



Start
Meditation
Today



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1

Why Meditate?

No happiness surpasses peace of mind.

Buddhist Proverb

Human endeavour all down the ages has sought to improve our quality of life, whether it be in the medical, technological or social spectrums. We have possibly come as far as we can in overcoming the problems solvable by material solutions. The problems that remain

unsolved in spite of our material progress alert us to the fact that we need alternative strategies if we are to attain true quality of life in our world.

Often we forget that behind every problem is a human face, and humans are more than just automatons governed by technological knowhow-humans have emotions, intentions and minds. If we are to elevate our quality of life, we have to upgrade our quality of mind alongside our material standard of living.

In answer to the question ‘Why Meditate?’ the obvious importance of meditation is that it serves as the most direct and practical means to upgrade the spiritual quality of our lives. Meditation serves as a way to integrate spiritual well-being in step with our material well-being.

Some people are attracted to meditation as a means to solve health problems. Several ‘modern-day’ illnesses that present complications for western medicine, such as stress, depression

and insomnia can be improved by meditation which helps to re-balance body and mind. Meditation has also been scientifically proven to assist in the speedy recovery from illness¹.

It is only a minority who meditate as a result of their problems. Most meditate because they want to improve or enrich themselves, their personality or their lifestyle in the spiritual dimension. To this end, meditation can enhance one's potential for study, sporting performance, self-confidence and decision-making.

Beyond this are those who meditate with a deeper spiritual vocation to learn more about themselves or to explore the 'eternal questions' of life and the world.

¹ e.g. Mindfulness and medicine: see Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Full Catastrophe Living* (Net Work: Delacorte, 1991) and Program for reversing heart disease: See Dean Ornish, *Dr. Dean Ornish's Program for Reversing Heart Disease* (New York: Ballantine, 1991)

Meditation: not so difficult, but not too easy either.

Meditation is not so difficult to learn because it builds on skill and abilities which we already have. Meditation is already something we do in our everyday life, allowing us to focus on the task in hand—but the depth of meditation is superficial because our mind is cluttered by thoughts. By developing our meditation formally, we can free our mind of unwanted thoughts, allowing the mind to come to a standstill—at which point the depth of concentration is increased.

The difficulty of meditation is that we have to do it by our own efforts—no one else can do it for us. Furthermore, one will never become skilled just by talking or reading about it. Expertise comes only by doing it. Thus, we have to rely on our own self-discipline to integrate meditation into our life as a daily practice. Moreover, progress in meditation is gradual. Reversing the mental habits of a lifetime doesn't happen overnight.

Consistent diligence is rewarded by success in the long-term. In our modern world of ‘instant gratification’, sometimes we have to engage a new level of patience in order to adapt ourselves to the pace of meditation progress—so be warned!

About this book

For reasons of brevity, this is not aimed to be a textbook describing every sort of meditation available. It is a starting point which equips you with sufficient know-how and techniques of meditation to give yourself an inroad into spiritual experience on a level which can be of practical benefit in your everyday life. In this book we emphasize skills rather than results—and the reader beginning in meditation would be advised to take the same approach. The book covers simply the meditations which correspond to the ‘Dhammakaya’ (body of enlightenment) principle of practice—a principle which emphasizes techniques by which the mind can become free of thought and come to a standstill at the center of the body.

With daily practice you will find that the advice in this book provides ample initiation onto the path of meditation progress. This book is not designed to be read for entertainment, but

as a manual upon which practice can be based. Depending on your level of commitment, this book can form the basis of a two month course of training. Thus follow through the instructions in the following chapters in the order they appear. We wish you every success.

TABLE I: SUGGESTED SCHEDULE OF PRACTICE

Schedule	Duration (min/day)	Meditation Method	Skills					LOVING KINDNESS
			Resource	SEVEN BASES	MANTRA	VISUALIZATION	OBSERVATION	
Week1+2	20	Visualization via the Seven Bases of the Mind	Chapter 3	/	/	/		
Week3+4	25	Visualization at the center of the body	Chapter 4		/	/		
Week5+6	30	Visualize at the center of the body	Chapter 5			/		
Week7+8	35	Observation at the center of the body	Chapter 6				/	
Week9+10	40	Observation at the center of the body+ meditation on loving kindness	Chapter 6+7					/





2

Setting Your Goals

The secret to getting ahead is getting started.

Mark Twain

So you would like to learn meditation. To aid you in transforming your initial enthusiasm into skills, based on experience of many meditators who have passed this same way, this chapter offers some preparatory advice before we embark on the meditation practice itself.

At the outset, it should be said that each person has his or her own rate of progress in meditation—some are faster, some slower. However, whatever your rate of progress, just like learning to fly an airplane, you need to put in a certain amount of ‘flying time’ to master the skills. If you dedicate enough time and have a proper understanding of the technique, before long you will start to see progress at your own personal pace.

How can I make sure my meditation is regular?

Meditation will be of limited use to you if you practice it on-and-off. The key to success in meditation is keeping the promise to yourself to meditate once or twice every day. You need to set aside a realistic amount of time each day to meditate. The table opposite recommends daily durations for meditation starting with twenty minutes per day and gradually increasing over the period of two months. The recommended

times are based on the usual lengths of time beginners can sit comfortably, in a half lotus position on the floor. If you feel comfortable, you can certainly meditate for longer than what's suggested—but be realistic. Set a start time for your meditation and stick to it. When it is time for meditation, stop what you are doing, find a quiet place to sit, close your eyes and meditate. The most important thing is to fix the habit of meditation in your daily life and meditate in that period of time every day. Maintain the consistency of your practice. Meditating regularly, every day, is of inestimable value.

Do I have to meditate at a special time of day?

Pick a time (or times) of day for meditation that you know you will be free at the same time each day. If your house is usually busy with demanding children or pets, choose a time that is usually peaceful. Times of the day which have proved popular amongst meditators are the morning and evening. If you choose to meditate in the morning after rising, you should do a little exercise to refresh your body before sitting down to meditate. This will give you the perfect start to your day. If you choose to meditate in the evening, like before going to bed, meditation will help you to relax your mind, allowing you to make the most efficient use of your mind, allowing you to make the most efficient use of your time asleep. In fact, it could be any other time of day that's suitable for you—experiment, explore.

Do I need to have a special place to meditate?

You can meditate anywhere you choose. You can meditate at home, or, if you prefer, in a spiritual meeting place if you find it has a conducive atmosphere. You can meditate alone or in a group. Simply make sure that the environment is peaceful—a place where you won't be interrupted. Secondly, the ambient temperatures should be comfortable—not too hot and not too cold—you will be the best judge of the temperature for yourself.

Which method of meditation should I use?

Just as different people like to eat different sorts of food, it is no surprise to find that different methods of meditation suit people of different temperaments. Part of our task as beginners in meditation is to find out which sort of Dhammakaya meditation suits us best. From the summary of meditation techniques in Table I you will see that there are a total of five variations

of meditation described. Follow the techniques in order. Spend two weeks, meditating at least once a day, to familiarize yourself with each of the techniques. At the end of ten weeks you will be in a good position to choose which technique suits you the best. If in doubt, choose the simplest form of meditation which suits you, with the meditation described in Chapter 6 as the ideal.

Sitting posture for meditation

The ideal sitting posture for meditation is the half-lotus position. The 'half-lotus position' means to sit upright on the floor with your back and spine straight—cross-legged with your right leg on the left one (see diagram page 29). You will almost certainly find that sitting on a meditation mat, cushion or pillow will make your position more comfortable. Ideally both your knees should touch the floor—together with your bottom forming three points of a triangle which distributes the

weight of your body. Such a position is often awkward for beginners, and in fact looser variations such as sitting with your legs to one side or sitting on a chair are also effective alternatives for beginners. Your hands should rest palms-up on your lap, and the tip of your right index finger should touch your left thumb. When meditating, try to avoid wearing tight clothing which might impede your breathing or circulation. If you feel uncomfortable during your meditation, you may change position.

Being a good teacher to yourself

At the outset it should be mentioned that to learn meditation from a book, alone, rather than from a teacher in a group, puts you at a slight disadvantage. You may have no one to answer your questions when you are curious, and you may have no one to give you encouragement when you feel lazy. However, if you are self-disciplined and follow the instructions in the book carefully,

through self-observation you can go a long way towards being your own teacher in this meditation technique. Unlike some other forms of meditation, you can practice Dhammakaya meditation without a teacher without fear of straying from the correct path. There are three factors which you should bear in mind as you study meditation, to re-assure yourself that you are on the right track:

1. Awareness: you should always have self-awareness, never losing consciousness or having diminished consciousness.

2. Feeling: the feeling which accompanies your meditation should never deviate into an unpleasant feeling.

3. Focus of Attention: when you concentrate your attention, it should always be inside the body, not outside.

If you monitor these three factors, you cannot go far wrong with meditation. However, it is

advisable to discuss and verify your experiences with qualified teachers of Dhammakaya meditation from time to time—at the very least to receive encouragement and re-assurance that you are on the right track.





3

Self-initiation: Meditation via the Seven Bases of the Mind

Stopping the mind is the secret of success.

*Great Master Phramongkolthepmuni
Abbot of Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen*

Skills and Tips

In this most basic method of Dhammakaya meditation, we acquaint ourselves with three elements which will take us further in our meditation: the visualized object of meditation, the center of the body, and the mantra.

The visualized object of meditation¹ is a bright object such as the sun, full moon, a star or a crystal ball which we imagine in our mind. It is visualized gently, as if one were remembering such an image one had seen before—and without the use of the eyes.

The center of the body is situated at the seventh base of the mind in the area of the stomach. It is here that we aim to focus the mind in meditation. Our normal habit is to focus our attention outside the body, so to facilitate bringing our mind back to the center of the body we do so along a pathway from a point in front of our face to a point in the center of body via seven intermediate bases (which in themselves are not important). As a result of practicing this meditation, beginners

1 These objects are suggested as an initial objects of meditation because they are bright, clear and pure- and in most cultures devoid of negative connotations. Other objects can be used instead of a crystal ball and will give results that are just as satisfactory (e.g. objects of positive religious significance: a Buddha Image for a Buddhist, a cross for a Christian, a star for a Muslim), but in all cases the object chosen should be bright, clear and pure.

should be able to familiarize themselves with the position of the center of the body.

The mantra is a word or phrase of positive meaning which one repeats to oneself silently during meditation. Because the mind cannot focus on two things at once, for as long as the meditator repeats the mantra, no interrupting thoughts will be able to come into the mind. The mantra used traditionally are the words ‘Samma Arahang’ (pronounced sam-ma-ara-hang) which mean “the purest state attainable by a human, attained the correct way”. If you are unhappy with this mantra, you may substitute any other word or phrase of your own which has a positive meaning for you.

Practicing this Self-initiation via the Seven Bases of the Mind will allow you to:

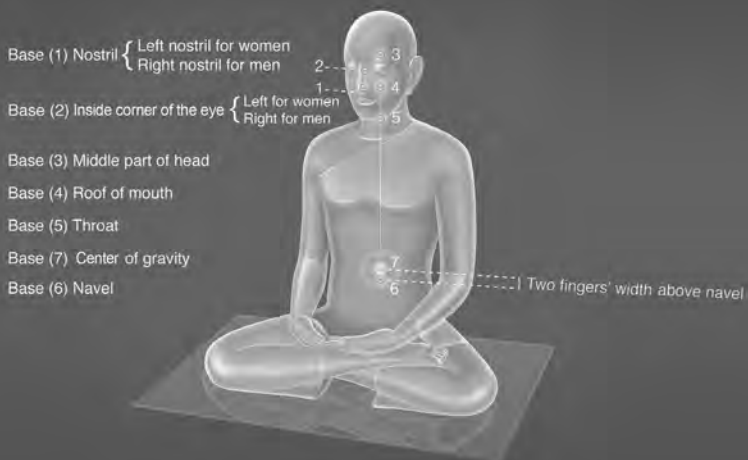
- slow down the mind
- reduces your impatience to see something in meditation

- increases your certainty about the position of the center of the body
- reduces the problem of using the eyes instead of the mind

The Method

Softly close your eyes as if you were falling asleep. Relax every part of your body, beginning with the muscles of your face, then relax your face, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, trunk and legs. Make sure there are no signs of tension on your forehead or across your shoulders.

THE SEVEN BASES OF THE MIND



Once your body is relaxed, relax your mind by putting aside all thoughts about the things of the world. Feel as if you are sitting alone—around you is nothing and no one. Create a feeling of happiness and spaciousness in your mind. Our attention is usually focused at a point in front of our face because we are used to focusing our attention where the eyes can see. Before starting, it is necessary to internalize the mind by tracing a pathway from the outside to the center of the body. This path follows seven resting places for the mind¹ (see diagram page 29). Very gently using no effort at all, imagine that there is a bright object such as a shining sun, a full moon, a shining star or a crystal ball (choose the one which you find easiest to imagine) floating in front of your face. Reduce the size of the bright object until it is the size of the tip of your little finger (about one centimeter in diameter) and

1. The seven bases of the mind are taught as a skilful means to internalize the mind. There is no need for the beginner to remember the precise details of the first six bases. Knowledge of the seventh base alone is sufficient.

floating in front of your nostril (the left nostril for ladies and the right nostril for gentlemen)². This point is called the first base of the mind. Make the object as bright and as clear as you can, while repeating to yourself silently the sound of the mantra ‘Samma Arahang’ three times.

Now move the object inside your nostril to a point inside your nose, next to the corner of the eye (on the left for ladies and on the right for gentlemen). This point is called the second base of the mind. Make the object as bright and as clear as you can, while repeating to yourself silently, the sound of the mantra ‘Samma Arahang’ three times.

2. The path of the crystal ball through the first two bases is different for men and woman in keeping with gender differences in the path of entry of the vital force.

Ten Tips for Success in Meditation

- 1. Cherish the center of the body more dearly than life itself.*
- 2. Be constantly on the alert to your own weakness—weakness that hinders the mind from coming to a standstill. Once you discover such weaknesses, rectify them as best you can.*
- 3. Let the mind come to a standstill, to a stop, with un-interfering observation, with contentment—nothing more, nothing less.*
- 4. Be content with whatever you should see—at least for the interim.*
- 5. Observing without interfering will allow your inner experience to unfold in a natural way.*
- 6. Whatever you may see, just observe, continuously, in contentment, without analysis or expectation.*
- 7. We are but observers—not the ones running the show.*

8. Inner experience is profound but can be attained only with ease.

9. We are so used to complexity that we have to adapt to cope with this simple task.

10. Rest not from this noble task until Inner Wisdom is attained.

Phrathepyanmahamuni (Luangpor Dhammajayo)

Abbot of Wat Phra Dhammakaya

Now move the object directly backward on a horizontal plane to a point at the center of the skull (from here on the pathway is the same for both ladies and gentlemen). This point is called the third base of the mind. Make the object as bright as you can, and as clear as you can, while repeating to yourself silently the sound of the mantra '*Samma Arahang*' three times.

Now move the object directly downwards to a point at the roof of your mouth. This point is called the fourth base of the mind. Make the object as bright and as clear as you can, while repeating to yourself silently, the sound of the mantra '*Samma Arahang*' three times.

Now move the object downwards to a point at the center of your throat just above the Adam's apple. This point is called the fifth base of the mind. Make the object as bright as you can and as clear as you can, while repeating to yourself silently, the sound of the mantra '*Samma Arahang*' three times.

Now move the object directly downwards through your chest and abdomen to a point at the center of the cross section of your body at the level of your navel. This point is called the sixth base of the mind. If you imagine two lines, one running from your navel horizontally to your back and a second on the same level, running from your left side to your right side, the sixth base of the mind is at the intersection of the two lines. Move the object so that its center is at the intersection of the two imaginary lines. Make the object as bright and as clear as you can, while repeating to yourself silently the sound of the mantra '*Samma Arahang*' three times.

Now move the object upwards the distance of two fingers' breadths. This point is called the seventh base of the mind. This base is the most important point in the body. It is the very center of the body and the point where the mind can come to a standstill—thus we will not move the bright object anywhere else. Always make the

object as bright as you can and as clear as you can, while repeating to yourself silently the sound of the mantra '*Samma Arahang*' continuously.

In this way your mind will become gradually purer and inner experience will unfold. If you find that you're not sure about the location of the center of the body, anywhere in the area of the stomach will do. Don't be disappointed if you find your mind wandering. It is only natural for beginners—but each time your mind wanders always bring your mind back again to the center and continue by visualizing your bright object and repeating the mantra to yourself. Keep bringing your mind back again to the center over and over again until eventually the mind becomes familiar with the center of the body and stays there more than wander. Eventually the image in the mind will become clearer and brighter on its own accord. The feeling of wellbeing in the mind will become stronger. The number of thoughts in the mind will dwindle to the point that there are no

remaining thoughts in the mind, and the mind can come to a standstill at the center of the body –our initial aim in the practice of meditation. At this stage the shining object is connected firmly to the mind and is seated at the center of the body. You will experience happiness. With continuous observation at the center of this bright object, it will give way to a succession of increasingly refined experiences of purity, brightness and wisdom, all coming from within.



I FIND
PEACE
LIKE THIS



SO

4

Visualization at the Center of the Body

Consistency is the heart of practice—accumulate as many hours of meditation experience as you can—hours of stopping, hours of stillness, hours at the center.

Phrathepyanmahamuni

Skills and Tips

In this second method of Dhammakaya meditation we build on the confidence about the position of the center of the body learned from the previous chapter. Instead of initiating the

mind via the seven bases of the mind, after relaxing the body and mind, we focus our mind directly at the center of the body, using a visualized object and mantra as before.

Visualization uses a visual object of meditation as a focus for the mind, which some might misunderstand as being a form of attachment that will hinder the liberation of the mind. In fact, the visual object of meditation serve as no more than a 'raft' for the mind to cross over to a higher state. Once it has served its purpose it will be discarded, not like someone who erroneously carries his raft further even after he has reached the far shore. Once the visualized object has served its purpose, meditation will continue by focusing on successively more refined objects of meditation that arise spontaneously as a result of the practice.

Before practicing meditation through visualization, you should note that seeing outside the body and seeing inside have their differences

and we have to change the way we apply effort accordingly. Whenever we look at things outside our body we can see them clearly as soon as we open our eyes. However, when we see things internally, we see them gradually—they get gradually clearer and clearer until we can see them clearly. This we have to accept. Thus when we come to meditate through visualization we must apply effort gently. Wait for the mind to be peaceful and imagine an image with the minimum of effort.

By this time in your introduction to meditation, it is likely that you will still be contending with extraneous thoughts in your mind. Like in the method explained in the previous chapter, we still use the mantra to overcome these unwanted thoughts during meditation.

The Method

Sit in the half-lotus position with your back and spine straight as described in the previous chapter. Softly close your eyes and relax every part of your body, beginning with the muscles of your face, then relax your face, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, trunk and legs. Make sure there are no signs of tension on your forehead or across your shoulders.

Stop thinking about the things of the world. Feel as if you are sitting alone in the world. Create a feeling of happiness and spaciousness in your mind. Feel that your body is an empty space, without organs, muscles or tissues. Gently and contentedly rest your attention at a point near to the seventh base of the mind—the center of the body described in the previous chapter.

Gently imagine a bright, clear object of meditation (like the shining sun, the full moon, a star or a crystal ball—any one of these four) about

the size of the tips of your little finger, located at a point inside the center of your body. If you find that you are not sure about the location of the center of the body, anywhere in the area of the stomach will do. Just make sure that it feels as if you are imagining within your body not a point outside the body—while at the same time repeating the mantra to yourself.

Maybe you'll find at first that you can imagine nothing—everything inside seems to be dark—but later you'll be able to see a bright object of increasing clarity. If you use too much effort you will find that it gives you tension in your forehead. If you are too relaxed about your visualization you will daydream or fall asleep. Use your intuition to keep the right balance of mind, and this will allow you to further your progress continually. Allow your mind to come to rest at a point at the very center of the bright object. Use the subtlest of effort and you will find that the object becomes brighter and clearer and

will enlarge by itself. If you use too much effort you will find that it gives you a headache. It is common for beginners to try to rush the process but resist the temptation. Meditate by applying your mind in a leisurely way instead. See with your mind, not with your eyes, and relax. Don't try to force images into your mind. Always make the object as bright as you can and as clear as you can while repeating to yourself silently and continuously the sound of the mantra 'Samma Arahang', as if the sound of the mantra is coming from the center of the bright object. In this way your mind will become gradually purer and inner experience will unfold.

Don't be disappointed if you find your mind wandering. It is only natural for beginners—but each time your mind wanders, always bring your mind back again to the center and continue by visualizing your bright object and repeating the the mantra to yourself. Keep bringing your mind back again to the center over and over again until eventually the mind becomes familiar with the

center of the body and stays more than wander. Eventually the image in the mind will become clearer and brighter of its own accord. The feeling of wellbeing in the mind will become stronger. The number of thoughts in the mind will dwindle to the point that there are no remaining thoughts in the mind. You may find that the sound of the mantra seems to fade away of its own accord. If there are no more interrupting thoughts in the absence of the mantra, there is no need to start anew with the mantra—just sit for meditation in silence, allowing your attention to be absorbed at the center of the bright object in silence. Eventually the mind will come to a standstill at the center of the body. At this stage the shining object is connected firmly to the mind, and is seated at the center of the body. You will experience happiness. With continuous observation at the center of this bright object, it will give way to a succession of increasingly refined experiences of purity, brightness and wisdom, all coming from inside.



5

Mantra-less Visualization

Gentleness and contentment are the things we must cultivate alongside meditation no matter what our level of advancement.

Phrathepyanmahamuni

Skills and Tips

By the time you come to this third method of Dhammakaya meditation you should find that the number of thoughts remaining in your mind is much reduced. Hopefully, you should also find that the mind is less distracted than it was before and should consequently wander less.

Even though we still use the visualized object as before, there should be no need to use the mantra any more. If we find that there are still thoughts arising in the mind, instead of trying to block them out with the mantra, we let them go by pretending that we have no interest in them—as if they were just unwanted guests that will go away if ignored.

The Method

Sit in the half-lotus position with your back and spine straight as described in the previous chapter. Softly close your eyes and relax every part of your body, beginning with the muscles of your face, then relax your face, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, trunk and legs. Make sure there are no signs of tension on your forehead or across your shoulders.

Stop thinking about the things of the world. Feel as if you are sitting alone in the world. Create a feeling of happiness and spaciousness

in your mind. Feel that your body is an empty space, without organs, muscles or tissues. Gently and contentedly rest your attention at the seventh base of the mind– the center of the body described in previous chapters.

Gently imagine a bright, clear object of meditation (like the shining sun, the full moon, a star or a crystal ball–any one of these four) about the size of the tip of your little finger, located at a point inside the center of your body. If you find that you're not sure about the location of the center of the body, anywhere in the area of stomach will do. Rest the mind at the point which gives you gives the strongest feeling of well-being and certainty–the point where you feel contented to rest the mind continuously.

Imagine your bright object with a light and gentle attention as continuously as you can, for as long as you can, without letting your mind wander anywhere else. Imagine with a soft and gentle attention, an attention so soft that it is like

a bird feather floating down to settle upon the surface of some water—floating down so lightly that it doesn't even break the surface of the water. Such is the gentleness of the attention we need to imagine our bright object continuously at the center of our body. As soon as you realize that your mind is wandering, always bring the mind back to the center and continue as before.

If you use too much effort you will find that it gives you tension in your forehead. If you are too relaxed about your visualization you will daydream or fall asleep. Use your intuition to keep the right balance of mind, and it will allow you to further your progress continually. See with your mind, not with your eyes, and relax.

If you find interrupting thoughts arising, notice the thoughts but don't allow the first thought to elaborate into a second or third. Like the saying goes: "a bird may land on your head, but there is no need to let it build a nest there."

In the same way, if you pay no attention to thoughts which arise in the mind, just observe them, the ensuing train of thought will never get the chance to arrive.

Eventually the mind will become familiar with the center of the body and stay there more than wander. The image in the mind will become clearer and brighter of its own accord. The feeling of well-being in the mind will become stronger. The number of thoughts in the mind will dwindle to the point that there are no remaining thoughts in the mind. Eventually the mind will come to a standstill at the center of the body. At this stage the shining object is connected firmly to the mind and is seated at the center of the body. You will experience happiness. With continuous observation at the center of this bright object, it will give way to a succession of increasingly refined experiences of purity, brightness and wisdom, all coming from within.



6

Observation

Whatever there is to see, observe it continuously, in contentment, without thinking anything—nothing more, nothing less.

Phrathepyanmahamuni

Skills and Tips

Our meditation techniques become simpler as we proceed further in the book. In all the techniques we have encountered up until now, we have used visualization (creating an image in the mind) as the method by which we focus the mind at the center of the body. Supposing we

were not to visualize anything, but simply to rest our attention at the center of the body and see what is already there for us to see—who would guess that the mind may have as much to see as when you imagine? For many meditators, this proves to be the case: simply observing yields more inner experience than ‘jump starting’ by visualizing a bright object—but of course, this ability comes about only on the firm foundation of skills learned in the previous chapters. The way in which you learn to observe at the center of the body is similar to the way our eyes ‘adapt’ to the low-lighting of a room suddenly plunged into darkness. In the beginning nothing but darkness will be seen, but before long, first forms, shapes and eventually colours and light will become apparent. It is the process that cannot be rushed. When you are establishing the position of the center of the body, work by your sense of touch and feeling instead of by your imagination.

The method is a good alternative for those who find they unwittingly ‘try too hard’ when visualizing an object of meditation.

The Method

Sit in the half-lotus position with your back and spine straight as described in the previous chapter. Softly close your eyes and relax every part of your body, beginning with the muscles of your face, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, trunk and legs. Make sure there are no signs of tension on your forehead or across your shoulders. Stop thinking about the things of the world. Feel as if you are sitting alone in the world. Create a feeling of happiness and spaciousness in your mind.

When your mind feels completely relaxed, harmonized and unified—and your body is completely relaxed too—very gently, using no effort at all, allow your attention to settle and to center itself at the point in the middle of your stomach and maintain your mind there,

at this point in the center of your stomach, as continuously as you can, for as long as you can, without letting your mind wander anywhere else. You should choose the point at the center of your stomach which you feel is the point of greatest contentment. The point where you feel you can rest your mind continuously without moving it anywhere else. For this method of meditation we maintain the mind at the center of the body simply by observing without imagining anything. Observe whatever there is to be seen at the center of the body. If there is darkness to be observed—then observe the darkness. If there are shadows to be observed—then observe the shadows. If there are images to be observed, then observe the images. If there is brightness to be observed, then observe the brightness. In brief, observe whatever there is to be seen—observe continuously with a light and gentle attention, without entertaining any thoughts in your mind, without judging the things that you see,

without any expectations, without becoming elated by pleasing things that we see, without feeling disappointed by displeasing things that we see. Simply observe and nothing more—just as you would watch a television screen without trying to interfere with the program you see on the screen—in the same way we simply observe without trying to interfere or affect the things that we see in the mind. The important thing is to rest your mind at the center of the body continuously with a light and gentle attention—never letting your attention wander anywhere else. With the continuity of effort eventually the mind will become subtler and the images in the mind will become subtler too. And the feelings in the mind will become more refined, while at the same time the number of thoughts will become gradually reduced—until the mind can come to a standstill at the center of the body. So cultivate the mind in this way using your chosen method—with a light and gentle attention—as continuously

as you can for as long as you can without letting the mind wander anywhere else. As the mind becomes more refined you will start to have access to more refined and subtle states of mind—because the mind can only have access to states of mind which are as subtle as the mind itself. So cultivate the refinement of the mind, cultivate the subtlety of your mind using your observation skills as continuously and as long as you can without letting the mind wander elsewhere.

Eventually the mind will come gently to a standstill at the center of the body, allowing the mind to go deeper inside—deeper into purity, deeper into brightness, and deeper into the hidden wisdom of the mind.





7

Loving-kindness Meditation

Content with stillness of the mind, a clear sphere as big as the size of the moon or the sun will appear at the point of stopping. Content with stopping, with perfect poise at the center of the sphere, another sphere will appear.

Great Master Phramongkolthepmuni

Skills and Tips

Loving-kindness meditation is not intended as an alternative to other forms of meditation but can be performed as a supplement either before or after your time of normal meditation. If you practice loving-kindness meditation

for a few minutes before your normal practice, it will soften the mind, creating the feeling of spaciousness, and make progress in your regular meditation more fruitful. If practiced after your regular meditation practice it will spread the positively generated energy as the result of your meditation for the benefit of all other living being. The traditional benefits of loving-kindness meditation are that it will allow you to sleep soundly, have sweet dreams, wake in happiness, be free from anger, be endearing to others, be optimistic about human nature, and make progress in your meditation with ease.

The Method

Follow the meditation method of your choice as explained in chapters 3, 4, 5 or 6. Leave yourself five extra minutes of meditation at the end of your meditation to follow the instructions as follows:

Allow the mind to rest gently at the center of the body until it comes to a standstill. Using only minimal effort to rest the mind at the center of the body, you will notice that the mind begins to expand as a sphere outwards, spreading the well-being arising as the result of the meditation to all beings within its sphere. Allow the sphere to spread until it encompasses your whole body. Silently entertain the wish that your body be well and happy and free from suffering.

Allow the sphere to spread until it encompasses the whole room in which you are seated. Silently entertain the wish that all beings in the room be well and happy and free from suffering.

Allow the sphere to spread until it encompasses the whole of your neighborhood. Silently entertain the wish that all beings in your neighborhood be well and happy and free from suffering.

Allow the sphere to spread until it encompasses the whole of your town. Silently entertain the wish that all beings in the town be well and happy and free from suffering.

Allow the sphere to spread until it encompasses the whole of your province. Silently entertain the wish that all beings in the province be well and happy and free from suffering.

Allow the sphere to spread until it encompasses the whole of your country. Silently entertain the wish that all beings in the country be well and happy and free from suffering.

Allow the sphere to spread until it encompasses the whole of your continent. Silently entertain the wish that all beings in your continent be well and happy and free from suffering.

Allow the sphere to spread until it encompasses the whole planet. Silently entertain the wish that all beings on the planet be well and happy and free from suffering.

Allow the sphere to spread until it encompasses the whole of the cosmos. Silently entertain the wish that all beings in the cosmos be well and happy and free from suffering.

At the end of your meditation on loving-kindness, condense your mind back to within yourself, as always with your mind centered at the center of the body, and come gently to the end of your meditation.



8

Meditation Techniques

My goal and motivation is for all people to attain the Dhammakaya, and for my wish to come true, I need your help. Can you visualize your mind at the center of your body at all times? Can you rest your mind there, even outside of a meditation session? Cradle it there for minutes, hours, until it becomes at home in this location. Then when you sit down for a meditation session, your mind will already be in its proper place, and you won't lose precious time trying to adjust it.

Phrathepyanmahamuni

This short saying by Luangpor Dhammajayo is inscribed on a stone plaque in front of the main meditation hall at Panawat Meditation Center in Chiang Mai, Thailand. It is a simple word of inspiration for the practitioners of meditation as they enter the hall that their first step towards happiness is stilling the mind at the center of the body.

Just Enough

Adjusting the body and mind is essential as we begin every meditation session. Use yourself as a natural benchmark as you seek balance. The more you practice meditation, the sooner you will discover where the point of equilibrium resides.

Balance is a feeling of openness, lightness and calm. It is a feeling of joy and peace. Try to maintain this feeling continuously, without worries. Soon, this equilibrium will usher your mind to a standstill inside, and the brightness will appear automatically.

31st March 1992

Indifference

In the Middle Way, the mind must be neutral. You must be indifferent to events, actions, or noise occurring around us. You are neither glad nor sad; you are still and your mind is at rest. By resting, you make progress. Try this and you will see.

27th March 1996

Relaxation & Peacefulness

When you meditate, make yourself comfortable; keep the mind peaceful, calm, and empty of all thoughts. Focus on the center of the body at all times. There's nothing in this world more important than the center of our body.

You ask what is relaxation? Use yourself as a gauge. What were you feeling when you last felt completely relaxed? This is the feeling you want to keep with you for as long as possible. That's the point where you feel most comfortable. But if the body feels any tension, then you're probably doing something incorrectly.

13th April 1992

Relaxed

There's no need to search for comfort. No need to ask, "Is this comfortable or is that comfortable?" Just keep your mind still and calm, and soon the feeling of calm, the vision of the luminous sphere, and the Dhammakaya will emerge.

Stillness will lead you to success. It is a special expressway that will lead to the Dhammakaya inside. It is best not to waste time trying to figure out the right amount of comfort.

Stop searching and just be still, and it will come to you naturally.

23rd July 2002

An Excellent Chef

Still your mind peacefully for as long as possible. Do just that. Don't concern yourself with anything else.

Your mind will adjust to the correct disposition. See yourself as a chef, creating the most delicately seasoned meal. Add nothing too much. Having the proper ingredients is key to success. So too must we condition and prepare ourselves: with the right ingredients for a peaceful mind.

22nd April 2002

Doctor of Dhamma

The trick to keeping your mind still is to practice observation. If you see a crystal sphere, gently guide your concentration to the center of the sphere and soon, you will reach your internal refuge. Meditation students can achieve a graduate degree in the Dhamma! A doctorate degree even!

This differs from a secular degree that requires years of studying, reading, writing, researching, analyzing, and discussing of numerous things. With meditation, you need not do a thing, just be still and observe while using the right technique.

26th January 2002

Keep Your Mind Relaxed

Whether you see darkness or brightness while you meditate, don't stress yourself about it. Keep your mind relaxed, like wearing a comfortable, loose-fitting shirt. We, too, must loosen our minds, so that it's relaxed and calm.

Let our minds be clear and pure. That's all you have to do. Soon the mind will adjust itself accordingly and move towards the proper location [at the 7th base of the body.]

22nd April 2002

Meditation Mantra

When we recite the mantra “Samma Arahang,” do not repeat it like a parrot or myna bird. Even reciting by using effort is an incorrect technique. Rather, you should think of the mantra with ease of mind. Allow the words to flow softly like a familiar song or a chant. Let it flow freely from your center without tension.

1st January 2002

The Sound of the Mantra Fades

When the mind becomes still, the mantra will fade away. It is as if you've forgotten the mantra since you no longer need it to concentrate.

Just retain your concentration at the center of your body or the sphere, two fingers' width above the navel. If this feeling of centeredness comes, then you don't have to recite the mantra. Maintain the still mind, peacefully and comfortably.

22nd April 2002

Comfort Is Crucial

To attain the Dhammakaya, your mind must come to a standstill. The key to stilling the mind is relaxation. Train your mind to be relaxed and empty. When the mind lets go of everything, it will come to a standstill at the center. It will return to its true position at the 7th base.

When you bring your mind back to its rightful position, you will reach the Dhammakaya.

10th January 1999

Don't Worry

If you feel fatigued, then adjust your sitting position. Don't worry too much about being in the "right" posture. Your main interest is stilling the mind. Also remember: you are not competing against anyone; it's not about winning or losing.

You're not here to practice endurance. You're here to focus on stilling the mind. There's a difference. Focus on your task and pay no attention to any distractions around you.

31st March 1992

Loosen Up

Being distracted doesn't mean that you will fail. You must first give yourself the chance to let go of all the things you've accumulated in your mind. Don't resist, get annoyed or become worried. Let it go, and soon it will disappear. In a similar vein, we wouldn't obstruct strong, flowing rapids with a boat, as it will only cause more pressure to build up.

31st March 1992

Don't Try So Hard

Why are you trying so hard? You will attain the Dhammakaya because everybody has the Dhammakaya within.

The center of the body is within us and your mind is capable of reaching it. All that is left is practicing the correct technique – by feeling relaxed and bringing the mind to a standstill at the center of the body.

Don't make it a race against time. Just keep your mind at the center. If you feel tense or tight, don't oppose it, just open your eyes. Think of things that make you feel refreshed. It could be nature, the beauty of a flower, a good deed, a meritorious activity, a child's innocence, anything that makes you feel good. Once you feel relaxed, bring your mind back to the center of the body.

13th April 1992

It's Okay

It is okay if you cannot visualize the image of the crystal sphere; just keep your mind still without it. The ability to visualize varies from person to person; some can do it more easily than others.

Once in a while I will come across someone who can visualize with up to 80-90 percent accuracy, as if they have a Xerox or a photocopy of a crystal ball inside. The occurrence is rare because the individual must have practiced meditation over many lifetimes. Due to this past merit, when he or she visualizes the sphere, they are able to see it clearly and easily. This effortless is special indeed.

22nd April 2002

This Is Called Meditation

When you place your mind at the center of the body at the 7th base, whether you're sitting, standing, walking, lying down, or even in the midst of an activity, then you are practicing meditation. You are actually very close to the Dhamma of the Buddha.

27th July 1992

A Budding Fruit

It makes me happy when someone focuses his mind at the center of the body. It is like a tree whose young leaves are about to bud. Soon it will bear unfurl. When you keep practicing meditation, in no time it will “bloom” and you will attain Enlightenment.

3rd April 1992

Love Yourself

Loving yourself is not being selfish. You must strive to make yourself pure and peaceful at all times. The sensations coming from your eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind can be both wholesome and unwholesome. You must select only wholesome things to converge at the center of the mind at the 7th base.

22nd September 2002

Dhamma Sphere

The Dhamma sphere that is inside the coarse human body is utterly pure and transparent.

It is equal in size to an egg yolk, yet this Dhamma sphere is very important. If it is clear and bright, then your life will be prosperous. If it is clouded and dark, your life is in deterioration. If the Dhamma sphere is extinguished altogether, the human body cannot endure, and life will be extinguished too.

The Dhamma sphere is inside every one of us. So if a person can focus his mind properly at the center of the body at the 7th base, there is no doubt he will find this pure Dhamma sphere inside himself.

23rd July 2002

Remember These Words

Remember these words: “stop [the mind], be still, and stay;” and remember the phrase: “We are only observers, not directors.”

These are essential for you to learn. They will help improve your level of meditation until you successfully reach the Dhammakaya.

Don't take these simple words lightly. They can help millions of people reach the true happiness.

27th March 1992

The Short Cut

The ways to reach the Dhammakaya can be easy or difficult.

The easiest way to attain the Dhammakaya—this is all you have to do: stop [the mind], be still and stay at the center of the 7th base of body - no more, no less.

Why search for other methods on your own? It is unnecessary.

I have encountered and overcome all the obstacles in meditation for attaining the Dhammakaya. Ultimately, I have found that the fastest method is also the simplest: stop [the mind], be still and stay at the center of the 7th base of body - no more, no less.

13th April 1992

Visualization

Visualization is easy when we think of something familiar or something for which we have affection. Just like when we meditate, the visualization should come easily and without strain.

22nd April 2002

No Other Shortcut

There is no shortcut to attain the Dhamma, except to gradually purify, refine, and bring peacefulness to the mind.

23rd July 2002

Machine

I think that when studying at any institution, you must use your eyes, ears and hands to write, ask questions, search for answers, memorize, and study—repeatedly.

Sometimes we do all this, yet we still fail exams. It's not always easy to find success.

But the study of the Dhammakaya method doesn't require much at all, not even notebooks or pencils!

You just need your body and a wholesome mind. Sit and meditate, keeping your mind empty of all thoughts for as long as possible, almost as if you were a machine. Switch off your “human-ness,” all the anxiety, racing thoughts, and distractions. If we can't let these go, we make our path that much longer and harder to travel. Be like a robot

and shut all these distractions out of your mind. Still the mind and stay still for as long as you can, and you will experience something quite miraculous, because the miracle is already inside of you. You just need to access it by staying still. Purify the mind. It's not complicated at all.

26th February 1996

The Path to Perfection

Today, you are content to practice meditation for five minutes. Tomorrow, do so again, and again the next day. Even if today's session was not as good as yesterday's, don't dwell too much on it. If today's session was better than yesterday's, don't dwell on that either. Make it a constant practice. You will encounter roadblocks, but this is the path to perfection. The mind improves with more practice even though you don't perceive it right away. You may think, "nothing seems to be happening for me." But slowly, your mind is becoming more refined and you are accumulating merit without even realizing it. Little by little, you are becoming more pure and clean.

11th August 2002

True Happiness Is Like This

Will you visualize the crystal sphere at all times? Can you do so inside the meditation hall and outside it too? If you can, it will help you attain inner happiness. When you can visualize the sphere at all times, you will understand what it means to be truly happy.

24th April 1996

Thought for Idle Minds

When you visualize the crystal sphere image, your mind becomes occupied by the task. To visualize or wonder about other subjects is not as useful. Meditation will purify the mind. When your mind wanders to other subjects, whether human or animal, then emotions like delight or sadness can arise and distract you.

24th April 1996

Loving Kindness

When you attain the Dhammakaya, you will truly understand the meaning of the word humanitarian. The most profound feeling of pure love, goodwill, and compassion for suffering will be unlocked from within you.

1st October 2000

Sleep in Merit

Try to go to bed each night with the image of the crystal ball in your mind's eye. When you sleep with the image clear in your thoughts, the angels above rejoice in your merit, and merit is the source of all of life's treasures and joy. Good fortune will be drawn to you by your goodness. Your sleep will be peaceful and dreamless, or if you dream, it will be only of joyful things. Sleep will be like floating in air.

10th June 2002

Regularity

Practicing meditation regularly is essential in order to reach the Dhammakaya. Even when you have many duties and responsibilities, you must add regular meditation to your routine. Whether you find yourself in a good mood or a bad mood; and whether you are sick or healthy; and whether you are at home or at the temple—meditate! With regular practice, your mind becomes more pure and clear. It will find itself settled at the 7th base of the body where Dhammakaya resides. If you can keep up this routine, then attaining the Dhammakaya is assured, one hundred percent.

27th March 1992

Diligence

Diligence is the key to meditation. All who have achieved Enlightenment did so through diligence. The opposite of diligence is laziness. Cure your laziness with diligence.

15th October 2000

Wake Up in Merit

When you wake up, first thing in the morning, visualize the crystal sphere at the center of your body. Then you can get up and brush your teeth, shower, and do morning prayers and meditation. This should be your daily routine.

10th June 2002

In Earnestness

If you all practice meditation with earnest intent, and make a resolution to attain the Dhammakaya, then each of you will surely succeed.

23rd July 2002

You Must Attain It

The Triple Gem is the most important thing. It is inside of us, and we must reach it. Meditate each day and each night. Analyze whether your methodology is correct. Besides regularity, ensure that you are engaging in the correct method, and continuously develop your practice...soon you will reach your goal.

30th August 2002

Using the Right Method

There is a correct method to Dhammakaya meditation, which you should follow. Even if you meditate a great deal, if you do not practice it correctly, you will not attain the Dhamma. Correct method and diligent practice will lead to a wholesome, clear, and purified mind and successful attainment of the Dhammakaya.

29th September 2002

Cleanliness

When you take a shower, clean your mind as well. When you wash your face and brush your teeth, clean your mind as well. As you wash the dishes, clear your mind. Think of the crystal sphere and empty your mind of all else. Meditation can be done even as you are doing other tasks. You can make your time twice as useful.

You are the source of your own merit. Focus your mind at the center at all times, and soon the crystal sphere will come to you with ease.

23rd July 2002

Think in a New Way

Once your Lent comes to an end, a new way of thinking should begin. Embrace meditation practice. If you never loved to do it before, or only liked it a little bit, then start to love it with all your heart. Meditate with discipline, and I promise you, you will achieve the Dhamma.

7th October 2002

Don't Forget to Focus the Mind

Even while occupied in your job, or other mundane tasks, never stop meditating. Combine work and meditation so that they go together hand in hand. Only by focusing and stilling the mind can we reach the Dhamma and know true happiness.

1st January 2002

Normal

You are a normal person, and it's normal to feel sad, fatigued, and distracted as everyone else does. You are not alone in facing these challenges. So don't feel discouraged or anxious.

22nd April 2002

Take It Easy

We've all heard this expression before: "Take it easy." When we don't take something seriously, it all seems easy. But when we get serious about it, it suddenly seems hard, such as when we play football or badminton for fun, we enjoy it. Meditation is similar. Do it with an easy spirit and it won't seem hard. It's when we are too serious that we find it difficult.

11th July 2002

From the Inside

A language teacher once told me that learning a language should be easy and direct because language is a human tool for communication. It did not originate from a scholar, a sage, or from the heavens; ordinary people created it. At its most basic level, there is a subject, a verb, and an object in a sentence. For example, I say, "I eat rice." You can add to the basic sentence to make it longer and more complex and elegant, but in the end the meaning is simple: "I eat rice." Meditation is like that too. It is very simple, so simple a child can practice it. You can do it. You will attain the Dhamma and all the knowledge of heaven, hell, and Nibbana will be revealed to you. It is as simple as drawing back a curtain, which will reveal the sunlight that illuminates our world.

30th June 1999

The Taste of Dhamma

When you are finally able to see the brightness within of the Dhamma sphere, the feeling is as indescribable as a flavor on the tongue. Your mind, going deeper and deeper into meditation, will witness the sphere and also the bodies within the body, going from coarsest to more refined as it goes inward. Each internal “plane” is different in flavor from the others, but each is more delightful, enthralling, and addictive than any taste found in the mundane world.

25th June 2000

Meditation Is Both Secular and Spiritual

To meditate is both a secular and a spiritual necessity.

In the mundane world, meditation helps you to succeed. Pausing is the first step of any mundane task. Your pencil hovers for one moment before you begin to write down your words. In the same way: To solve problems, you must stop for a moment to ponder your direction before you put thought to action. That pause allows your mind to settle and begin from a place of concentration, a place of wisdom.

Start from a small point of focus in the mind and find peace and stability. A calm mind will find solutions to life's difficulties, step by step.

4th August 1996

Life Science

My wish is that everyone feels the same thing I feel, which is love for the Dhammakaya. I love the Dhammakaya because there is no other method in the world that can cure the suffering of humankind and bring happiness to all. When your suffering is most acute, there is no earthly science – political science, economics, or whatever science - that can alleviate it. What can help you then is Buddhism. The wisdom of the Buddha is the source of bravery and patience in the face of suffering, with more strength than the doctors or nurses who try to cure you. Myself, though I suffer from a physical malady, my mind remains joyful, strong, and bright.

The Middle Way

Do you wish to travel abroad? It can be more tiring than relaxing, and when you finally return home, you forget most of what you saw.

Do you wish to travel to outer space? It seems like a journey filled with terror, fear of death, and all without knowing what there is to see on the other side.

Wherever you travel to, your defilements—greed, anger, and delusion—always stay with you.

But there is another path you can travel, the one called the Middle Way; this is the path that leads to Enlightenment. This is the only journey that leads to true and lasting happiness. Some people think happiness is about getting drunk or other such things. They will happily fall into disaster. It is important to recognize what real happiness is to mankind. If you don't even see this, then you remain in danger.

17th June 2001

As Indispensable as Air

Meditation must become part of your routine, like taking a shower, washing up, and brushing your teeth. It is as indispensable as air. Without it, we cannot thrive. When you lack air, you lose your life. When you lack meditation, you lose everything. Make meditation a priority since it is the most important thing, your only refuge, your access to the Dhamma. With the Dhamma you attain peace and happiness, and it is the only thing you can take with you through all the lifetimes until you enter Nibbana.

15th October 2000

Remnant of Time

Time is getting away from you. There is still so much for you to learn. The knowledge gained from meditation practice is tremendous and if you lived to be a thousand years old, you might still not learn all there is to know about Dhammakaya Knowledge. Don't waste any precious time. Meditate. Whatever mundane tasks may lie before you, stop and meditate. You will come to realize just how important it is.

23th May 1992

Dhamma Practice

Meditation is the pathway to Nibbana, which is why it is of utmost importance to practice. You are in search of Nibbana. There is no greater merit than what we gain from meditation. Even if we only glimpse a momentary flash of brightness within, it is a glimpse of Nibbana.

30th March 1992

Earth and the Universe

When we can see the Dhamma sphere, the secret of life will be laid bare to you. When your eyes are closed [in meditation], and your focus centered and maintained within, and all movement—physical, verbal, and mental—are stopped, and you will see all of the Earth and the Universe.

26th January 2002

Those Who Attain the Dhammakaya

The heavenly beings of the celestial world need people who have attained the Dhammakaya. They are drawn to virtuous, wholesome people and want to be near them to bask in their goodness radiating from within. It gives them a feeling of peace and happiness to be near the Dhamma. They feel protected, and draw strength from it, the strength to be pure and virtuous too. This is why the Dhamma is incomparable.

5th March 2002

Purified Mind

Purify and clarify the mind; do not let it remain clouded with sadness. The myriad of stimuli that passes through our eyes, nose, and tongue assaults the mind and we need to carefully filter the good from the bad so that only the good remains. One of these days we shall all have to depart this world, and we should do so with a purified mind.

1st September 2002

The Shining Sun

Though you may be going through the darkest of times in your life now, one day you will be in the light of the Dhamma.

The darkest night cannot last longer than 12 hours in a single day. The sun will rise and lift it away. The light of the Dhamma is like the sun. One day when you have meditated diligently and your mind has become still, the pure light of the Dhamma will appear within. There is no need to search far and wide; you already have it inside you. You only need the right method to open the door.

23rd July 2002



9

Meditation in Everyday Life

Integrating meditation into your everyday life is simple. Just make the promise to yourself that any night when you haven't done your meditation, you won't dare to go to bed!

*Phrarajbhavanajarn
Vice-Abbot of Wat Phra Dhammakaya*

Our meditation and our everyday life affect each other mutually. Improvements in your meditation will serve to improve your everyday life and vice-versa. Don't be surprised if the

ups and downs of everyday life seem to affect how you meditate. It is a pitfall of beginners to feel that they are making no progress or that their meditation is even getting worse as time goes on. However, solace can be taken in reminding oneself that many more factors affect the quality of our meditation than meet the eye. The best we can do is to make the effort to be observant about the possible connections between our inner and outer lives.

Try to notice the things that put you in the mood for meditation and the things that seem to make it more difficult for you to meditate.

There are several tips for 'meditation homework' which you might like to try to keep up the subtle state of mind throughout your non-meditating hours. Of these, particularly influential are 'keeping a meditation diary' and 'remembering to bring your mind back to the center of your body for one minute every hour'.

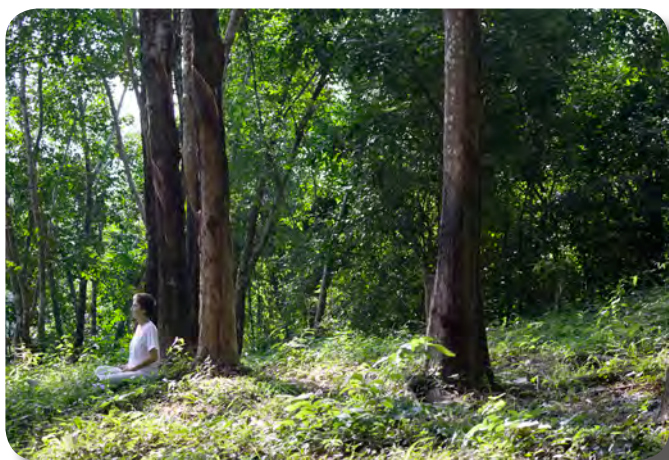
Keeping a meditation diary means keeping short notes written after each session while the inner experience is still fresh in the mind. This personal record will prove invaluable over a long period of time. You will find that learning how to optimize everyday life to help your meditation is an art in itself—a sophisticated science that goes beyond the scope of this book but which can be studied on courses held in many of the centers mentioned at the end of this book.

As for keeping your mind at the center of your body for one minute of every hour, one way to remind yourself to keep up this practice is to set an hourly alarm on your wristwatch or cellphone to give an audible ‘beep’ on the hour.

In general if you are the sort of person who is kind and ready to help other people then it will help your meditation. At the same time one should be responsible for the human dignity of oneself and others and upholding an economy

that is ethically fair. If you follow these norms of behaviour, you will find that your meditation improves a lot.

As mentioned at the beginning of this book, there are some disadvantages in learning meditation from a book rather than directly from a teacher. These disadvantages are not insurmountable, and the knowledge and techniques contained in this book are sufficient for you to practice meditation and progress without hindrance up to the stage where your meditation becomes stable. Your aim in meditation should be to attain a clear counter-image inside which is as clear as a diamond and as bright as the midday sun, permanent in your mind so that you can see it with your eyes open or closed, the whole of the time.





10

Extending Your Experience

Dig your well in search of the spring, keep on digging never rest. dig shallow, no water's to be found, dig until you reach it and the water flows.

(Great Master Phramongkolthepmuni)

The biggest limitation to the extension of experience for western meditators is the length of time they can comfortably sit cross-legged on the floor. Sometimes one would like to sit for longer, but bodily discomfort becomes a distraction. In

the first year, while your body is adapting, see if you can work your meditation time up to a full hour. If you have the opportunity to join a half-day retreat, a full-day retreat, or a weekend retreat, you will certainly benefit from the experience.

Details of dates and application forms for these retreats can be requested from your local meditation centers.

Worldwide Centers

America

United States

Dhammakaya International Meditation Center (U.S.A)

Tel : + (1) 626-334-2160 E-mail : dimc.info@gmail.com

Seattle Meditation Center

Tel : +(1) 425-608-0096 E-mail : seattle072@yahoo.com

Meditation Center of Chicago

Tel : +(1) 773-763-8763 E-mail : mcc_072@yahoo.com

Meditation Center of D.C.

Tel : + (1) 703-329-0350

E-mail : mdc072@yahoo.com, mdc072@meditationdc.org

Oregon Meditation Center

Tel : + (1) 503-252-3637 Website : www.dimcor.org

Dhammakaya International Meditation Center (New Jersey)

Tel : + (1) 908-322-4187 E-mail : dimc_nj@yahoo.com

Minnesota Meditation Center

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