Course on Meditation (Stopping & Deep Looking)
November 21, 2010 – February 20, 2011

Verse 10:
Nirvana is non-attainment.
Sudden or gradual enlightenment are not different.
True realization is to live in freedom
right now in this moment.

alternative version:
Nirvana means non-attainment
Immediate and Gradual Enlightenment are not Seperate
Realizing this one lives with Freedom
right in this present life.

Reflection Questions:
1) Do I notice times when I feel the need to be right? How does this manifest in thought, word and action?
2) What situations do I notice more of a push to be right, or to prove my point? How does this feel in my body? In my mind?
3) If I can sit with that experience, am I able to discover anything underneath?

Practices
Don't Know Mind
Only Don't Know

Readings
Discourse on Teachings to be Given to the Sick

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Discourse on the Teachings to Be Given to the Sick

I heard these words of the Buddha one time when the Lord was staying in the monastery in the Jeta Grove in Anathapindika's park, near Shravasti. At that time the householder Anathapindika was seriously ill. When the Venerable Shariputra was told this, he immediately went to Ananda and said, "Brother Ananda, let us go and visit the layman Anathapindika." The Venerable Ananda replied, "Yes, let us go now."

The Venerable Ananda put on his robe, took his bowl, and went into the town of Shravasti with the Venerable Shariputra to make the almsround. Ananda walked behind Shariputra, stopping at every house until they came to the house of the layman Anathapindika, and they went in to visit him. After he had sat down, the Venerable Shariputra asked the layman Anathapindika, "How is your illness? Is it getting better or worse? Is the physical pain easing at all or is it getting greater?" The householder Anathapindika replied, "Venerable monks, it does not seem to be getting better. The pain is not easing. It is getting greater all the time." Shariputra said, "Friend Anathapindika, now is the time to practice the meditation on the Three Jewels, the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

"The Buddha has gone to Suchness, is fully and truly awakened, has perfected understanding and action, has arrived at true happiness, understands the nature of the world, is unequaled in understanding, has conquered the afflictions of human beings, is a teacher of gods and humans, and is the Awakened One, the one who liberates the world.

"The Dharma is the teaching of love and understanding that the Tathagata has expounded. It is deep and lovely, worthy of the highest respect, and very precious. It is a teaching that cannot be compared to ordinary teachings. It is a path of practice for the Noble Ones.

"The Sangha is the community of practice, guided by the teachings of the Awakened One. The community is in harmony, and within it all aspects of the practice can be realized. The community is respected and precious. It practices the precepts and realizes concentration, insight, and liberation. Offerings made to the Sangha are very beneficial.

"Friend Anathapindika, if you meditate in this way on the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, the beneficial effects are beyond measure. Meditating in this way, you can destroy the obstacles of wrong deeds and the afflictions. You can harvest a fruit that is as fresh and sweet as the balm of compassion. A woman or a man practicing an upright way of life who knows how to meditate on the Three Jewels will have no chance of falling into the three lower realms but will be reborn as a human or a god.

"Friend Anathapindika, now is the time to practice the meditation on the Six Sense Bases:

"These eyes are not me. I am not caught in these eyes.
"These ears are not me. I am not caught in these ears.
"This nose is not me. I am not caught in this nose.
"This tongue is not me. I am not caught in this tongue.
"This body is not me. I am not caught in this body.

“This mind is not me. I am not caught in this mind.
“Now continue your meditation with the Six Sense Objects:
“These forms are not me. I am not caught in these forms.
“These sounds are not me. I am not caught in these sounds.
“These smells are not me. I am not caught in these smells.
“These tastes are not me. I am not caught in these tastes.
“These contacts with the body are not me. I am not caught in these contacts with the body.
“These thoughts are not me. I am not caught in these thoughts.
“Now continue your meditation on the Six Sense Consciousnesses:
“Sight is not me. I am not caught in sight.
“Hearing is not me. I am not caught in hearing.
“Consciousness based on the nose is not me. I am not caught in the consciousness based on the nose.
“Consciousness based on the tongue is not me. I am not caught in consciousness based on the tongue.
“Consciousness based on the body is not me. I am not caught in consciousness based on the body.
“Consciousness based on the mind is not me. I am not caught in consciousness based on the mind.
“Now continue your meditation on the Six Elements:
“The earth element is not me. I am not caught in the earth element.
“The water element is not me. I am not caught in the water element.
“The fire element is not me. I am not caught in the fire element.
“The air element is not me. I am not caught in the air element.
“The space element is not me. I am not caught in the space element.
“The consciousness element is not me. I am not caught in the consciousness element.
“Now continue your meditation on the Five Aggregates:
“Form is not me. I am not limited by the form aggregate.
“Feelings are not me. I am not limited by the feeling aggregate.
“Perceptions are not me. I am not limited by the perception aggregate.
“Mental formations are not me. I am not limited by the mental formation aggregate.
“Consciousness is not me. I am not limited by the consciousness aggregate.
“Now continue your meditation on the Three Times:
“The past is not me. I am not limited by the past.
“The present is not me. I am not limited by the present.
“The future is not me. I am not limited by the future.

“Friend Anathapindika, everything that arises is due to causes and conditions. Everything that is has the nature not to be born and not to die, not to arrive and not to depart.When eyes arise, they arise, but they do not come from anywhere. When eyes cease to be, they cease to be, but they do not go anywhere. Eyes are neither nonexistent before they arise, nor are they existent after they arise. Everything that is comes to be because of a combination of causes and conditions. When the causes and conditions are

sufficient, eyes are present. When the causes and conditions are not sufficient, eyes are absent. The same is true of ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind; form, sound, smell, taste, touch, and thought; sight, hearing, and the consciousnesses based on the nose, tongue, body, and mind; the Six Elements, the Five Aggregates, and the Three Times.

"In the Five Aggregates, there is nothing that we can call 'I,' a 'person,' or a 'soul.' Ignorance is the inability to see this truth. Because there is ignorance, there are mistaken impulses. Because there are mistaken impulses, there is mistaken consciousness. Because there is mistaken consciousness, there is the distinction between the perceiver and the perceived. Because there is the distinction between the perceiver and the perceived, there is the distinction between the six organs and the six objects of sense. Because there is the distinction between the six organs and the six objects of sense, there is contact. Because there is contact, there is feeling. Because there is feeling, there is thirst. Because there is thirst, there is grasping. Because there is grasping, there is being. Because there is becoming, there are birth, death, and the subsequent pain and grief.

"Friend Anathapindika, you have meditated that everything that arises is due to causes and conditions and does not have a separate self. That is called 'the meditation on emptiness.' It is the highest and the most profound meditation."

When he had practiced to this point, the layman Anathapindika began to cry. Venerable Ananda asked him, "Friend, why are you crying? Has your meditation not been successful? Do you have some regret?" The layman Anathapindika replied, "Venerable Ananda, I do not regret anything. The meditation has been most successful. I am crying because I am so deeply moved. I have been fortunate to have been able to serve the Buddha and his community for many years, yet I have never heard a teaching so wonderful and precious as the teaching transmitted by the Venerable Shariputra today."

Then the Venerable Ananda said to the layman Anathapindika, "Do you not know, friend, that the Buddha often gives this teaching to bhikshus and bhikshunis?" The layman Anathapindika replied, "Venerable Ananda, please tell the Buddha that there are also laypeople with the capacity to listen, understand, and put into practice these deep and wonderful teachings."

After hearing Shariputra's instructions and meditating accordingly, Anathapindika felt free and at ease. The Venerables Shariputra and Ananda bade him farewell and went back to the monastery, and Anathapindika passed away and was born in the thirty-third heaven.

Ekottara Agama 51. 8
(In consultation with Majjhima Nikaya 143
and Madhyama Agama 26)