

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

Verse 7

To dwell in the present moment, to transform all habit energies, to give rise to understanding, liberating ourselves from all afflictions.

Alternative version
Dwelling peacefully in the present moment, transforming habit energies gives rise to understanding, freeing me from afflictions and pain.

Meditation Practices:

Silent Sitting Meditation Slow Walking Meditation Time-outs during the day – one minute meditation

Reflections:

- What is nourishing our capacity to dwell in the present moment?
- How do we cultivate our capacity to be present?
- What prevents us from dwelling happily in the present moment?
- What can we let go of in order to be more present?

Reading:

Five Mindfulness Trainings Discourse on the White-Clad Disciple



web: <u>www.dpweb.org</u> email: <u>deerpark@dpmail.net</u> 2499 Melru Lane, Escondido,CA (760) 291-1003 ext 100 The Five Mindfulness Trainings represent the Buddhist vision for a global spirituality and ethic. They are a concrete expression of the Buddha's teachings on the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path, the path of right understanding and true love, leading to healing, transformation, and happiness for ourselves and for the world. To practice the Five Mindfulness Trainings is to cultivate the insight of interbeing, or Right View, which can remove all discrimination, intolerance, anger, fear, and despair. If we live according to the Five Mindfulness Trainings, we are already on the path of a bodhisattva. Knowing we are on that path, we are not lost in confusion about our life in the present or in fears about the future.

Reverence For Life

Aware of the suffering caused by the destruction of life, I am committed to cultivating the insight of interbeing and compassion and learning ways to protect the lives of people, animals, plants, and minerals. I am determined not to kill, not to let others kill, and not to support any act of killing in the world, in my thinking, or in my way of life. Seeing that harmful actions arise from anger, fear, greed, and intolerance, which in turn come from dualistic and discriminative thinking, I will cultivate openness, non-discrimination, and non-attachment to views in order to transform violence, fanaticism, and dogmatism in myself and in the world.

True Happiness

Aware of the suffering caused by exploitation, social injustice, stealing, and oppression, I am committed to practicing generosity in my thinking, speaking, and acting. I am determined not to steal and not to possess anything that should belong to others; and I will share my time, energy, and material resources with those who are in need. I will practice looking deeply to see that the happiness and suffering of others are not separate from my own happiness and suffering; that true happiness is not possible without understanding and compassion; and that running after wealth, fame, power and sensual pleasures can bring much suffering and despair. I am aware that happiness depends on my mental attitude and not on external conditions, and that I can live happily in the present moment simply by remembering that I already have more than enough conditions to be happy. I am committed to practicing Right Livelihood so that I can help reduce the suffering of living beings on Earth and reverse the process of global warming.

True Love

Aware of the suffering caused by sexual misconduct, I am committed to cultivating responsibility and learning ways to protect the safety and integrity of individuals, couples, families, and society. Knowing that sexual desire is not love, and that sexual activity motivated by craving always harms myself as well as others, I am determined not to engage in sexual relations without true love and a deep, long-term commitment made known to my family and friends. I will do everything in my power to protect children from sexual abuse and to prevent couples and families from being broken by sexual misconduct. Seeing that body and mind are one, I am committed to learning appropriate ways to take care of my sexual energy and cultivating loving kindness, compassion, joy and inclusiveness – which are the

four basic elements of true love – for my greater happiness and the greater happiness of others. Practicing true love, we know that we will continue beautifully into the future.

Loving Speech and Deep Listening

Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful speech and the inability to listen to others, I am committed to cultivating loving speech and compassionate listening in order to relieve suffering and to promote reconciliation and peace in myself and among other people, ethnic and religious groups, and nations. Knowing that words can create happiness or suffering, I am committed to speaking truthfully using words that inspire confidence, joy, and hope. When anger is manifesting in me, I am determined not to speak. I will practice mindful breathing and walking in order to recognize and to look deeply into my anger. I know that the roots of anger can be found in my wrong perceptions and lack of understanding of the suffering in myself and in the other person. I will speak and listen in a way that can help myself and the other person to transform suffering and see the way out of difficult situations. I am determined not to spread news that I do not know to be certain and not to utter words that can cause division or discord. I will practice Right Diligence to nourish my capacity for understanding, love, joy, and inclusiveness, and gradually transform anger, violence, and fear that lie deep in my consciousness.

Nourishment and Healing

Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful consumption, I am committed to cultivating good health, both physical and mental, for myself, my family, and my society by practicing mindful eating, drinking, and consuming. I will practice looking deeply into how I consume the Four Kinds of Nutriments, namely edible foods, sense impressions, volition, and consciousness. I am determined not to gamble, or to use alcohol, drugs, or any other products which contain toxins, such as certain websites, electronic games, TV programs, films, magazines, books, and conversations. I will practice coming back to the present moment to be in touch with the refreshing, healing and nourishing elements in me and around me, not letting regrets and sorrow drag me back into the past nor letting anxieties, fear, or craving pull me out of the present moment. I am determined not to try to cover up loneliness, anxiety, or other suffering by losing myself in consumption. I will contemplate interbeing and consume in a way that preserves peace, joy, and well-being in my body and consciousness, and in the collective body and consciousness of my family, my society and the Earth.

Discourse on the White-Clad Disciple

fering.

I heard these words of the Buddha one time when he was staying at the monastery in the Jeta Grove near Shravasti that had been donated by the layman Anathapindika.On that day, Anathapindika came with five hundred other lay students of the Buddha to the hut where Shariputra resided. They bowed their heads in reverence to Shariputra and sat down respectfully to one side. Venerable Shariputra offered them skillful teachings, bringing them joy and confidence in the Three Jewels and the practice of the true Dharma. Then, Shariputra and the five hundred laymen and women went together to the hut of the Buddha, where Shariputra, Anathapindika, and the other five hundred laymen and women prostrated at the Buddha's feet and sat down to one side.

When he observed that everyone was seated, the Buddha addressed Shariputra, saying, "Shariputra, if lay students of the Buddha, those who wear white robes, study and practice the Five Mindfulness Trainings and the Four Contemplations, they will realize without hardship the capacity to abide happily in the present moment. They know they will not fall into the realms of hell, hungry ghosts, animals, and other suffering paths. "Such men and women will have attained the fruit of stream-enterer, and they will have no fear of descending into dark paths. They are on the way of right awakening. They will only need to return to the worlds of gods or men seven more times before attaining perfect liberation and the end of suf-

"Shariputra, how do lay students of the Buddha, those who wear white robes, study and practice the Five Mindfulness Trainings and the Four Contemplations?

"Lay students of the Buddha refrain from killing, put an end to killing, rid themselves of all weapons, learn humility before others, learn humility in themselves, practice love and compassion, and protect all living beings, even the smallest insects. They uproot from within themselves any intention to kill. In this way, lay students of the Buddha study and practice the first of the Five Mindfulness Trainings.

"Lay students of the Buddha refrain from taking what has not been given, put an end to taking what has not been given. They find joy in being generous without expecting anything in return. Their minds are not obscured by greed or craving. They constantly guard their own honesty and uproot from within themselves any intention to take what has not been given. In this way, lay students of the Buddha study and practice the second of the Five Mindfulness Trainings.

"Lay students of the Buddha refrain from sexual misconduct, put an end to sexual misconduct, and protect everyone — those under the care of their father, mother, or both father and mother; their elder sister or elder brother; their parents-in-law or other in-laws; those of the same sex; the wife, daughter, husband or son of another; and those who have been raped, assaulted, or sexually abused, or who have been prostitutes. Lay students of the Buddha uproot from within themselves any intention to commit sexual misconduct. In this way, lay students of the Buddha study and practice

the third of the Five Mindfulness Trainings.

"Lay students of the Buddha refrain from saying what is not true, put an end to saying what is not true. They say only what is true, and they find great joy in saying what is true. They always abide in truth and are completely reliable, never deceiving others. They have uprooted from within themselves any intention to say what is not true. In this way, lay students of the Buddha study and practice the fourth of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. "Lay students of the Buddha refrain from drinking alcohol, put an end to drinking alcohol. They uproot from within themselves the habit of drinking alcohol. In this way, lay students of the Buddha study and practice the fifth of the Five Mindfulness Trainings.

"Shariputra, how do lay students of the Buddha attain the Four Contemplations and abide happily in the present moment with ease and without hardship? They practice being aware of the Buddha, meditating on the one who has come from Suchness and returns to Suchness; as one who is truly and fully awakened, without any attachments; as one whose understanding and practice are perfect; as the Well-Gone One; as one who knows and fully understands the world; as one who has attained the very highest; as one who has tamed what needs to be tamed; as a teacher of humans and gods; as an Awakened One; and as a World-Honored One. When they meditate in this way, all unwholesome desires come to an end, and impure, sorrowful, or anxious elements no longer arise in their hearts. As a result of contemplating the Buddha, their thoughts are clear, they feel joy, and they arrive at the first of the Four Contemplations, abiding happily in the present moment, with ease and without any hardships.

"Shariputra, the lay students of the Buddha practice being aware of the Dharma, meditating as follows: the Dharma is taught by the Lord Buddha with great skill; it can lead to complete liberation; it can lead to a state of no afflictions; it is cool and refreshing; its value is timeless. When lay students of the Buddha meditate on and observe the Dharma in this way, all unwholesome desires come to an end, and impure, sorrowful, or anxious elements no longer arise in their hearts. As a result of contemplating the Dharma, their thoughts are clear, they feel joy, and they arrive at the second of the Four Contemplations, abiding happily in the present moment, with ease and without any hardship.

"Shariputra, the lay students of the Buddha practice being aware of the Sangha, meditating as follows: the noble community of the Tathagata is advancing in a good direction; it is on an upright path; it is oriented toward the Dharma; it lives the teachings in the way they are meant to be lived. In that community, there are the Four Pairs and the Eight Grades — realized arhats and those who are realizing the fruit of arhatship, non-returners and those who are realizing the fruit of non-returning, once-returners and those who are realizing the fruit of once-returning, and stream-enterers and those who are realizing the fruit of stream-entry. The noble community of the Tathagata has successfully realized the practice of the mindfulness trainings (shila), the practice of concentration (samadhi), and the practice of insight (prajña). It has liberation and liberated vision. It is worthy of respect, honor, service, and offerings. It is a beautiful field of

merit for everyone. As a result of contemplating the Sangha, their thoughts are clear, they feel joy, and they arrive at the third of the Four Contemplations, abiding happily in the present moment, with ease and without any hardship.

"Shariputra, the lay students of the Buddha practice being mindful of the mindfulness trainings, meditating as follows: the mindfulness trainings have no drawbacks, flaws, impurities, or unsound points; and they help us abide in the land of the Tathagata. The Mindfulness Trainings are not of the nature to deceive. They are always praised, accepted, practiced, and guarded by the holy ones. As a result of contemplating these Trainings, the students' thoughts are clear, they feel joy, and they arrive at the fourth of the Four Contemplations, abiding happily in the present moment, with ease and without any hardship.

"Shariputra, remember that white-clad disciples of the Buddha who practice in this way will not descend into hell realms, hungry ghost realms, animal realms, or any other realms of suffering. They have experienced the fruit of stream-entry, which means not falling into paths of hardship or wrongdoing. Having entered the stream, they cannot help but go in the direction of right awakening. They will only need to return to the world of gods or humans seven more times before they arrive at complete liberation and the end of sorrow."

Thus spoke the Buddha. The Venerable Shariputra, the other monks and nuns, the layman Anathapindika, and the other five hundred laymen and laywomen heard these words and were delighted to put them into practice.

Upasaka Sutra, Madhyama Agama 128*