

## PREFACE

Gautama Buddha pointed out and cleared the way of liberation from the rounds of birth. He taught the techniques of mental development to attain that liberation. Samatha eliminates distractedness, establishes one-pointed and concentrated mind and leads to tranquility. Vipassana offers insight into the true characteristics of phenomena and the attainment of liberating knowledge.

In Burma many meditation centres offer various methods of mental development employing the techniques set forth in the Maha-Satipatthana Sutta. On account of its proven efficacy and appropriateness to modern man, there is now growing interest in a technique which had been practised by the late Sunlun-gukyaung Sayadaw, the Abbot of the Cave Monastery of Sunlun. This technique was wrought by the Abbot in actual struggle to win the final fruits of vipassana practice. It was found to be in conformity with the principles which are at the core of Buddhist vipassana practice.

Two characteristics of Sunlun are its employment of sensation as the object of meditation and the intensity of practice. The adoption of sensation was never the result of a deliberate intellectual choice. It arose naturally as an organic part of the actual practice. But now it is possible to understand why sensation contributes towards the efficiency of the method. Sensation lies at the intersection of mind and matter. As such it is the best object of meditation to help the yogi establish mindfulness of the body, of sensation and of consciousness, namely kayanupassana, vedananupassana, and cittanupassana. It does so because it is at the root of all these stations. It is the non-mnemic element in perception and does not depend upon habit, memory and past experience. Therefore it is closest to the requirement of vipassana which avoids the concepts which are the basis of habit, memory and mnemic perception.

Sunlun calls for intensity of practice. It asks the meditator to generate the necessary zeal, ardour, energy and effort to break the

bonds of attachment to the illusive sense of an "I". It should be clearly understood that the four foundations of mindfulness cannot be established in a leisurely manner. This age, perhaps more than any other, demands unflinching effort on the part of the yogi who would wish to make significant progress in the practice of vipassana.

This book contains four pieces on the fundamental aspects of the Sunlun way of mindfulness. The first constitutes a sermon delivered in Rangoon by Sunlun Shin Vinaya. The next two are by U Win Pe, and the last one by Dr. Ba Le; both are disciples of Sunlun Shin Vinaya and the pieces were written under his guidance.