

To the Reader

This beautiful book in your hands is a priceless gift of truth — a gift derived from the collective effort of many kind people.

Many of our friends have been involved in this simple yet tedious task of publication — putting in long hours in keying the entire manuscript into the computer, proof-reading, editing and layout work made simple by desktop publishing before delivering the script into final output or FA (Finished Art).

Then there was the printer's task of engraving work, printing process, stitching, trimming and binding; and the end product is what is in your hand now.

This book would not have gone into print if not for those kind people who assisted in raising funds needed to defray the cost of printing for free distribution; and, of course, the support of generous donors.

Thus it is our humble wish that you cherish this book with utmost care and respect — not merely leaving it on the shelf as another exhibit, but by thoroughly reading and investigating the dhamma which Sayadaw has so lovingly given — the precious dhamma as taught by the Buddha.

May this book further enhance our faith and wisdom in our practice. Metta.

FOREWORD

when he fell seriously ill. Months later, much to our grief, he succumbed to his illness. Chris MacLachlan of the Buddha Sasana Association of Australia managed to resume the work left by Leon. This was later returned to us.

During a discussion with the Venerable Sujiva of Santisukharama, Malaysia, in 1991, he readily agreed to edit and print the book. For any suggestions or comments, kindly contact the undersigned.

MYA THAUNG
c/o Panditarama
80A Thanlwin Road
Bahan, Yangon
Myanmar (Burma).

Several translations have been made of the late Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw's discourses by various translators. The present volume is one of the few attempts made of the Sayadaw U Pandita's discourses. This transcript covers discourses given to foreign yogis who came to practise under him in Yangon (formerly Rangoon) from August 1986 to March 1987.

Parts of discourses in typed copies have been distributed to meditators after each session, but seldom in a complete set like the present one. Since there had been a demand for the complete set, the typed copies were taken to Australia during Sayadaw's trip abroad in 1988. One of the Australian yogis, Leon Prolius, offered to arrange and computerise the articles. He managed to produce a draft set.

Though Leon was suffering from a terminal disease, he was dedicated to the completion of the work, so much so that he was reluctant to hand over the project to us even

CONTENTS

FREEDOM

1 VIEW OF INDIVIDUALITY 1
Definition of Personality/Individuality 3
Consequences of Sakkāya Diṭṭhi 4
Paṭivedha Lakkhaṇa Pañña 5

2 IGNORANCE, AVARICE AND NEGLIGENCE 9
The Shrouded World 9
How to Overcome Ignorance 10

3 THE BOOK OF THE SOLES 13

4 DIVERSIFICATIONS 17
Craving (Taṇhā) 18
Conceit (Māna) 19
Views (Diṭṭhi) 20
Satipaṭṭhāna as Remedy 24

5 PERVERSIONS 27

6 TRAINING 31
Bhikkhu 31
Defilements (Kilesa) 32
The Three Maggas 34
Peace (Santi) 37
The Noble Eightfold Path
(Ariya Atṭhaṅgika Magga) 38

7 CONTRADICTION AND COMPLIANCE 41

8 MAKE HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES 43
The Prodigal Son 43
Virtuous Friend (Kalyāṇamitta) 45
Benefits 45

9 WHEELS OF CONJUNCTURE 47
Patirupadesavāsa 47
Sappurisuṇṇasāya 48
Attasamāpanidhi 48
Pubbekatappunāta 52

10 HUMANKIND IS A RARE PRIVILEGE 55

11 FULL AWARENESS 59
Sāttaha Sampajañña 60
Sappāya Sampajañña 60
Gocara Sampajañña 61
Asammoha Sampajañña 61

12 THE CHARACTERISTICS 65
Dhamma Maxim 65
Natural or Unique Characteristics
(Sabhāva Lakkhaṇa) 66
Labelling 68
The Triple Characteristics
(Sankhata Lakkhaṇa) 71
Common or Universal Characteristics
(Samañña Lakkhaṇa) 71

13 ACCOMPLISHMENTS 73
Accomplishment through Personal Experience
or Evidence (Paccakha Siddhā) 73
Accomplishment by Inference
(Anumāna Siddhā) 74
Accomplishment by Faith
(Okappana Siddhā) 74

14 NURTURING THE SAPLING OF INSIGHT 77

15 ELEMENTS OF EXERTION 81
Faith 81
Health 82
Sincerity 82
Energy 83

16 FIVE WAYS TO PROGRESS 85
An Extraneous Discourse (Antara Katha) 85

17 MENTAL OBSTACLES AND BONDAGES 91
Mental Obstacles (Cetokhilla) 91
Sabrahmacari 94
Mental Bondages (Cetovinibandha) 95

18 TEN ARMIES OF MARA 97
Sensuous Pleasures (Kama) 98
Dissatisfaction (Araṇi) 98
Hunger and Thirst (Khuppipasa) 101
Craving (Taṇhā) 103
Sloth and Torpor (Thina-middha) 103
Fear (Bhīra) 104
Doubt (Vicikicchā) 105
Hypocrisy and Obstinacy
(Mabbha and Tambha) 105
Gains, Fame and Reverence
(Lābha, Siloka and Sabbhāra) 106
Self-exaltation and Disparaging Others
(Attukkamsana and Paroambhana) 108

19 BUDDHA LAYS DOWN THE DHAMMA PRINCIPLES 111
Subhadda's Question 111
Defilements (Kilesa) 115

20 THE TRIPLE BOUND 117
Beginning of the Round 117
Clinging is the Cause 118
Escape from the Round 119

21 MOMENTARY PEACE 121

IV * ON THE PATH TO FREEDOM

CONTENTS

22 DIRECT AND FULL KNOWLEDGE 125
The Four Great Essentials 127
Beyond Form and Manner 129
Parināna 130

23 ONE BLOW FIVE SHOTS 145
Appamāda 147
Ethical Essence 150

24 ABSORPTIONS 151
Three Types of Concentration 151
Mundane and Supramundane 153

25 PRELIMINARY PRACTICE 155

26 TRANQUILITY MEDITATION 159
Factors of Absorption 159
The Three Miracle 163
Miracles of Faith 164

27 INSIGHT MEDITATION 167
Definition 167
Noteworthy Objects 169
Overcoming of Hindrances 170
Momentary Concentration (Khaṇīka Samādhi) 171
Joy and Happiness (Pīti-sukhanti-vivekaja) 174
Kinds of Pīti (Joy) 177
The Indolent and the Energetic 178
Three Kinds of Effort 180

28 HINDRANCES TO PRACTICE 183
Five Hindrances 183

29 IMPERFECTIONS OF INSIGHT 187

30 ENLIGHTENMENT FACTORS AND THEIR THERAPEUTIC EFFECTS 193

31 SENSUOUSNESS 207
Kinds of Sensuousness 207
The Two Extremes 209
Two Kinds of Happiness 212

V * ON THE PATH TO FREEDOM

CONTENTS

32 THE MIDDLE WAY 215

33 SECOND JHĀNA 217
Confidence with One-pointedness of Mind 219

34 THIRD JHĀNA 223
Stagnation (Ajjhataṅga Saṅghita) 224
Fading Away of Happiness 226
Literary Obstacle 228
Ten Kinds of Equanimity 229
Dwelling in Equanimity 249
The Role of Sati and Sampajañña 252
The Qualities of Sati and Sampajañña 255
Equanimous Bliss 258

35 LOVING-KINDNESS MEDITATION 261
Introduction 261
Genuine and Fictitious Mettā 262
Nature of Mettā 264
Family Love (Gehassita Pema) 266
Methods of Development 267
Advantages 268
Relationship with Non-human 272
Kinds of Persons 274
Towards Oneself 275
Towards a Dear Person 276
Four Expressions 277
Four Postures 278
Resolutions and Mastery 279
Associated Benefits 279
Mettā Bhāvanā and Vipassanā 281
The Four Bhāvanās 282
The Breaking Down of the Barriers
(Simasambheda) 282
Developing 528 Kinds of Mettā 283
Dhamma Discussion (Dhammasākaccā) 285

VI * ON THE PATH TO FREEDOM

CONTENTS

36 BUDDHIST CEREMONIES OF THE VASSA (LENT) 287
Kathina 291
The Beginning of Kathina 292
Benefits 293

37 SEVEN SUITABLE THINGS 297
Spiritual Faculties 297
Sharpening of Faculties 298
Working Suitably 299

38 THE STREAMS 303
The Restraint 303
Discourse on Bharadvaja 306
The Constraint 308
The Triple Round (Vajṭa) 309
Cessation of Cycle 312
Path (Magga) 316

39 THE DHAMMA 319
The Meaning of Dhamma 319
Protection by Dhamma 320
The Wheel of Law (Dhammacakka) 321
The Quality of Law 321
Universal Guardian 323

40 LEARNING THE SCRIPTURES 327
What to Learn 327
Purposes of Learning 329

41 THE TRAINER AND NON-TRAINER 333
Ajita's Question 333
Bhikkhu 335
Knowing the Ariyas 335
Types of Ariya 336

42 ORDINARY BEING 339
Scriptures and Attainment 339
Perceiving the Ariyas 340
Multiplicity of Things 340

CONTENTS * VII

CONTENTS

Tendencies 343
Complexities 344
The Floods 346
The Fires 348
Jati Fire 354
Marana Fire 355

43 THE GOOD FRIEND 401
The Three Disasters 357
Soka and Other Fires 359
The Defilements 362
Desires of Senses 365
Hooked on Craving 368
Avoid the Evil Way 369
Attached to Craving 371
Hindrances to Freedom 372
Wholesome and Unwholesome Heap 375
Living with the Present 377
Ariyas' Attitude 378
Turned Away from the Ariyan Law 379
Mūla Magga 380
Pubbabhāga Magga 381
Ariya Magga 381
Separated from the Ariyan Law 383
Saddhā Dhana 384
Testing the Object of Faith 388
Resoluteness of Faith 388
Material Wealth versus Ariyan Wealth 389
Mohapatala 390
The Benefits 392
Sīla Dhana 393
Hiri Dhana and Ottapa Dhana 393
Suta Dhana 394
Cāga Dhana 394
Pañña Dhana 394

VIII * ON THE PATH TO FREEDOM

CONTENTS

The Devout are Respected Everywhere 395
Born of Understanding 395
Five Delusion 397
The Light of the World 398
The Light of the Sasana 399

44 PASSION, MALICE AND DELUSION 409
Channa the Wanderer 409
Ajivaka's Follower 412
Good Teaching 412
Right Conduct 414
Fare-thee-well 414

45 NOBLE SILENCE 417
Talking is a Great Hindrance 417

46 ONE TRUTH LEADS TO ALL TRUTHS 421
Natural Law 421
The Noble Truth of Suffering
(Dukkha Sacca) 421
Know the Truth of Suffering 422
Know the Other Truth 423

47 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS 427
Characteristics (Lakkhaṇa) 439
Functions (Rasa) 440
Manifestation (Paccupatṭhāna) 440

BIOGRAPHY 441
NUMERICAL LISTS 447
INDEX 461
DONATION LISTS 487