

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

## Verse 5

To calm, to relax the body and mind; to nourish, to heal, to protect the six senses; and to maintain Right Concentration.

Alternative version

Calming body and mind; receiving nourishment and healing, protecting my six senses; I maintain concentration.

## Meditation Practices:

Deep Relaxation
Guided Meditation

#### Guided Meditation:

Breathing in, I experience the in-breath. Breathing out, I experience the out-breath.

In-out

Breathing in, I experience my whole body sitting. Breathing out, I experience my whole body sitting. *Aware of body – aware of sitting* 

Breathing in, I come in contact with my eyes. Breathing out, I smile to my eyes.

Aware of eyes - smiling to eyes

Breathing in, I come in contact with my ears. Breathing out, I smile to my ears.

Aware of ears - smiling to ears

Breathing in, I come in contact with my nose. Breathing out, I smile to my nose.

Aware of nose - smiling to nose

Breathing in, I come in contact with my tongue. Breathing out, I smile to my tongue.

Aware of tongue - smiling to tongue

Breathing in, I come in contact with my skin. Breathing out, I smile to my skin.

Aware of skin - smiling to skin

Breathing in, I come in contact with my mind. Breathing out, I smile to my mind.

Aware of mind - smiling to mind

Breathing in, I enjoy the in-breath. Breathing out, I enjoying the out-breath.

Enjoying in-breath – enjoying out-breath

#### Reading:

Discourse on the Full Awareness of Breathing (especially section II)



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## **Deep Relaxation**

The following is an example of how to guide yourself or others in Deep Relaxation. Allowing your body to rest is very important. When your body is at ease and relaxed, your mind will be at peace as well. The practice of Deep Relaxation is essential for your body and mind to heal. Please take the time to practice it often. Although the following guided relaxation may take you thirty minutes, feel free to modify it to fit your situation. Use the time you have. Just five to ten minutes when you wake up in the morning, before going to bed in the evening, or during a short break in the middle of a busy day will relax your body and mind. You can also make it longer and more in-depth. The most important thing is to enjoy it.

Lie down comfortably with your back on the floor or a bed. Close your eyes. Allow your arms to rest gently on either side of your body and let your legs relax, turning outwards.

As you breathe in and out, become aware of your whole body lying down. Feel all the areas of your body that are touching the floor or bed you are lying on: your heels, the backs of your legs, your buttocks, your back, the backs of your hands and arms, the back of your head. With each out-breath, feel yourself sinking deeper and deeper into the floor, letting go of tension, letting go of worries, not holding on to anything.

As you breathe in, feel your abdomen rising; as your breathe out, feel your abdomen falling. For several breaths, just notice the rise and fall of your abdomen.

Now, as you breathe in, become aware of your two feet. As you breathe out, allow your two feet to relax. Breathing in, send your love to your feet; breathing out, smile to your feet. As you breathe in and out, know how wonderful it is to have two feet that allow you to walk, run, play

sports, dance, drive, and do so many other activities throughout the day. Send your gratitude to your two feet for always being there for you wherever you need them.

Breathing in, become aware of your right and left legs. Breathing out, allow all the cells in your legs to relax. Breathing in, smile to your legs; breathing out, send them your love. Appreciate whatever degree of strength and health is there in your legs. As you breathe in and out, send them your tenderness and care. Allow them to rest, sinking gently into the floor. Release any tension you may be holding in your legs.

Breathing in, become aware of your two hands lying on the floor. Breathing out, completely relax all the muscles in your two hands, releasing any tension you may be holding in them. As you breathe in, appreciate how wonderful it is to have two hands. As you breathe out, send a smile of love to your two hands. Breathe in and out and be in touch with all the things your two hands allow you to do: cook, write, drive, hold someone's hand, hold a baby, wash your own body, draw, play a musical instrument, type, build and fix things, pet an animal, hold a cup of tea. So many things are available to you because of your two hands. Just enjoy the fact that you have two hands, and allow all the cells in your hands to really rest.

Breathing in, become aware of your two arms. Breathing out, let your arms fully relax. As you breathe in, send your love to your arms; as you breathe out, smile to them. Take the time to appreciate your arms and whatever strength and health are there in them. Send them your gratitude for allowing you to hug someone, to swing on a swing, to help and serve others, to work — cleaning the house, mowing the lawn, doing so many things throughout the day. Breathing in and out, allow your two arms to let go and rest completely on the floor. Feel the tension leaving your arms. As you embrace them with your mindfulness, feel joy and ease in every part of your two arms.

Breathing in, become aware of your shoulders. Breathing out, allow any tension in your shoulders to flow out into the floor. As you breathe in, send your love to your shoulders; as you breathe out, smile with gratitude to them. Breathing in and out, be aware that you may have allowed a lot of tension and stress to accumulate in your shoulders. With each exhalation, allow the tension to leave your shoulders, and feel them relaxing more and more deeply. Send them your tenderness and care, knowing that you do not want to put too much strain on them, you want to live in a way that will allow them to be relaxed and at ease.

Breathing in, become aware of your heart. Breathing out, allow your heart to rest. With your in-breath, send your love to your heart. With your out-breath, smile to your heart. As you breathe in and out, get in touch with how wonderful it is to have a heart still beating in your chest. Your heart allows your life to be possible, and it is always there for you, every minute of every day. It never takes a break. Your heart has been beating since you were a four-week-old fetus in your mother's womb. It is a marvelous organ that allows you to do everything you do throughout the day. Breathe in and know that your heart also loves you. Breathe out and commit to live in a way that will help your heart to function well. With each exhalation, feel your heart relaxing more and more. Allow each cell in your heart to smile with ease and joy.

Breathing in, become aware of your stomach and intestines. Breathing out, allow your stomach and intestines to relax. As you breathe in, send them your love and gratitude. As you breathe out, smile tenderly to them. Breathing in and out, know how essential these organs are to your health. Give them the chance to rest deeply. Each day they digest and assimilate the food you eat, giving you energy and strength. They need you to take the time to recognize and appreciate them. As you breathe in, feel your stomach and intestines relaxing and releasing all tension. As you breathe out, enjoy the fact that you have a stomach and intestines.

Breathing in, become aware of your eyes. Breathing out, allow your eyes and the muscles around your eyes to relax. Breathing in, smile to your eyes; breathing out, send them your love. Allow your eyes to rest and sink back into your head. As you breathe in and out, know how precious your two eyes are. They allow you to look into the eyes of someone you love, to see a beautiful sunset, to read and write, to move around with ease, to see a bird flying in the sky, to watch a movie — so many things are possible because of your two eyes. Take the time to appreciate the miraculous gift of sight, and allow your eyes to rest deeply. You can

gently raise your eyebrows to help release any tension you may be holding around your eyes.

Here you can continue to relax other areas of your body, using the same pattern as above.

Now, if there is a place in your body that is sick or in pain, take this time to become aware of it and send it your love. Breathing in, allow this area to rest; breathing out, smile to it with great tenderness and affection. Be aware that there are other parts of your body that are still strong and healthy. Allow these strong parts of your body to send their strength and energy to the weak or sick area. Feel the support, energy, and love of the rest of your body penetrating the weak area, soothing and healing it. Breathe in and affirm your own capacity to heal; breathe out and let go of the worry or fear you may be holding in your body. Breathing in and out, smile with love and confidence to the area of your body that is not well.

Finally, breathing in, become aware of the whole of your body lying down. Breathing out, enjoy the sensation of your whole body lying down, very relaxed and calm. Smile to your whole body as you breathe in, and send your love and compassion to your whole body as you breathe out. Feel all the cells in your whole body smiling joyfully with you. Feel gratitude for all the cells in your whole body. Return to the gentle rise and fall of your abdomen.

If you are guiding other people, and if you are comfortable doing so, you can now sing a few relaxing songs or lullables.

To end, slowly stretch and open your eyes. Take your time to get up, mindfully and lightly. Practice to carry the calmness and attentiveness you have generated here into your next activity, and throughout the day.

## Discourse on the Full Awareness of Breathing

I heard these words of the Buddha one time when he was staying in Savatthi in the Eastern Park, with many well-known and accomplished disciples, including Sariputta, Mahamoggallana, Mahakassapa, Mahakacchayana, Mahakotthita, Mahakappina, Mahachunda, Anuradha, Revata, and Ananda. The senior bhikkhus in the community were diligently instructing bhikkhus who were new to the practice — some instructing ten bhikkhus, some twenty, some thirty, and some forty; and in this way the bhikkhus who were new to the practice gradually made great progress.

That night the moon was full, and the Pavarana Ceremony was held to mark the end of the rainy-season retreat. Lord Buddha, the Awakened One, was sitting in the open air, and his disciples were gathered around him. After looking over the assembly, he began to speak:

"O bhikkhus, I am pleased to observe the fruit you have attained in your practice. Yet I know you can make even more progress. What you have not yet attained, you can attain. What you have not yet realized, you can realize perfectly. [To engage your efforts,] I will remain here until the next full-moon day."

When they heard that the Lord Buddha was going to remain in Savatthi

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for another month, bhikkhus throughout the country began traveling there to study with him. The senior bhikkhus continued teaching the bhikkhus new to the practice even more ardently. Some were instructing ten bhikkhus, some twenty, some thirty, and some forty. With this help, the newer bhikkhus were able, little by little, to continue their progress in understanding.

When the next full-moon day arrived, the Buddha, seated under the open sky, looked over the assembly of bhikkhus and began to speak:

"O bhikkhus, our community is pure and good. At its heart, it is without useless and boastful talk, and therefore it deserves to receive offerings and be considered a field of merit. Such a community is rare, and any pilgrim who seeks it, no matter how far he must travel, will find it worthy.

"O bhikkhus, there are bhikkhus in this assembly who have realized the fruit of Arhatship, destroyed every root of affliction, laid aside every burden, and attained right understanding and emancipation. There are also bhikkhus who have cut off the first five internal knots and realized the fruit of never returning to the cycle of birth and death.

"There are those who have thrown off the first three internal knots and realized the fruit of returning once more. They have cut off the roots of greed, hatred, and ignorance, and will only need to return to the cycle of birth and death one more time. There are those who have thrown off the three internal knots and attained the fruit of stream-enterer, coursing steadily to the Awakened State. There are those who practice the Four Establishments of Mindfulness. There are those who practice the Four Right Efforts, and those who practice the Four Bases of Success. There are those who practice the Five Faculties, those who practice the Five Powers, those who practice the Seven Factors of Awakening, and those who practice the Noble Eightfold Path. There are those who practice loving kindness, those who practice compassion, those who practice joy, and those who practice equanimity. There are those who practice the Nine Contemplations, and those who practice the Observation of Impermanence. There are also bhikkhus who are already practicing Full Awareness of Breathing."

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"O bhikkhus, the Full Awareness of Breathing, if developed and practiced continuously, will be rewarding and bring great advantages. It will lead to success in practicing the Four Establishments of Mindfulness. If the method of the Four Establishments of Mindfulness is developed and practiced continuously, it will lead to success in the practice of the Seven Factors of Awaking. The Seven Factors of Awakening, if developed and practiced continuously, will give rise to understanding and liberation of the mind.

"What is the way to develop and practice continuously the method of Full Awareness of Breathing so that the practice will be rewarding and offer great benefit?

"It is like this, bhikkhus: the practitioner goes into the forest or to the foot of a tree, or to any deserted place, sits stably in the lotus position, holding his or her body quite straight, and practices like this: 'Breathing in, I know I am breathing in. Breathing out,'

- 1. 'Breathing in a long breath, I know I am breathing in a long breath.

  Breathing out a long breath, I know I am breathing out a long breath.
- 2. 'Breathing in a short breath, I know I am breathing in a short breath. Breathing out a short breath, I know I am breathing out a short breath.
- 3. 'Breathing in, I am aware of my whole body. Breathing out, I am aware of my whole body.' He or she practices like this.
- 4. 'Breathing in, I calm my whole body. Breathing out, I calm my whole body.' He or she practices like this.
- 5. 'Breathing in, I feel joyful. Breathing out, I feel joyful.' He or she practices like this.
- 6. 'Breathing in, I feel happy. Breathing out, I feel happy.' He or she practices like this.
- 7. 'Breathing in, I am aware of my mental formations. Breathing out, I am aware of my mental formations.' He or she practices like this.
- 8. 'Breathing in, I calm my mental formations. Breathing out, I calm my mental formations.' He or she practices like this.
- 9. 'Breathing in, I am aware of my mind. Breathing out, I am aware of my mind.' He or she practices like this.
- 10. 'Breathing in, I make my mind happy. Breathing out, I make my mind happy.' He or she practices like this.
- 11. 'Breathing in, I concentrate my mind. Breathing out, I concentrate my mind.' He or she practices like this.
- 12. 'Breathing in, I liberate my mind. Breathing out, I liberate my mind.' He or she practices like this.
- 13. 'Breathing in, I observe the impermanent nature of all dharmas.' Breathing out, I observe the impermanent nature of all dharmas.' He or she practices like this.
- 14. 'Breathing in, I observe the disappearance of desire. Breathing out, I observe the disappearance of desire.' He or she practices like this.
- 15. 'Breathing in, I observe the no-birth, no-death nature of all phenomena. Breathing out, I observe the no-birth, no-death nature of all phenomena.' He or she practices like this.
- 16. 'Breathing in, I observe letting go. Breathing out, I observe letting go.' He or she practices like this.

"The Full Awareness of Breathing, if developed and practiced continuously according to these instructions, will be rewarding and of great benefit."

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"In what way does one develop and continuously practice the Full Awareness of Breathing, in order to succeed in the practice of the Four Establishments of Mindfulness?

"When the practitioner breathes in or out a long or a short breath, aware of his breath or his whole body, or aware that he is making his whole body calm and at peace, he abides peacefully in the observation of the body in the body, persevering, fully awake, clearly understanding his state, gone beyond all attachment and aversion to this life. These exercises of breathing with

Full Awareness belong to the First Establishment of Mindfulness, the body.

"When the practitioner breathes in or out aware of joy or happiness, of the mental formations, or to make the mental formations peaceful, he abides peacefully in the observation of the feelings in the feelings, persevering, fully awake, clearly understanding his state, gone beyond all attachment and aversion to this life. These exercises of breathing with Full Awareness belong to the Second Establishment of Mindfulness, the feelings.

"When the practitioner breathes in or out with the awareness of the mind, or to make the mind happy, to collect the mind in concentration, or to free and liberate the mind, he abides peacefully in the observation of the mind in the mind, persevering, fully awake, clearly understanding his state, gone beyond all attachment and aversion to this life. These exercises of breathing with Full Awareness belong to the Third Establishment of Mindfulness, the mind. Without Full Awareness of Breathing, there can be no development of meditative stability and understanding.

"When the practitioner breathes in or breathes out and contemplates the essential impermanence or the essential disappearance of desire or the nobirth, no-death nature of all phenomena or letting go, he abides peacefully in the observations of the objects of mind in the objects of mind, persevering, fully awake, clearly understanding his state, gone beyond all attachment and aversion to this life. These exercises of breathing with Full Awareness belong to the Fourth Establishment of Mindfulness, the objects of mind.

"The practice of Full Awareness of Breathing, if developed and practiced continuously, will lead to perfect accomplishment of the Four Establishments of Mindfulness."

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"Moreover, if they are developed and continuously practiced, the Four Establishments of Mindfulness will lead to perfect abiding in the Seven Factors of Awakening. How is this so?

"When the practitioner can maintain, without distraction, the practice of observing the body in the body, the feelings in the feelings, the mind in the mind, and the objects of mind in the objects of mind, persevering, fully awake, clearly understanding her state, gone beyond all attachment and aversion to this life, with unwavering, steadfast, imperturbable meditative stability, she will attain the First Factor of Awakening, namely mindfulness. When this factor is developed, it will come to perfection.

"When the practitioner can abide in meditative stability without being distracted and can investigate every dharma, every object of mind that arises, then the Second Factor of Awakening will be born and developed in her, the factor of investigating dharmas. When this factor is developed, it will come to perfection.

"When the practitioner can observe and investigate every dharma in a sustained, persevering, and steadfast way, without being distracted, the Third Factor of Awakening will be born and developed in her, the factor of energy. When this factor is developed, it will come to perfection.

"When the practitioner has reached a stable, imperturbable abiding in the stream of practice, the Fourth Factor of Awakening will be born and devel-

oped in her, the factor of joy. When this factor is developed, it will come to perfection.

"When the practitioner can abide undistractedly in the state of joy, she will feel her body and mind light and at peace. At this point the Fifth Factor of Awakening will be born and developed, the factor of ease. When this factor is developed, it will come to perfection.

"When both body and mind are at ease, the practitioner can easily enter into concentration. At this point the Sixth Factor of Awakening will be born and developed in her, the factor of concentration. When this factor is developed, it will come to perfection.

"When the practitioner is abiding in concentration with deep calm, she will cease discriminating and comparing. At this point the Seventh Factor of Awakening is released, born, and developed in her, the factor of letting go. When this factor is developed, it will come to perfection.

"This is how the Four Establishments of Mindfulness, if developed and practiced continuously, will lead to perfect abiding in the Seven Factors of Awakening."

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"How will the Seven Factors of Awakening, if developed and practiced continuously, lead to the perfect accomplishment of true understanding and complete liberation?

"If the practitioner follows the path of the Seven Factors of Awakening, living in quiet seclusion, observing and contemplating the disappearance of desire, he will develop the capacity of letting go. This will be a result of following the path of the Seven Factors of Awakening and will lead to the perfect accomplishment of true understanding and complete liberation."

## VI

This is what the Lord, the Awakened One, said; and everyone in the assembly felt gratitude and delight at having heard his teachings.

Anapanasati Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya 118\*