Four Satipatthanas* free us to simultaneously engage Buddha's sutra '*Seven Factors of Awakening*': *mindfulness* of breathing; *investigation* and study of the emptiness of arising form; *patient, diligent effort*; *joy-bliss* of happy feeling; *peace* and tranquility of mind and body; *meditation-samadhi* (*dhyana, jhana*); *equanimity*, loving acceptance of self and others, with compassionate *bodhicitta* for the benefit of both.

*The Four Foundations of Mindfulness.* 1) *Mindfulness of Body* as immediate direct awareness of being physically embodied in human form—"the body in the body". Here we learn, upon each mindful breath, to ground the mind in our physical earth body, the spacetime vessel for our engaged compassionate *bodhicitta* activity/conduct, 'heart-mind of enlightenment' arising always in that vast infinite primordial awareness Spirit ground for the benefit of all living beings, including our precious Mother Earth.

2) *Mindfulness of Feeling* is being lovingly present, 'mindful and aware' of "the feeling in feelings", our 'felt sense', just prior to our emotional and conceptual responses to being here in form and time. Here we learn to tame, pacify, and ground the busy concept-mind in our indwelling always already present noetic, non-conceptual, love-wisdom feeling-knowing Buddha mind. Through feeling we experience great gratitude for the exceedingly rare precious gift of our human life, and devotion to the treasured *Three Jewels*—the Guru as the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha community.

3) *Mindfulness of Mind* is mindful awareness of, and non-identification with our fleeting, insubstantial thoughts and the negative and positive emotions that ride them. Our thoughts naturally arise and fall away spontaneously. We need not take them too seriously, nor judge them good or bad. Thoughts have only the power we choose to bestow upon them. Grounded in 'mindfulness of breathing' we learn mantra prayer,

deity practice, direct *rigpa*, *vidya* Presence of the primordial ground, and skillful engaged *bodhicitta* activity for the benefit of all living beings.

4) *Mindfulness of Phenomena* that continuously appear to the body, feeling senses, and the mind is accomplished by placing your awareness, moment to moment, upon any and all arising sensory phenomenal experience. With mindful practice we may learn to allow such appearing stuff to 'self-liberate' at or near the very instant of its arising to our awareness, before we impulsively act on it, thereby creating new negative karma. We come to understand that all appearing phenomena are but the play of that primordial awareness-consciousness ground of our bright always present love-wisdom Buddha mind Presence, inherently pristine and 'primordially pure' from the very beginning.

*Awareness Management.* The ultimate nature of all empty (*shunya*), impermanent (*anitya*), selfless (*anatman*) and interdependently arising (*pratitya samutpada*) phenomena (*dharmata*) is none other than the vast empty 'basic space' (*dharmadhatu*, *chöying*) of primordial *dharmakaya* ground, boundless unbroken whole itself in whom all of this relative spacetime form arises, participates, and is instantiated.

Through such *awareness management*, this presence of mindfulness, we learn 'the path' to awakening to the primordial wisdom of the 'two selflessnesses', inherent 'selflessness of the person', and of the 'emptiness of phenomena' arising to the person. While appearing *relative* reality is often all too real, there is no intrinsically existing *ultimate* self-ego-I, and no ultimate existing spacetime phenomenal reality! And that is the peaceful joyous love-wisdom mind *samadhi* of the Buddha's Two Truths, boundless emptiness, and physical and mental form arising therein. As Buddha told, "Form is empty; emptiness is form." These Two Truths are a prior and present *one truth unity*.

From that primordial awareness ground arises the compassionate 'original basal clear light' *wisdom of emptiness*—Dzogchen *rimé* master Mipham's immutable "noumenal Fundamental Mind" (*chös nyid*, *dharmata*), pristine clear light mind nature (*'od gsal yeshe*) Presence (*rigpa*, *vidya*) abiding as our primordial ground of being. Ju Mipham reveals for us [2006 pp. 52-64]:

About this, just this original basal clear light, the primordial mode of subsistence, is the [ultimate] reality of all phenomena. All appearances of cyclic existence and nirvana shine forth from within it...continuously abide within it...Thus, the meaning indicated by the phrases 'fundamental basic mind, the clear light, the Great Completeness' is the noumenon of the mind, self-arisen pristine wisdom...empty basic knowledge without object and subject...basal mode of [being], the great equality...immutable and not changing in the three times...[This is] what is to be realized by the View...[The Ground] is empty and pervasive like space...like a jewel, like

the sun...Consciousness itself dawns as perfect wisdom, and even phenomena dawn as naturally pure...When fundamental mind abides as the basis, it is said that 'the realizer realizes emptiness'...At that time 'realizing mind' has dissolved completely into fundamental mind [the nature of mind]...This naked basic wisdom is awareness of the present moment, in which you do not follow thoughts of past or future.



### III

## The Seven Mind Training Steps of the Great Perfection

The great Nyingma School vidyadhara Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798)—synthesizer of Longchenpa's *Longchen Nyinthig* lineage—presented for us his precious dharma treasure *The Steps to Liberation* (2016). Here he introduces the universal and all embracing "Sevenfold Mind Training" instructions—to be practiced continuously upon each mindful breath. For Longchenpa, these are the "Essential Instructions on the Preliminary Practices". They are the

vital points on the exceedingly profound essentials [that] lead all beings to the state of perfect peace...By meditating in this way experience whatever you direct your attention to...then rest in a spacious non-conceptual mind state.

That great contemplative teaching pervades all four of the Tibetan Buddhist Vajrayana (esoteric Buddhist tantra) lineages. Jigme Lingpa's Seven Steps are most profoundly revealed in the *Dzogchen* Great Perfection tradition as it arises in the earliest 8th century Nyingma tradition of "the Ancient Ones". The natural Great Perfection, with its six singular but essentially same (*samata*) lineages is considered by those who know to be the pinnacle of all Buddhist sutra and tantra/mantra enlightenment teaching vehicles. The prodigious Sevenfold Mind Training permits our non-judgmental love-wisdom access. Compassionate heartmind *bodhicitta* is cultivated from the very beginning in all of them, and indeed in all the Buddhist Mahayana Great Vehicle teaching.

While the great masters and *mahasiddhas* of the later *Sarma* 'New Translation' (Rinchen Zangpo) Tibetan Buddhist lineages—Sakya, Kagyu, Gelug—have composed profound texts on mind training (Tib. *lojong*), the 'ancient' Nyingma 'Sevenfold Mind Training' of Jigme Lingpa's *The Steps to Liberation* should not be conflated with the *lojong* mind training of these later profound *Sarma* lineages.

Thus do these 'seven steps for training the mind' offer definitive teaching for awakening and liberating our human hearts and minds into the primordial ground of the *Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen*. This foundational seven-point teaching is requisite to Tibetan Buddhist view and practice. It is also practiced in unity with the *kadag trekchö* and *lhundrub tögal Dzogchen* teaching cycles.

Here Jigme Lingpa's *Seven Steps* naturally become the prior and present unity of the *Four Dzogchen Yogas*, as we have seen. Yes, these are *Shamatha*, *Vipashyana*, primordial *Kadag* ground, and *Lhundrub* primordial Presence of that ground. Indeed, *The Seven Steps* may be seen as a foundation for the entire Buddhist teaching tradition.

Jigme Lingpa's *The Steps to Liberation* with his Seven Mind Trainings embraces the nondual pith instructions of the Great Perfection teaching from 2nd century Garab Dorje, through 14th century Longchenpa (*Fourfold Heart Essence*), then on to the great Nyingma *rimé Dzogchen* master Ju Mipham Gyamtso (1846-1912). These mindful steps teach the buddhadharma from foundational relative "impermanence" and "compassion" to ultimate nondual "wisdom", the seventh step *dharmakaya* primordial wisdom ground in whom arises the very nature and essence of *ultimate* primordial awareness-consciousness itself, aboriginal ground of our *relative* human consciousness.

Without further commentary, and all too briefly, Jigme Lingpa's *Dzogchen* mindful Seven Steps to liberation are: Impermanence; Karma; Suffering and Compassion; The Guru; Meditation; Ignorance and Negativity; and the nondual Primordial Wisdom of Emptiness. [Jigme Lingpa 2016]

In the perfect words of 14th century Tibetan *Dzogchen* master Longchenpa, the 'omniscient one' (2001):

The universe of appearances and possibilities arises as the adornment of the ultimate womb of basic space [*chöying, dharmadhatu*]... naturally occurring timeless awareness, utterly lucent awakened mind, primordially and spontaneously present...Everything is wholly pristine, supreme state of spontaneous presence...beyond the extremes of existence and nonexistence [*medpa*]...blissful place of rest. Spontaneously perfect is this timeless primordial awareness of the vast expanse of awakened mind, single sphere of being, all-pervasive, unborn and unceasing...The sublime secret of Dzogchen Ati Yoga is that of resting in genuine being, just as it is... By this virtue, may all beings without exception effortlessly awaken together in luminous primordial ground of the Great Perfection.

Buddha Heart Buddha Mind. Please rest now in that uncontrived compassionate numinous ground for a few minutes. Please do it now. You will be mostly free of conceptual thinking. Take refuge in That, "just as it is". Now how does it feel? Where in your body do you feel it? Who are you now? What is your mind? So many questions. So, simply relax and enjoy!

## IV

### The Neuroscience of Mindfulness Meditation

All the happiness in this world comes from compassionate service to others; all the suffering comes from serving oneself.

—Shantideva

*Mindful Prelude.* Human beings being here in time desire, require and deserve some semblance of happiness and well being. We have as well seen that these happiness mind states are already innately present within the human mind. We access them through the conscious "placement of awareness/attention" upon our always present love-wisdom mind Presence of the primordial ground in whom this all arises.

Therefore, both neuroscientifically, and metaphysically speaking, human happiness is a function of one's here now *present* mind state; a blatantly obvious relative conventional truth. As our attentional awareness is consciously placed upon our inherent innermost peace—that luminous Presence that we are—we are happy. If awareness is mired in worry and anger, we are unhappy. So the proper question as to human happiness is this: how do we accomplish such happy, peaceful mind states? That is to say, how do we learn "placement of attention" upon such already present happiness states? We have examined some of the contemplative considerations. Let us now very briefly explore the pertinent neuroscientific data.

*The Neuroscience of Mindfulness Meditation.* Over 50 years of Western world neuroscientific research has demonstrated that mindful breathing practice supports the following noble objectives: preventive medicine, chronic pain management, stress reduction (recovery from stressed induced cortisol production which is known to cause many psychophysical and physical symptoms), and psycho-emotional healing, learning and well being.

Meditation supports parasympathetic function (alpha and 'waking theta' brain rhythm "rest and digest" approach behavior), and thus enhances immune function, while tending to tonify sympathetic (beta rhythm "fight or flight" aversion/avoidance behavior) activation which suppresses immune function. [Porges 2014; Siegel 2013; Sheng in Hanson 2014]

Neuroscientist Richard Davidson at the University of Wisconsin has shown that beginning meditators in a corporate business setting developed stronger immune systems than controls, as evidenced by statistically significant resistance to respiratory infections. In another Davidson study, novice meditators reported being happier than

non-meditating controls, experience more positive emotions, fewer stressful emotions, and an enhanced feeling of overall well being. [Davidson 2017; Begley 2007; Siegel 2013; Wallace 2009]

The left and medial prefrontal cortex of the brain activated in mindfulness meditation has been shown to dampen response to negative emotional mind states, while enhancing positive states. Just so, the right prefrontal cortex is activated in negative states. The amygdala is responsible for such negative internal states as fear and anger, which are then expressed outwardly through egocentric, often destructive and self destructive behavior.

In other words, the left and medial prefrontal cortex generate alpha, theta and 25-42 hertz gamma brain oscillations which mitigate and pacify the negative neural signals from the right prefrontal cortex and amygdala which inwardly manifest as fear and its flipside—anger, hostility and aggression—which then manifest outwardly as adventitious human evil: alienation, hostility, aggression, despotism and war. [Siegel 2013; Begley 2007; Wallace 2007, 2009]

This process of aggression is observed clinically in stroke patients. Patients with damage to the "happy" left prefrontal cortex are generally more irritable than those with damage to the "angry" right ventromedial prefrontal cortex, who are often relatively calm, even serene [Sheng in Hanson 2014].

Meanwhile, the frontoparietal control module network manages brain's multiple modules allowing it to function as a consciousness unity (executive function and cognitive control), while the default mode module, which spans the same lobes as the frontoparietal network, is linked to such cognitive functions as self-referencing, introspective thought and subjective feeling, passive emotional listening and learning, emotional processing, memory retrieval and 'theory of mind' (empathetic emotional connection to others). [*Scientific American* November 2014; July 2019]

Mindfulness meditation meta-research, over thousands of studies, has demonstrated the following positive outcomes: enhanced immune system function, respiratory function, post-surgical healing, blood pressure reduction, reduced age related brain atrophy, reduced symptoms of dementia and Alzheimer's disease, reduction in symptoms of anxiety, clinical depression, bipolar disorder I and II, obsessive compulsive disorder, attention deficit disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, chronic pain, post-stroke symptoms, reduction of prison violence and recidivism, improvement of school grades, and much more. [Begley 2007; Sheng/Hanson 2014; Wallace 2009; Siegel 2013]

Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) has been shown to be as effective as antidepressants in treatment of clinical depression. [Lancet Vol. 386; Kuyken 2015]

## The Neuroscience of Meditation and Our Experience of Self

We've very briefly surveyed the neurobiological influences of mindfulness meditation on human behavior. How do these influences effect our sense of self-ego-I; our brain structure and function; relative human flourishing and happiness (*eudiamonia, felicitas*); and the ultimate happiness and freedom of liberation/enlightenment (*paramananda, mahasukha, beatitudo*)?

Both Zen Masters and neuroscientists agree, "mindfulness of breathing" (focused attention meditation), and "compassion meditation" both facilitate 1) a beneficial shift of attention from obsessive, usually fraught self-referential thinking and concern for 'I, Me, Mine'; which 2) bestows a sense of inner peace and self-acceptance; which 3) reduces anxiety and anger toward self and others; which 4) enhances altruistic thought, intention and action for the benefit of living beings; 5) enhancing individual well being and happiness. How then shall we understand this contemplative process in the scientific gloss of neurobiology?

The unfocused ruminating wandering mind, under sway of the brain's 'default mode network'—the medial prefrontal cortex (MPFC) and posterior cingulate cortex (PCC)—significantly increase self-referential attention—'selfing'—with its always present fear/anxiety, anger/hostility, greed/pride, and negative judgments about self, which are then psychologically projected onto others. The micro-cognitive result in the individual is stress and unhappiness. The macro-cognitive result in the human sociocultural cognosphere is alienation, despotism, endless war, and despair.

Scientific meta-research, synthesizing data from thousands of research projects since 1970, reveal substantial benefit in each of the three primary classes of meditation practice. These include 1) *shamatha mindfulness focused attention meditation*, usually upon the breath, or on an object image/vision of the Buddha or of the Christ, or of the guru; 2) *open monitoring mindfulness meditation*, witnessing whatever arises in awareness without grasping, rejecting, or judging; and 3) *loving-kindness compassion meditation*, feeling our natural empathy, even love for all living beings. All three meditation classes resulted in beneficial outcomes by conclusively reducing or deactivating processing in some physical structures, while enhancing activity in others. How is this so?

*The Proven Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation.* 1) Reduced processing in the default mode network (PCC and MPFC) of the "selfing" wandering mind; which 2) reduced self-ego-I self-referential processing—habitual attention and concern about I-Me-Mine with its secondary anxiety, anger and ill-will mind states; 3) reduced activity in, and reduced the size of the amygdala which is responsible for fear and anger ('fight or flight'); 4) reduced stress related cortisol production by the adrenal cortex while blocking its circulation throughout the upper body upon the autonomic vagus nerve (CN-X); 5) enhanced beneficial brain alpha, theta, and medium amplitude gamma band

oscillations (25 to 42 hertz), while reducing excessive, often obsessive beta activity; 6) reduced activity in the right prefrontal cortex which is active in fear, anger, and ill-will mind states; 7) greatly increased left prefrontal cortex processing which enhances feelings of altruism, compassion and forgiveness toward self and others; 8) induced increased, long term frontal cortex gyrification (neuroplasticity), which proved to be permanent, even when contemplative practice ceases. [Siegel 2013; Porges 2014; Begley 2007; Davidson 2017; Wallace 2007, 2009; *Scientific American* November, 2014]

The no longer surprising result of this neuroscientific meta-research includes 1) greatly reduced preoccupation with self and its obsessive narcissistic self-narrative; 2) reduced psycho-emotional stress; 3) induced and enhanced subjective feelings of connection, well being, good will; and 4) subjective reports of enhanced happiness.

Thus does mindfulness meditation train the "wild horse of the mind" in the *placement of attention*, and continued focus of attentional awareness upon immediate, non-conceptual, present moment to moment sensory/feeling experience, upon the mindful breath—our eternal here now connection—while shifting self-referencing attention away from chronic unfocused wandering mind with its obsessive attachment to self-ego-I, and toward altruistic compassionate thought, intention, and action for the benefit of living beings (*bodhichitta, karuna, patheos, caris, hesed/lovingkindness, rahmah*).

We begin to realize that *mindfulness is an act of love*, a continuity of the *ultimate* primordial Great Love compassionately expressing itself in and through this *relative* gift of human form, for the benefit of all human and nonhuman beings, including our precious Mother Earth.

### **Being Happy Now: Presence of the Primordial Ground**

Clearly, meditation reduces or suspends habitual, often obsessive self-referential thinking ('selfing') that causes the terrible suffering secondary to our pervasive sense of a fearful lonely separate self, adrift in a hostile, dangerous, meaningless cosmos. And all of this accomplished through a program of mind training in present moment, trans-conceptual *feeling awareness* upon the breath—mindful placement and maintenance of attentional awareness upon the breath which settles the frantic, fearful, obsessively thinking 'monkey mind'. Thus does dualistic human awareness enter in, merge and awaken to its own indwelling, always already present Presence of nondual primordial awareness-consciousness whole itself, numinous formless, timeless, selfless primordial ground of all spacetime form—the very 'Nature of Mind' (*cittata, sems nyid, buddhajnana*), nondual love-wisdom mind Presence of That, by whatever grand name.

Yes, neuroscientific meta-research demonstrates the profound value of meditation—beginning with *shamatha* calm abiding, and loving-kindness compassion meditation—in support of our relative human flourishing and ultimate happiness.

Indeed, there is a "mindfulness revolution" now abroad in the Western mind and its culture. It's alive and well in most of our institutions—education, medicine, psychology, the social sciences, business, government, military, corrections, even organized religion which has grown apart from its foundation in the contemplative mythos of the great Primordial Wisdom Tradition of our much beloved *Homo sapiens*.

*Wise Choice.* On this neurobiological view then, human happiness is very much dependent upon an *awareness management* skill set—where, when, and how we *choose* to place our awareness. In short, both happiness and unhappiness are the result of present placement of our cognitive attention/awareness in this present moment here and now. And this can be learned from the wisdom injunctions of those who know—the qualified mindfulness meditation teachers and their mentor/masters.

*Modes of the Self.* Cognitive neuroscience has identified two ways of experiencing the self—two modes of self-reference: 1) *narrative focus upon self*, our urgent all consuming story-drama about ourselves; and 2) *experiential focus upon self*, bodily proprioceptive sense experience, including direct trans-conceptual feeling experience. These two modes are hypothesized by cognitive scientists to be neurologically distinct. Recent contemplative research with H.H. Dalai Lama's highly skilled Buddhist meditating monks has shown these two modalities of self experience are in fact a neurological and phenomenological unity. [Davidson 2017; Siegel 2013]

Once again, volumes of research have demonstrated that in both meditators and non-meditators the *experiential focus* mode involving non-conceptual "mindfulness of breathing" as the Buddha called it, reduced egocentric narrative self-referential activity in the MPFC and PCC of the brain's default mode network. The reported result was 'peace of mind' and enhanced feelings of happiness.

For highly skilled meditators habitual fantasy-reverie self-referential thinking of the untrained mind is absent during sitting meditation, and for varying periods of time following formal sitting meditation. Here, processing activity of the default mode network is nearly quiescent. [Davidson 2017] These skilled practitioners abide in a calm post-meditation meditative mind state most of the time. This quiescent state persists through some sleep states. The subjective experience of such a stable neurological state of mind is known to such practitioners as the peace and happiness of the 'yogi's bliss'.

In short, 'advanced' meditators have demonstrated in hundreds of studies (Davidson 2017; Begley 2007; Siegel 2013) the capacity to maintain such stable direct non-conceptual contemplative mind states (*yogi pratyaksa*) with their corresponding brain rhythms (alpha, theta, gamma) in post-meditation activities—while "hewing wood and carrying water", and driving, talking, loving, and even mostly selfless creative thinking and planning.

Therefore, mindfulness meditation practice for established meditators seems to facilitate the *choice* of a fluent cognitive ambulation from conceptual self narrative mode to a selfless, peaceful, non-conceptual experiential mode, almost at will. The result is calm abiding quiescent peace of mind, and a felt sense of happy, blissful connection and interdependence with all living things; indeed, with the *ultimate* unbroken whole of *kosmos* itself—even as inexorable human adversity continues to arise in the *relative* world of spacetime conditioned lived experience.

*Awareness Management.* Clearly, the neuroscientific implications of meditation for the reduction of human suffering and for human happiness are profound. Mindfulness meditation and loving-kindness meditation offer skillful regulation of negative emotional response to life's adversity by transforming the painful narcissistic self-narrative into quiescent, peaceful, and altruistic states of mind. And That (*tathata*) is the open secret of human happiness, both relative human flourishing, and ultimate liberating Happiness Itself. We are what we choose to place our attention upon.

As we learn the practice of "mindfulness of breathing", we learn to place our present moment to moment awareness—our *attention*—upon our direct trans-conceptual wisdom mind *feeling experience*. Thus do we connect with an aspect of ourselves—indeed a numinous Presence—that is selfless, profound, and directly experiential, beyond yet including habitual discursive concepts and beliefs.

*We now begin to see that mindfulness meditation is observing our thoughts without identifying with, or judging them.* We come to understand that we need not believe and defend our adventitious dreary and destructive negative ego-centric thoughts, feelings and closely held beliefs; stress is reduced; human happiness is enhanced. Thoughts, feelings, and beliefs are seen to be inherently evanescent, ever changing, and impermanent. Perhaps we should take them less seriously, with a bit of self-effacing humor. Perhaps after all we are not the egocentric center around which the universe revolves. I have come to call this prodigious cognitive process *awareness management*.

### **The Phenomenology of Primordial Presence in the County Jail**

Not surprisingly, inherently trans-conceptual, 'post-empirical', nonlocal, nondual, selfless, formless, timeless yet always present luminous love-wisdom mind Presence of the all embracing primordial ground of being cannot be objectively located in physical brain, nor heart, nor gut, nor in any other local spacetime place; no more so than the spacious presence of love, or of wisdom, or of happiness can be objectively physically located. Spirit Presence of the numinous 'primordial awareness ground of being' in which, or in whom the stuff of spacetime arises is trans-conceptual, nonlocal, nondual, perfectly subjective contemplative direct experience (*yogi pratyaksa*), quite



beyond the grasp of our concepts and beliefs, try as we may to objectively reduce it to a purely physical/material thinking brain. But don't believe it! It is quite beyond belief.

Moreover, the perfect subjectivity of our innate love-wisdom mind Presence does not admit of purely objective 'scientific proof'; as if objective Science exhausted our human awareness-consciousness procession that constitutes our four cognitive dimensions—mind states and life stages—of the totality of human body, mind, Spirit knowing/feeling experience.

We have seen that, broadly construed, these four state/stages are: 1) pre-conceptual, unelaborated, objective, ordinary direct attention/perception, just prior to concept and naming; 2) dualistic exoteric objective thinking-conceptual Science cognition wherein knowing subject and its objects are separate and divided (*anumana pramana, kalpana, doxa*); 3) esoteric subjective contemplative meditative cognition with emotional feeling cognition (*dhyana, shamatha*); and 4) perfectly subjective nondual (subject-object unity), noetic (body, mind, spirit unity) direct yogic experience (*yogi pratyaksa, samadhi, satori, dhyana*) of our indwelling love-wisdom mind, nondual Spirit ground Presence itself. The deeply subjective love-wisdom mind of our always already present indwelling Christ mind Presence (*christos*), or our Buddha nature love-wisdom Presence (*buddhajnana*) is an exemplar of this all-pervading yogic state/stage four.

We abide most of our lives in the mind states of life stage one and two. It is assiduous practice of the contemplative mind states of life stage three—under the guidance of a qualified meditation master—that open into the adept mastery of buddhas and mahasiddhas dwelling in life stage four.

Yet, wonder of wonders, the love-wisdom '*samadhi* of suchness' and the '*samadhi* of illumination' mind states of life stage four are always already present and available to the experience of our 'ordinary mind' at any moment, in any life stage. Thus do contemplative *mind states* become liberated personality *mind traits*. This is so because our four cognitive dimensions are inherently an indivisible prior and present unity of human experience. The clarity and happiness of state/stage four is always present!

To be sure, it is the art and contemplative science of the ancient practice of 'mindfulness of breathing' that reveals the phenomenology and metaphysics of this numinous 'primordially pure' Presence that pilots us through these four dimensions of our being here in space and time. [Boaz 2023: *The Prior Unity of Science and Spirit*]

Most human beings can recognize this nameless, selfless inherently subjective but very real love-wisdom face of ours when it is contemplatively, directly experienced, more or less beyond, or prior to the relentless distractions of our busy, often troubled, obsessively thinking and self referencing 'selfing' mind. [Davidson 2017; Siegel 2013; Begely 2007]

Please recall our *noetic cognitive doublet* that embraces the great enfolded, always unfolding and arising awareness whole of the above four dimensions of our human cognition—*exoteric objective conceptual*, and *esoteric subjective contemplative/intuitive*. We

quite artificially, conceptually separate these two (or four) modalities of mind to better understand the prior and present invariant one truth unity. That unity is always the unbroken implicate order of the vast expanse of nondual unbounded whole, basal primordial awareness-consciousness ground itself in which, or in whom all of this explicate spacetime stuff and all of us self-reflexively arises, unfolds, participates, and is instantiated. So many words for this basic process of being happy in our human form.

*Experiencing Primordial Presence, and Beyond.* As to my own not especially astute experience in psychiatric corrections, as my incarcerated psychiatric acute care ('the PAC') students came to understand, in a non-conceptual experiential 'felt sense' that this profound, no longer so spooky nondual *unity* of their exoteric physically embodied self-ego-I with 'spiritual' innermost esoteric love-wisdom mind Presence (their actual 'supreme identity'), they began to heal. Their painful sleep disorders often relented and their psychiatric 'meds' were reduced or eliminated. Many came to directly experience (*yogi pratyaksa*) their own always already present Presence of the primordial ground of everything, or of the Christ, or of the Buddha, or *Ein Sof*, or Tao—beyond ego and by whatever grand name—deep within their body mind. [For moving personal written expressions of such experiences please see Boaz 2022 *Appendix D*, "Light From the County Jail".]

'Mindfulness of breathing' as the Buddha called such contemplative experience, revealed to these troubled folks who it is that they truly are—far beyond ego; far beyond their 'pathology' and psychiatric diagnosis; far beyond their not so conscious deep cultural background materialist and religious "global web of belief" (Quine 1969). They came to realize that they are so much more than a suffering unruly ego-I with or without clinical symptoms, or a legal problem, or a discouraging psychiatric diagnosis.

My students learned that the ultimate answer to the urgent perennial question "Who am I", is this: human beings are not just a painful, narcissistic self-ego-I in a material bag of skin. There abides always within each human form a formless, selfless, perfectly subjective love-wisdom 'Presence' of the nondual 'primordial awareness Spirit ground of being' that is inherently clear, peaceful and happy. All of the Buddhas, love-wisdom masters, saints, and sages of the great Primordial Wisdom Tradition of our kind have taught this great truth through the compassionate example of their lives.

Many of my students came to recognize this happy Presence that is their 'supreme identity' of that 'primordial ground' of being. Some of them went well beyond it. Some have become yogi/yoginis. Some are now teaching mindfulness meditation in Buddhist, Christian, Jewish or Islamic settings.

Well then, how does one come to recognize, then realize in one's everyday lifeworld this cognitive spiritual miracle? For my incarcerated students mindfulness meditation and contemplative prayer became the *choice* of each one for peace and happiness in an otherwise dreadful world of unrelenting adversity.

These courageous 'students' of mine have taught me the true happiness potential of all of us human beings being here now as providential heirs of this rare and inconceivable gift of a human life on the Earth.

## V

### The Physics of Mindfulness Meditation

*Wholeness.* Well, what does "hard science" modern/postmodern physics make of such a soft "spooky" subjectivist contemplative consciousness metaphysic? Let us all too briefly survey some of the greatest Nobel laureates of 20th century physics.

In the words of quantum theory pioneer Max Planck (Nobel Prize 1918): "I regard immaterial consciousness as fundamental...matter is derived from it."

Werner Heisenberg (Nobel Prize 1932) on the quantum Principle of Uncertainty:

Subject and object are only one. The barrier between them does not exist....  
There is a fundamental error in separating the parts from the whole.  
Unity and complementarity constitute reality....Causality can only explain  
later events by earlier events, but it can never explain the beginning....  
It will never be possible by pure reason alone to arrive at absolute  
truth....Scientific concepts cover always only a very limited part of reality;  
the other part that has not been understood is the infinite.

For Niels Bohr (Nobel Prize 1922), creator of the quantum Principle of Complementarity, "Opposites are complementary....Truth and clarity are complementary." For Bohr, subject and object, self and other, existence and non-existence, quantum wave and particle, position and momentum are a complementary, nonlocal 'entangled' nondual prior and present unity. Again Bohr,

We must turn to thinkers like Buddha, or Lao Tzu....I go into the Upanishads to ask questions....Our description of nature is not to disclose...phenomena, but to describe our relations with it.

Erwin Schrödinger (Nobel Prize 1933, with Paul Dirac), creator of the Schrödinger Quantum Wave Equation: "Consciousness is absolutely fundamental. It cannot be accounted for in terms of (matter), or anything else."

Paul Dirac (Nobel Prize 1933, with Schrödinger), discoverer of the Dirac Equation which fully unified Einstein's 1905 Special Relativity Theory (SRT) with the 1928 Quantum Theory of Bohr and Heisenberg opening the way for Richard Feynman's prodigious Quantum Electrodynamics (QED). Dirac's sublime equation also predicted the physical reality of antimatter. For Dirac,

All matter is created out of some imperceptible substance not accurately described as material since it uniformly fills all space and is undetectable by any observation...It appears as nothingness—immaterial, undetectable, omnipotent...out of which all matter is created.

Legendary quantum physicist David Bohm expresses it beautifully:

The vast implicate order of the unbroken whole is the ground of existence of everything...In this flow mind and matter are not separate substances. Rather, they are different aspects of one whole...Wholeness is what is real...The notion that these fragments are separate is an illusion. The world is an undivided whole...All the parts unite in one totality.

Einstein (Nobel Prize 1921), a founder, yet later detractor of Quantum Theory:

A human being is part of a great whole. We experience ourselves as something separate from it...This delusion is a kind of prison. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in all its beauty.

In the "spooky" (Einstein's term) conceptual explanatory gap of subjective nonlocal (faster than light) quantum chaos abides the non-objective 'one taste' "wisdom of uncertainty", the ironic and paradoxical, subtle, profound, trans-conceptual, direct experience (*yogi pratyaksa*) of subjective contemplative certainty—for those with good taste anyway. It's flavor is subtle, and quite satisfying. It is indeed, a mindfully acquired taste. As Buddha told in his early *Pali Canon Udana*:

Just as the great ocean has one taste,  
the taste of salt, so also my teaching  
has one taste, the taste of liberation.

In that profound post-empirical nondual certainty we take refuge, ease our fearful weary concept-minds, and rest in the ultimate Nature of Mind, our innermost love-wisdom mind Presence of the primordial ground of this phenomenal world that exoteric post-Standard Model Quantum Field Theory (QFT, QED) knows as the non-zero emptiness of the unified quantum vacuum energy ground state, or ultimate zero point energy field (ZPE). This vacuum energy is now the primary candidate for the mysterious dark energy that accelerates our already expanding universe, the end of which in a few trillion years (give or take a trillion) is a quite chilly "Big Chill Heat Death". [Boaz 2023 *The Noetic Revolution Ch. IV*]

This highly speculative, trans-empirical, purely metaphysical, almost mystical quantum ZPE ground state is none other than our old friend Einstein's Cosmological Constant ( $\Lambda$  *lambda*) which in 1917 he inserted into the field equations of his great 1915 General Relativity Theory (GRT) to explain an expanding universe which his theory predicted. But Einstein was certain that the cosmos was static; the prevailing cosmological ideology of the time. Thus did the great physics master tweak his wondrous expanding universe GRT with his *lambda*  $\Lambda$  constant "to hold back gravity" and remain true to the "perfect cosmological principle" alternative to recent Big Bang cosmology. That was the timeless, ageless "steady state universe" model of his esteemed cosmologist peers Hermann Bondi, Thomas Gold, and Fred Hoyle.

Alas, Einstein came to regret his *lambda*  $\Lambda$  Cosmological Constant. In 1929 Edwin Hubble demonstrated that the universe was far from a static 'steady state', but was indeed expanding. Adding factual insult to Einstein's theoretical injury, in 1998 it was discovered independently by the Perlmutter and Schmidt teams that the expanding universe was actually accelerating! Yes, mysterious dark energy is the probable cause; and the positive value of Einstein's Cosmological Constant  $\Lambda$  is the primary suspect for dark energy. [Ch. 7] Discomfiting outcome for Herr Professor Doktor Einstein, to be sure. As physicist Steven Weinberg told, "Perhaps he should have taken his mathematics more seriously."

So yes, the foundational primordial awareness-consciousness ground of our great Wisdom Tradition is alive and well in recent objectivist classical relativistic physics; and even more so in post-classical non-objective nonlocal entangled quantum physics and cosmology with their ZPE quantum emptiness. But this is far from a demonstration that dualistic objective Science "proves" the great nondual wisdom teaching of Buddhist emptiness/*shunyata*. Better perhaps to view it as a dualistic metaphor for an inherently nondual, trans-conceptual invariant through all human cognitive reference frames *one truth unity* of the perfectly subjective ultimate nature and nondual Spirit ground of all-embracing reality itself in whom this all arises and plays.

Unfortunately, in spite of what we have just heard from our quantum pioneers, lesser minds of recent relativistic and quantum physics are still trying to reduce the random observer-dependent, nonlocal entangled subjectivity at the very heart of the quantum theory to the old classical observer-independent paradigm bias that is ideological objectivist, reductionistic Scientific Local Realism/Materialism/Physicalism. Philosophers of physics and cosmology, including myself, are tearing their hair out. Let Physicists, philosophers of physics and Buddhist scholar-practitioners dialogue over pizza and ale. Why isn't this happening? Old Big Science paradigm doctrinal bias?

It may be useful in this regard to understand that objective Science cannot give us the whole picture even of objective physical reality, let alone the perfectly subjective boundless whole, primordial awareness-consciousness Spirit ground itself in which, on

the view of some of our quantum pioneers, not to mention Gautama Buddha, spacetime physical stuff arises, participates, and is providentially instantiated for us.

As Bertrand Russell suggested in 1927, and cosmologist Arthur Eddington later told, "Physics describes what matter *does*; it doesn't tell us what it *is*." What this appearing reality ultimately *is* abides beyond physics, in the only recently respectable domain of metaphysics. [Klein 2006; Wallace 2012; Boaz 2022





## VI

### The Nine Stages of Shamatha Meditation

*Noetic Prelude: Mind and the Nature of Mind.* Mind is like vast empty space. Space is empty. Just so, mind is naturally and inherently empty—no boundary, no limit, no center and no edge. Mind is empty in essence, like basic space. Mind is essentially spacious, diaphanous and ephemeral. Yet unlike space, mind is cognizant and aware—spacious empty awareness. In the clear words of recent *Dzogchen* master Tulku Urgyen:

The empty essence itself is like the space of sky. Our cognizance is like sunshine. The sky itself never changes whether it's sunny or cloudy...We train in recognition of mind essence. [*As It Is, Volume II*]

For Dzogchen master Dilgo Khyentze Rinpoche,

The mind is free of any true inherent reality...To recognize the ultimate Nature of Mind is to recognize its selfless emptiness... That is a realization that occurs in the realm of direct experience. It cannot be expressed in words.

The great 19th century ecumenical *rimé* master Shechen Gyaltsap Rinpoche (2020), root lama of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, unfolds the self-reflexive *Dzogchen* Great Perfection View of this everyday miracle of the vast expanse that is our all subsuming primordial awareness-consciousness ground itself:

Self-cognizing awareness is beyond verbal expression. It is the union of primordial purity [*kadag*] and spontaneous presence [*lhundrub*] the sole sphere of self-arisen primordial wisdom... the actual nature of ordinary mind. It is unaltered by dualistic subject-object cognition. It is beyond thought, word and conceptual formulation. It is the great state beyond the ordinary mind... It is the nature of mind...free of any arising and cessation throughout the three times [past, present, future]...Empty luminosity, beyond all movement...ultimate reality, the unconditioned, uncompounded dharmata, the state of great equality...by nature stable, peaceful, unmoving, ever-lasting...one and only sphere... perfect ground beyond movement and change...indwelling primordial wisdom that purifies the mind's defilements...nondual,

beyond identity or difference...This is why it is called *perfection*.  
And because the ground, path, and result is primordial wisdom,  
it is *great*...the Great Perfection...It is the union of appearance and  
emptiness, the fourth state of the mind, free of past, present, future...  
It is wholly untrammelled, beyond the extremes of existence and nothing.

We have thus far engaged many words for that deep love and wisdom unity that  
"cannot be expressed in words". What is the essential truth of that great mystery of  
liberated human happiness?—"That flower absent from all bouquets." [Mallarmé]

Gautama Shakumuni the Buddha of this present age simplified his wondrous  
teaching in a force of very few words. Indeed, we discover in the early *Pali Canon* that  
entire wondrous teaching of all that was to come. The precious *Dhammapada* reveals it:

First do no harm.  
Practice what is skillful  
In benefiting living beings.  
Train and purify your mind.  
That is my teaching.

In these twenty-one words we are given the heart essence of 26 centuries of that  
prodigious primordial teaching of the Buddha.

*Finding Nondual Dzogchen Truth in the Middle Way*. In Tibetan Buddhist tantric  
wisdom view and practice the Mahayana Prasangika Madhyamaka Middle Way is said  
by those who know to be the conceptual foundation of the Great Perfection that is itself  
the acausal nondual Great Completion of the Mahayana Causal Vehicle.

Broadly construed, the Mahayana teaches cause and effect. If you desire *that*  
future result, first practice and accomplish *this* cause. However, the non-causal *Ati*  
*Dzogchen* 'fruitional view' teaches—as Middle Way founder Nagarjuna told two  
centuries past—"That which you seek is already accomplished from the very beginning;  
to rest here without seeking, that is the meditation."

The Fruit or Result that we, as a self-ego-I seek, is our always already present  
love-wisdom Buddha mind (*buddhajnana*), indwelling knowing-feeling spirit Presence  
(*rigpa*) of the nondual ultimate primordial spirit ground (*gzhi rigpa*) that is both origin  
and aim of all our fruitless happiness seeking strategies. Whether or not this wisdom is  
part of our present system of concepts and beliefs.

That primordial wisdom (*jnana, yeshe*) is the self-arising, self-perfected, nondual  
*Dzogchen* View, Meditation, and Action/Conduct that realizes the "already  
accomplished" Ground, Path, and Fruition-Result.

And yes, such a multi-dimensional mythopoetic noetic understanding abides  
beyond the conceptual reach of our human discursive cognition. Thus are the "central

meanings" of the great Secret Mantra fruitional teaching—the Buddha's subtlest and 'highest' nondual teaching—grounded in the *Ati Yoga* fruitional path, and 'pointed out' through the gentle, skillful guidance of the *Dzogchen* master.

*The Power of Bodhicitta.* The selfless compassionate *bodhicitta* of the Mahayana Middle Way—uncontrived, spontaneous, effortless thought, intention, and engaged human action for both the relative and ultimate benefit of living beings—requires the cooperation of the self, that unruly, apparitional non-entity that is the narcissistic self-ego-I, concerned mostly with, yes, I, me, and mine. A bit paradoxical because selfless *bodhicitta* is, well, selfless. As to compassionate *Bodhicitta*—the wisdom of kindness—Buddha told, "This cannot be taught." It utterly transcends concept and belief. It cannot be authentically contrived nor fabricated. Effort and goal directed activity shall not accomplish it. William Shakespeare has told it well:

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath.  
It is twice blessed; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

—Portia, *Merchant of Venice*

Thus does our too often duplicitous self, as we refrain from denigration, denial, and 'pathologizing' of it ('self-loathing') become our love-wisdom ally as it learns to take refuge in its selfless prior and present primordial noself love-wisdom ground. Bright primordial Presence of That (*tathata*).

Now selfless *bodhicitta* becomes the open secret and primary cause of our human happiness, both relative happiness (*eudiamonia, felicitas*) and ultimate Happiness Itself (*paramananda, mahasukha, beatitudo*). Failure to launch that great spirit gift of *bodhicitta* is a primary cause of human and animal suffering. All the avatars, mahasiddhas, saints and sages of the wisdom traditions of humankind have taught the love and wisdom of *bodhicitta*. We do have this ethical choice—the second of the Buddha's Mahayana *Six Paramitas*. Good karma indeed.

*Our Kosmic Process: Involution, Evolution, and Buddha Mind.* Within formless, selfless empty 'basic space'—formless, timeless, selfless primordial awareness-consciousness ground, vast expanse of the boundless whole of arising reality being itself—perforce naturally and spontaneously arise in an illusory time living sentient beings. Some of these beings evolve into human beings with our indwelling if un-awakened Buddha nature Buddha mind, and then, in due course and by grace, into perfectly awakened buddhas.

Natural clarity of the buddha Nature of Mind (*sem nyid, cittata*) seems bewitched by dualistic thinking and grasping desire-mind of these deluded human beings, mired as we are in 'primal ignorance' (*avidya, marigpa, ajnana, hamartia* or sin) with its

destructive afflictive emotions—fear, anger, hatred, grasping desire, greed, and pride of an atavistic personal self-ego-I. That rude awakening begets collective despotism, genocide, despair, and endless war—root cause of our negative karma and rebirth. Not at all a pretty picture.

Now the good news. Upon Buddha's 'mindfulness of breathing' such adventitious destructive thoughts and negative emotions arising in unruly untrained mind are surrendered and so 'self-liberated' at the very instant of their arising in the vast empty space of sky, like a bird leaving no trace. That happens at the bottom of each conscious mindful breath, on the out breath. "Let your indescribable awareness remain undistracted in the naked state of basic space...That dissolves our negative karma and disturbing emotions." [Tulku Urgyen]

More good news. Wherever there is such an afflicted suffering mind there is as well the very clear light Nature of Mind that embraces and subsumes it. And that is none other than our inherent, indwelling love-wisdom mind that is primordial Buddha nature Buddha mind. Indeed, relative mind and the ultimate Buddha Nature of mind are always already a prior and present one truth unity. We are told by the buddhas and mahasiddhas that mind and the Nature of Mind abide in a primordial state of relational equality and identity. What a relief!

That Buddha Nature of ours subsumes and pervades the mind and body of all sentient beings arising within the vast expanse of its primordial *dharmakaya* ground, boundless whole in whom we all arise and participate. The aboriginal imprint of That I AM That I AM is always already present as 'innermost secret' primordial Presence (*rigpa, vidya, christos*) of that formless, timeless, selfless ground. *Emaho!* How wonderful!

Well, how shall we realize that great truth of lucent being itself in our busy lives? Here the proverbial plot thickens. What at first blush seems like a really bad show of the impossible task killing off your self-ego-I becomes your soteriological liberating saving grace. Although, at the beginning of the 'Path' we are scarcely aware of this *kosmic* miracle, we may still make some highly unlikely providential choices. The prepared mind somehow finds a 'spiritual' mentor or master. He or she then introduces us to the aboriginal luminous Nature of Mind and we begin the quiescent and happy shamatha 'mindfulness of breathing' practice that bears this luscious fruit.

As Buddha told so long ago, "Now I am breathing in; I am happy and at peace. Now I am breathing out; I am happy and at peace." That is mindful shamatha.

In our *kosmic* process, as the karmic winds of the movement of mind in space and time cause the fabrications and imputations of dualistic concept-mind (*namtok*) and its deep cultural background 'global web of belief' we have 'forgotten' (*marigpa, avidya*) that actual 'supreme identity' of our 'supreme source' ground and fall under sway of narcissistic self-ego-I with its habitual obsessive split between perceiving subject and its perceived objects. The result is this terrible suffering for living beings. What to do?

Should you be so lucky to have found your spiritual mentor, he or she points out ('pointing out instruction') that, yes, the actual nature of your more or less deluded and ultimately illusory *relative* mind and its all too real phenomena is *already* your *ultimate* buddha mind itself—bright luminous, numinous indwelling Presence of That (*tathata*)!

But to awaken to that miracle you require 'mind training' in order to 'take refuge' in the ground of it, and then through that recognize, pacify, stabilize, then realize the already present body, voice, and mind of all the buddhas. Buddha told, "The true refuge of self is selfless no-self." And "wonder of wonders", that is already your love-wisdom buddha mind (*buddhajñana*). As Buddhist Middle Way Madhyamaka founder Nagarjuna told, "It is already accomplished from the very beginning. To rest here without seeking something more is the true Meditation."

As you begin to tame the 'wild horse of the mind'—breath by mindful breath—obsessive self-referential conceptual thinking is at least partially liberated, and you learn to relax into, then rest in that empty 'basic space' (*dharmadhātu, chöying*) of mind that is peace and yogi's bliss, your 'supreme identity', actual buddha nature of mind.

Soon you begin to notice that you are actually happy, even as inexorable adversity continues to arise in your busy life world. And from that 'meditative stability' spontaneously arises your kind compassionate *bodhicitta*—the thought, intention, and engaged action for the benefit of all living beings. Yes, that most of all. That wisdom of kindness is after all, the open secret of human happiness. What do think dear Reader?

As you now see your buddha mind in midst of the scattered activity of your mostly negative concept mind—without imputing and reifying any difference—a 'samadhi of certainty' enters in wherein adventitious thinking is 'self-liberated' at or near the very instant of its arising. Great Perfection clarity/bliss! Stop and *feel* that now just for this brief moment.

Please notice that no egocentric nor even yogic *effort* whatsoever is required. No *seeking* of something more is required. So you surrender the foolish drama of your happiness seeking strategies as your goal becomes the moment to moment practice itself. Indeed, all that you think and do is practice. The Buddha's emptiness of mind is no longer merely conceptual. Yes, it is who you actually are—your 'supreme identity'.

That then is the noetic (body mind spirit subject-object unity) *process* of liberating the conflicted mind in its own prior and present nature. As Buddha told so long ago, "Rest your weary mind and let it be as it is; all things are perfect exactly as they are."

What then is the 'skillful method' that assures your awakening to that already present realization of your 'innermost secret' precious mind essence?

Hot tip. At the instant of receiving your introduction to the Nature of Mind by the spiritual master, you no longer need seek it elsewhere. That happiness you seek is already present within your ordinary mind! And now you know and feel it. Seeking already present happiness to avoid suffering, is itself a kind of suffering; is it not?

Therefore, you cannot *become* happy in some exalted future mind state. But you can *be* happy here and now.

In my own not especially special case, upon the light touch to my forehead of my Guru's fingers I instantly realized my clear joyous identity with the primordial essence of my own mind. My nondual (subject-object unity) ultimate 'Big Mind'. And yes, many happy years of relative 'Small Mind' unfolding and unpacking that love-wisdom buddha mind have followed. My mind, your mind, any mind, and the luminous mind essence of all the buddhas abides in that eternal relationship of noetic, trans-conceptual, nondual identity of mind with its essential Nature of Mind.

*Shamatha (sati, smriti)*. It begins with our conscious 'placement of attention/awareness' upon the 'object of meditation', usually the *prana* spirit breath in the belly. That courageous placement of attention instantly connects you to your 'innermost secret' Spirit ground home.

The Mahayana Buddhist source texts for shamatha include Indian Buddhist master Kamalashila's *Bhavanakrama*, the Buddha's own *Satipatthana* Sutra, and his *Anapanasati* Sutra, and the *Arya Ratnamegha* Sutra. Good ancillary reading indeed.

Shamatha calm abiding meditation is for Buddhist Mahayana the foundation and necessary prerequisite for the analytic penetrating insight of 'clear seeing' Vipashyana meditation. A calm quiescent mind is prior yet present to analytic insight. During the nine stages of shamatha, analytic Vipashyana and mindful shamatha are practiced together and thus constitute a unity that approaches the profundity of Buddha's one truth unity (*dzog*) of his Two Truths. Shamatha engages and partially completes the 7th and 8th disciplines of Buddha's Eightfold Path to the cessation of suffering.

*Shamatha in Dzogchen and Mahamudra*. In the *Dzogchen Semde* teaching cycle Shamatha is the first of the four Nyingma School *Dzogchen* yogas, followed by Vipashyana, Kadag nondual primordial ground, and Lhundrab primordial Presence of that ground. These parallel the Four Yogas of Kagyu Essence *Mahamudra*.

In the 'nondoing' of *Dzogchen* and *Mahamudra* we do not attempt to create or contrive a state of calm abiding by actively *doing* something, but let the mind directly experience that always present state of nondual primordial Presence by *not trying* to do anything. We open our hearts and minds to receive that which is always already present as the very Nature of Mind. Bright Presence of That (*tathata*). So resting in that basic space (*dharmadhatu*) is often called 'non-meditation'. We 'leave it alone' that non-conceptual Ultimate Truth and 'let it be as it is' — radically unmeditated.

That supreme meditation is undistracted, non-seeking, non-doing non-meditation. It is quite natural because that basic space is always our natural 'supreme identity'. That spacious essential mind nature is formless, timeless, and selfless, beyond

the 'three times' that are past, present, future, always abiding in *turiya*, the empty, timeless 'nowness' of the fourth time, or 'fourth state'.

Past and future are gone beyond. Nothing happens there. Past is but a present memory. Future is but a present anticipation. And this 'eternal' present moment now is too brief to be grasped and held. It is already past. So there is nothing to which we may cling. What remains? Just this spacious emptiness (*shunyata*) awareness upon the mindful breath. And that's enough.

In *Dzogchen* view and practice we are therefore not encouraged to strive for a conceptually contrived hierarchy of preconceived levels of contemplative accomplishment that progressively eliminates discursive thinking and negative cognition, but rather to simply recognize such habitual cognition as adventitious impermanent transient phenomena that 'self-liberates' into its primordial awareness-consciousness ground at the very instant of its arising to mind. In that most subtle teaching shamatha means 'mindfulness of breathing', as the Buddha called it so long ago. Thus do we view the mind itself 'just as it is', the empty 'object of meditation'. The penetrating insight of vipashyana then follows most naturally.

Shamatha as placement of attentional awareness upon the breath need not be construed as purely Buddhist meditation. It is present in its various contemplative raiment in all of the primary wisdom traditions of humankind—Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, and in esoteric Abrahamic monotheism—Hebrew, Christian, and Islam.

*Nine Stages.* Still, the ancient progressive mindfulness 'stages' are useful to our linear objective understanding that is the cognitive support for our perfectly subjective realization. Human cognition, our *noetic cognitive doublet*, has two interconnected voices—objective conceptual, and subjective contemplative. We must learn to engage them both, at first more or less individually, then with a bit of practice, simultaneously.

The first four stages of shamatha allow us to develop contemplative meditative stability. These are placement of attention on the object of meditation (usually the mindful breath), continuous placement, repeated placement, and close placement of our attentional awareness. Stages five and six bestow clarity, to tame and pacify the distracting 'laxity and excitation' that block the profound equanimity of shamatha. Stages seven, eight and nine bestow that equanimity (*upeksha*)—single pointed pacification of our habitual conceptual and emotional distractions from natural peaceful, blissful equanimity.

Please know that no matter how intelligent and intellectually well trained is your mind, it is woefully untrained in quiescent mindfulness of breathing, as you will see.

Conscious 'placement of attention' upon the mindful *prana* breath in the belly begins with surrender of busy scattered concept mind that thereby allows the instant connection with our indwelling always already present numinous *Presence* of Adi Buddha Samanthabhadra, formless, timeless, selfless, all embracing primordial

*dharmakaya* ground—vast boundless whole that is ultimate reality being itself in whom all relative spacetime stuff arises, participates, and is impermanently instantiated.

1) *Directed Placement of Attention*. Beginning stage. Course excitation and laxity are to be expected. Placement of conscious focused attention on a chosen object of awareness—usually the breath in the belly now begins. Scattered thoughts continue to arise in your untrained mind like a wild horse—the untamed 'wild horse of the mind'.

Buddha's 'mindfulness of breathing' begins. Your self-ego-I will discover creative 'excuses' for forgetting, or for being just too busy to practice. You are after all already far too busy. Awareness of the urgency of compassionate *bodhicitta*—the thought, intention, and engaged action for the benefit of all living beings—begins in earnest. Self-referencing mind ('selfing') is full of itself. Use basic mantra practice—*OM AH HUM* or *LAMA KHYEN*—to connect to your always already present love-wisdom mind Presence. Use a 108 bead mala. Remain present to your breath a minute or so 'brief moments many times' as you go about your day. If you are not too resistant, practice with or without your mantra 5-10 minutes before retiring, and first thing upon arising, even (Gasp!) before your morning coffee.

You do have this choice to manage your awareness. It's the potential of each human being. It will save you a lot of time in anxious worry and obsessive thinking. Now is the time to begin.

2) *Continuous Placement of Attention*. You have now accomplished brief focused unbroken attentional continuity on the breath. The gap (*schnitt*) between thoughts extends for a minute or so. Mostly conceptual and random wandering thinking in and out of the natural breath. Frequent distraction from your mindful breath. Course excitation alternating with laxity remain. The only mistake you can make here is to quit. You have by now engaged with a qualified meditation master to gently and subtly guide your practice.

3) *Repeated Placement of Attention*. Mindfulness or calm abiding reveals anew your natural indwelling *Presence* of the very ground of being. You observe your recovery of distracted attentional awareness and return to the mindful breath. You are gaining confidence. It's working! Non-judgmental introspection begins to develop. Frequent distraction from the breath via random obsessive 'selfing' is further reduced. Course excitation and laxity continues. *Bodhicitta* and the 'wisdom of kindness' increases as your mindful practice becomes less narcissistic—'all about me'. Your *bodhicitta* expands phylogenetically to embrace non-mammalian life forms. You no longer take the life of 'lower' life forms. You now take refuge in the precious Three Jewels day and night.



4) *Close Mindful Attention*. Primordial Presence becomes real. Clarity and precision of focused attention further develop. You remain close to the mindful breath. Thoughts and feelings, negative and positive, pass on the out breath. You now have certainty that you can 'continue in confidence' upon this path. Tempered excitement and laxity. Distractions begin to subside. Kind, non-judgmental introspection further develops. Peace at last for the scattered mind. *Bodhicitta* becomes engaged action. The *Paramitas* of generosity, ethical conduct, patience, and perseverance approach stability.

5) *Mindfully Tamed Awareness*. Distractions during meditation are becoming tamed. The 'wild horse of the mind' has come home and is accepting advanced training. Samadhi insight brings peace of mind and a bit of 'yogi's bliss'. Distraction, excitement and laxity remain. You begin to dwell in the always present subtle spirit Presence of the *ultimate* primordial awareness *dharmakaya* ground of all *relative* spacetime reality. That 'samadhi of certainty' transcends your concepts and beliefs about it. Self-ego-I becomes background. You have entered into nondual practices with your mentor. Your intimate family relationships, as well as working relationships, are now stable, generous, patient, kind, and loving. You have earned almost everyone's respect. You now realize, if you have not already done so, that you have liberated through Buddha's basic mindfulness of breathing, thousands of years of seemingly negative karmic imprints. You are becoming free of it. Great joy! That joy is the only true human emotion. *Feel That* now.

6) *Mindfully Pacified Awareness*. Distraction is further pacified. The gap between thoughts has become 30 minutes or longer. Suppression of thinking is long gone. Resistance and excuses to mindfulness practice have fallen away. Your duplicitous demanding self-ego-I is now an ally. You no longer see self as your enemy. You have come to be kind to and love your unruly self, like the faithful mother loves her willful child. Buddha told so long ago, "Noself is the true refuge of self." Introspection, analytic penetrating insight, and peace/bliss continues. 'Sloth and torpor' and the yogi's mild depression are no longer suppressed and repressed so enter in awareness to be liberated. Your chakras at the heart, throat, forebrain, and crown are all open for business. You now have many practices with their approach and root mantras. The first four *Paramitas* of the path are imperfectly stable. You now *feel That (tathata)* happiness in your heart of hearts.

7) *Fully Pacified Awareness*. Always already present peace and equanimity has fully emerged into your life world. And you here and now have the samadhi of certainty that knows and feels it. Attraction and Aversion of the negative afflictive emotions born in primal ignorance (*avidya, marigpa*)—fear/anger, hatred, grasping desire, greed and pride—become present to awareness and are allowed to 'self-liberate' at or near the instant of their arising, almost moment to moment upon the mindful

*prana* breath. Subtle distractions and imbalances in attentional awareness (laxity and excitation) remain present but are quickly recognized and surrendered upon the quiescent mindful breath. Habitual obsessive conceptual mind is pacified. 'Selfing' is further minimized. Your *bodhicitta* is a light to all who enter your sphere. You have come to understand that That is the open secret of human happiness. As if self and other were ever separate at all. You are now authentically happy!

8) *One Pointed Awareness*. Non-self absorbed contemplative meditative concentration has now emerged from the cushion to your everyday life world. Clarity, bliss, happiness manifest abundantly in your sphere. It is quite contagious. That 'samadhi of suchness' is extended in time and space and effortlessly, spontaneously expresses itself as profound selfless engaged *bodhicitta*. Excitation and laxity remain subtly present. Conceptual mind and creative thinking are now a choice. *Bodhicitta* is abundantly active in word and deed. Adversity happens. Yet you are happy! You understand that the best way to help a suffering world is to be present to your own indwelling primordial Presence of all embracing dharmakaya ground. Great joy!

9) *Equanimity: Awareness Stability*. Great peace, clarity, and psycho-emotional 'spiritual' stability. Shamatha calm abiding is well established and complete. Samadhi clarity joy/bliss is effortlessly sustained in your sitting, walking, working, and teaching. Subtle latent attentional imbalance may arise until the full *bodhi* of buddhahood. Your conceptual discursive mind is mostly quiescent. Conceptual activity is minimal. Love-wisdom mind *bodhicitta* is well balanced. Self-referencing cognition is minimal. The Six *Paramitas* are well grounded. You are home at last!

For practitioners of *Dzogchen*, *trekchö* and *tögal* may or may not be complete. The ultimate happiness of liberation from adventitious human suffering is present most of the time. Your concern for others exceeds your concern for yourself. Much karma is redeemed in that lovely light.

You are not yet through. Mindful shamatha is a prodigious beginning. It is not ultimately free of discursive thinking. Buddha's last words, "Make of yourselves a light." At all stages of shamatha you are now That (*tathata*). It's like coming home. *Amaho! Mahasukho!* May all beings be happy.

Thank you H.H. Dalai Lama, Adzom Paylo Rinpoche, Adzom Gyalse Rinpoche, Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche, Lama Harvey Aronson, Lama Anne C. Klein, Lama Tsultrim Allione, Alan Wallace, and many others for this impossible task of codifying the miracle of the great gift of mindful shamatha awareness.

## VII

### Let It Be: Brief Course in Basic Mindfulness Meditation

Enjoy the clear bright space between your thoughts.

#### **Happiness Arises From Your Present Mind State!**

*Awareness Management.* Therefore, train your mind in happiness: peace, free of the habitual thinking of self-ego-I with its unhappy fear, anger, hatred, and pride. Mindfulness meditation is after all a conscious finite portal into infinite Basic Space—peace, boundless primordial awareness whole, original ground of everything arising therein—bright love-wisdom mind Presence of That, always already present within you now. Train your mind in *placement of awareness/attention* upon that aspect, or imprint, or *Presence* that you actually are, in this present moment now. You do have that choice.

'Mindfulness of breathing' is the meditation that accomplishes this open secret of human happiness. Below are Ten Steps that will make you happy, not in some glorious future mind state, but here and now. Good news! It's easier than you think. And it requires little more than breathing. So begin now by *feeling* the breath in your belly.

Now sit in a chair, your back straight, hands in your lap, legs uncrossed, feet flat on the floor. Or sit on a cushion, legs crossed. Or consciously walk in a peaceful meadow. That is known as 'walking meditation'. Walk mindfully walk after sitting.

#### **1. Thank You!**

*Experience deep thanks for the great gift of your life, just as it is now. Accept yourself—all your positive and negative experience—exactly as you are, here and now. Feel your selfless good will intention to benefit living beings. That is the primary cause of your own human happiness.*

*Sitting Meditation:* lower your gaze so that your neck is straight. Relax jaw, neck, gut. Feel for a minute or two the life giving *prana* spirit wind upon the breath in your belly. Breathe naturally and normally. Now *place your attention/awareness* behind your forehead, in the forebrain. *Close your eyes, and raise your eyebrows.* This posture will produce alpha and 'waking theta' brain rhythm, the peace response, replacing habitual stressful 'fight or flight' beta rhythm. *Feel* the gentle stirring here, a subtle focused

fullness in the forebrain. Let the crown of your head open as light streams in from above and instantly pervades your entire body and mind, and deep into our Mother Earth. Now return to the *prana* life energy rising upon each breath. Rest here for a few moments in that quiet peaceful space of the primordial Presence that you are.

## 2. Attention!

*Again gather the 'wild horse of the mind' by placement of attention/awareness upon your breath. Be present to your breath as it rises and falls in your belly. No need to block thoughts. Simply observe whatever arises, positive or negative. In this safe space it's all good.*

Let your mantra prayer begin. Softly recite *OM AH HUM* (see below). That is your 'alpha mantra breath': 5 seconds in; 7 seconds out through pursed lips (12 seconds). Do it 3 to 9 times (36 to 108 seconds). Count them or not, as you wish. Let this, or other mantra prayer continue, either consciously, or in awareness background, day and night.

*Each mindful breath feel your busy mind settle into its quiet natural state of wakefulness; your clear light love-wisdom mind Presence—that aspect of you that is utterly connected with the great source of everything—your safe place, beyond all thoughts, concepts, beliefs; free of judgment, fear, anger, hatred, grasping desire, guilt, pride; just for a moment utterly free of self-ego-I. No need to think about it. Open and feel it! Be that stillness. Now say to the busy mind, "Peace, be still". Say to the frightened grasping self, "Peace, I Am".*

Thoughts, questions, feelings naturally arise. Briefly greet whatever arises in your busy mind. Negative or positive thinking, planning, mind wandering, worry/anxiety, anger: label whatever arises "distraction", or "thinking". Then surrender it all on the out-breath. Or let it flow by on vast empty space of the sky, like a cloud, leaving no trace. *Again and again return attention to the breath.* After three or four minutes open your eyes slightly and breathe normally, mouth closed, tongue on the roof of your mouth, behind your teeth. Feel that indwelling naturally arising happiness that is always present.

As you settle into, and rest in your selfless *love-wisdom mind Presence*, your breath will naturally be slow and gentle. Enjoy this feeling of delight within you. Feel your connectedness to everything. No need to try to create it; or grasp at it; or seek it. Mindful Presence upon the breath is always already present—your "Supreme Source Identity". Who Am I? *That I Am!* Rest in That and enjoy for as long as you wish.

### 3. In-Breath

Open to receive luminous purifying 'life-force energy', sustainer of all life. It has many names. In the East this energy is *prana* or *ch'i* (spirit/breath). For the West it is *pneuma*/Holy Spirit, the very 'breath of life', for neuroscience it is 'bio energy', the subtle presence of gross physical light/energy/form ( $E=mc^2$ ) arising from formless, timeless, selfless, non-conceptual, spacious unbounded whole; vast primordial awareness-consciousness ground itself in whom this all arises. *Breathe*, you are alive! Open and receive. Yes. Feel it pervade every space of your body-mind. Rest and enjoy.

### 4. Out-Breath

Release thoughts, feelings, past, future, all self-ego-I grasping. Feel your stability deep in our precious Mother Earth. Whatever arises—thoughts, feelings, doubts, happy or not—release it all on the out-breath. Surrender it all. Witness it all dissolve as you return to your mindful mantra breath, again and again. *Let it be just as it is* in this great gift of peaceful luminous sky-like space of your mind.

As Buddha told so long ago: "Now I am breathing in; I am happy and at peace. Now I am breathing out; I am happy and at peace." No need to complicate it. Recite that, even count your breaths, or both, if it helps you to calm the 'wild horse of the mind'. Give it up when you no longer need it. If you are new to "mindfulness of breathing" you will be astounded at your 'addiction' to constant self-referential thinking ('selfing'). It's OK.

*Please consider this well: Thoughts are only thoughts. They come and they go in dependence upon your present mind state. Thoughts are not a solid reality! You are now learning to choose your realities by choosing your present mind state. All of the love-wisdom Masters of our great Primordial Wisdom Tradition have taught this great liberating freedom to be happy right here now. We accomplish that through conscious mindful "placement of attentional awareness".*

So, as thoughts and feelings begin to retreat, *feel* your selfless, natural clear light *love-wisdom mind Presence*—peace, clarity, subtle bliss. From this natural spacious mind state the kind, compassionate *activity* of love spontaneously arises in your mind stream—the very secret and primary cause of human happiness. Now, place your *attention* on that.

So it is, that deep blissful peace you desire rides the breath. Remain close to the breath. When distracted by fear/anxiety, anger, or self-doubt—simply return to already present Presence of the nondual primordial ground—upon your conscious mindful mantra

breath, again and again. When your mind is filled with this light of love-wisdom mind Presence, there is little room for the negative stuff. Practice that and be happy. Now, rest naturally in That for as long as you wish. Practice being here while working, running endless errands, arguing with the kids, or sleeping.

## 5. Presence

*Now simply breathe peacefully and naturally. Open your heart and mind and feel your always present indwelling love-wisdom mind Presence of vast open awareness whole in whom this all so naturally and spontaneously arises. It's right here! That you are now! Subtle Presence of That may be directly experienced, prior to thinking, or during thinking, as luminous clear-light mind essence—the essential Christ-Buddha Nature of Mind, beyond any name, concept, or belief.*

*Your Full Body Scan.* While sitting, or prone on your back, now once again experience this *prana* spirit light life-energy at the open crown of your head. Feel it stream in from above upon each breath. Open your heart to receive. Feel the *prana* spirit wind instantly pervade your entire body-mind—like a purifying flash of spirit light energy. Relax into it, and observe as it spontaneously flows downward from your crown center throughout your head, throat, heart center in your chest, back, *hara* center in the belly, pelvis, and deep into Mother Earth. Let any obstructions to your *prana* spirit life energy flow that you are ready to release pass out and away through the soles of your feet and the palms of your hands. Feel your natural fearless stability in Earth. Yes. Release any negative thoughts and emotions that are ready to go, whether or not you as a self-ego-I are aware of that readiness. That is your healing 'full body scan'. "Just like that it is."

So now let this energy of Presence penetrate any discomfort—that self-contraction from your natural life-energy flow: physical tension and pain, sense desire, grief, self-doubt, guilt, fear/anxiety, anger/hostility, harsh judgments of self and others. Patient love and wisdom heal fear and anger. And now, wonder of wonders, you know what to do! "Instant Presence" of your alpha mantra breath is your touchstone to being happy now.

Now experience the emotional lift as any and all presently activated 'attachment and aversion' are inundated by loving Presence of clear light life energy. *Be* for a moment with whatever arises—attractive or aversive. Then surrender it all on the out-breath. Know now you are free of it. Tomorrow you shall once again free yourself of it.

Now once again *feel* this light penetrate and pervade space of your entire emotional and physical body-mind: brain, nervous systems, heart, organs, cells, the very atomic

structure of your physical/emotional/spiritual being. Now, rest in this feeling of delight within you. "Let it be as it is, and rest your weary mind, all things are perfect exactly as they are...Wonder of wonders all beings are Buddha" (Buddha) "That which you seek...the Kingdom of God...is already present within you...and it is spread upon the face of the Earth, but you do not see it." [Jesus the Christ, Luke 17]

With each breath *feel* your healing life energy Presence fill and overflow into your subtle energy field, this light of you that embraces and pervades your whole body-mind and fills your spacious non-physical *akashic* energy field. Awaken to this 'basic goodness' that you are, prior to our deep background cultural skeptical 'global web of belief'. But don't *believe* it. It's beyond belief. *Feel* it. Self-ego-I is now at peace. Now that you can feel it, rest fearlessly in That. So arise and do some good. It will make you happy now.

## 6. Wisdom Mind is a Choice

*"What you are is what you have been; what you will be is what you do now."* [Gautama the Buddha] This bright basic space upon the breath is your natural wakefulness—your primordial love-wisdom mind Presence. *Choose* to be that space/peace, here and now, beyond ego: no past nor future; no attachment nor aversion; no true nor false; no judgment at all—just for this moment. No need to think, try or do anything. *Know that your clear-light mind is already awake, kind and wise. Rest in That, each breath. Let it be as it is; calm and clear.*

Love-wisdom mind *practice* is your Path to liberation from egocentric ignorance and delusion, root cause of human suffering. Stay with it. Your self-ego-I may resist. Notice the bogus excuses. This *choice* of yours is kind, karma free *relative* human flourishing that does no harm; and *ultimate* happiness-liberation from suffering; the happiness that cannot be lost.

*Thus is human happiness very much an awareness management skill set!* Happiness arises, not so much from desirable stuff, but from the choice of your *placement of awareness/attention* upon your breath, in this present moment now! No belief, no leap of faith, no authority but your own is required. Simply settle your mind, open your heart, and be fully present to your alpha mantra breath now. That is your *connection* to peace and happiness already present within you. That is the foundation of your love-wisdom mind practice of the Path. *What is your mind? That is your mind. Feel that now, beyond your thoughts about it. Rest in That.*

## 7. Refuge

Now you know this precious Basic Space/peace of your *love-wisdom mind Presence*. Take refuge in it often. Breath by breath purify, pacify, stabilize, beautify your mind; a most courageous act; your most urgent activity. Make mindful breathing a priority, '*brief moments; many times*', all day, all night. Soon it becomes a quiet conscious continuity of awareness. Who am I? Feeling *Presence* of that vast whole—'*Tat Tvam Asi; That I AM*', without a single exception. You have never been separate from That! Feel it upon each breath. *That is the View. That is the Teaching. That is the Practice. It's like coming home.*

## 8. Compassion Meditation

By this good generated by each mindful breath make this aspiration for the benefit of all living beings: "*May all beings be free of suffering, and the causes of suffering. May all beings have happiness, and the causes of happiness*". That powerful mantra prayer is as well, your *Compassion Meditation* when practiced for a few minutes. It moves your attention from self to others. 'Come and see' what it does for your present state of happiness.

Is not your happiness already linked to the happiness of others? We're all in this reality boat together. Accomplish your own happiness through compassionate thought, intention, and action to benefit living beings. It's called altruism. In the East it's *bodhicitta*. It's the magic metric for a good life. So arise, and do some good. It will make you happy.

## 9. Real Practice

Practice requires patience and courage. Please don't say that you don't have it. You demonstrate it every day. Patience is the antidote to anger, which arises from fear. It takes courage to face our fear. Practice 10 minutes or more upon rising and retiring; and many '36 seconds of bliss' alpha mantra breaths during the day. 'Brief moments many times'. Peace is always here, between your constant thoughts, each mindful breath.

*Take refuge in your love-wisdom mind Presence often.* Feel it at your heart before sleep; and all night long. Be present while waking, eating, walking, working, loving. Lovingly accept yourself as a mother accepts her willful child. You are that mother. You are that child. No blame. Anxious, angry? No time? *Take three OM AH HUM belly breaths now!* Go ahead and do it now. That is enough. Your goal is *not* peace and happiness in some



ideal future mind state. *Make the practice itself your goal*—each mindful breath. "Mindfulness of breathing is the foundation of all wisdom and happiness." [Buddha]

## 10. The Five Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation: An Always Present Unity

- 1) *Body-Mind Relaxation* experienced as profound peace, forgiveness, healing.
- 2) *Non-Conceptuality*: beyond self-ego-I thinking, concept, belief, fear and anger.
- 3) *Clarity*: mental and perceptual acuity, luminosity, vividness, wakefulness.
- 4) *Deep Appreciation* and acceptance of your life, and yourself, just as you are now.
- 5) *Wisdom Mind Presence*: real happiness expressed as kind, compassionate action.

### Good Sleep

This works! Engage your alpha mantra breath a few minutes near your bed just before sleep. Continue to recite *OM AH HUM* silently, on your back, hands over your solar plexus, or at your side, palms down. Settle into your clear light love-wisdom mind Presence. Feel it throughout your entire body and mind.

Now begin your *full body scan*. *Feel* the gentle peace of *prana* spirit life energy throughout your entire body mind. With a touch of attentional awareness your crown center is open. Feel Presence of Buddha or Christ or your guru three feet above your crown. Breath by mindful breath receive this love and peace from above through your crown and into your head; neck, shoulders, chest, arms and hands; then belly and back, pelvic area, legs and feet, and deep into Mother Earth. Let this life-light *prana* life energy pervade your body-mind all the way down to the subatomic level.

Relax into this light. And now rest in it. Let any obstruction to energy flow—tension, pain, worry, anger—flow away on the out-breath, and out through your hands and feet. "Rest your weary mind and let it be as it is." Feel life energy *prana* peace pervade your entire body-mind. Now say quietly, "May all beings be free of suffering and the causes of suffering. May all beings be happy, and have the causes of happiness." Thus do you go beyond 'self' to the quiet peace of Christ-Buddha selfless 'noself' Presence of the *ultimate* primordial ground of everything that arises here in this all too real *relative* dimension of space and time. As your breath naturally becomes slow and regular, let

your *OM AH HUM* mantra prayer settle into your awareness background as you assume your normal sleeping position. Rest in That. Let this spirit breath be your love-wisdom lullaby and goodnight.

Please be patient. Give the practice a couple of weeks. Make it your own. Common sense: don't use caffeine or stimulants after noon; don't read or watch TV in bed; don't tolerate snoring bed fellows; let pets sleep alone for a week; taper off sleeping meds.

### ***OM AH HUM: Our Three Reality Dimensions***

Use this powerful mantra prayer as a touchstone in your practice—all that you think and do is practice—to instantly connect to and protect your primordial love-wisdom mind Presence. Let it be always in your awareness foreground or background. Free your mind by reciting it 3-4 times daily 108 times while walking, or sitting. (Get a 108 bead mala.) These three 'Buddha Bodies' are one prior and present *one truth unity*.

*OM* is *dharmakaya* dimension, formless, timeless, selfless empty 'Basic Space', all-pervading, always present primordial awareness ground of all arising spacetime phenomena, vast unbounded whole of Reality Being Itself. *AH* is *sambhogakaya* dimension, like the sun in empty space; Logos; selfless, lucid clear light awareness—light bridge into form. *HUM* is Presence, dream-like display of *nirmanakaya* form dimension—Buddha mind acting in time as love-wisdom Presence of *OM*—always already present now within you; light-form gift naturally expressing itself as skillful loving *bodhicitta*—thought, intention and action to benefit all living beings.

What is your mind? That (*tathata*) is your mind. Who am I? *I AM OM AH HUM*: body, voice, and mind of all the Buddhas and wisdom masters of the Three Times—past, present, future—instant connection to That! Three Gates to peace. Feel it purify your cause and effect karma. Don't think so much. Feel your way here. *The benefit of 'mindfulness of breathing' is immeasurable.*

Now you know the open 'innermost secret' of human happiness. Please consider it well. If you desire to be free and happy, then choose to practice it. You do have that choice. Now that you know, arise and do some good. It will make you happy, not in the future, but here and now. It's like coming home. *Emaho!* [Excerpted from *Mindfulness Meditation: The Complete Guide*, 2022, David Paul Boaz]



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