

# A Comparative Study of the Foundations of Mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna) Teachings between Theravāda and Tibetan Vajrayāna Buddhism

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## ABSTRACT

This article aims to compare and analyze the teachings of the foundations of mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna) between Theravāda and Tibetan Vajrayāna Buddhism. The findings reveal two main similarities in both concept and practice. Firstly, the terms *smṛti* or *sati* are similarly defined as ‘mindfulness’ or ‘remembrance’. Both traditions share the ultimate goal of attaining the highest peace (*nirvāṇa*) by realizing the three characteristics. Secondly, the practice is categorized into four areas: observation of the body, feelings, mind, and phenomena. However, there are notable differences in how these foundations of mindfulness are applied. In the Pāli canon, the sequence of observing the body begins with the breathing section, whereas in Vajrayāna, it starts with bodily postures. Additionally, the Pāli canon divides the observation of mind-objects into five detailed categories. In contrast, the Tibetan canon does not explicitly list these five categories, though many Sanskrit and Tibetan commentaries provide detailed explanations.

**Keywords:** Foundations of Mindfulness; Satipaṭṭhāna; Theravāda Buddhism; Tibetan Vajrayāna Buddhism

## Introduction

The Buddha's teaching had been based on his own empirical experience and analytical wisdom not on mere faith and authoritarianism for purification.<sup>1</sup> Also, the teaching of the Four foundation of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*)<sup>2</sup> is the direct path (*ekāyano*)<sup>3</sup> for the purification of beings in order to get rid of the *dukkhā* and discontent. These practices have been widely taught among two main Buddhist sects: Theravāda and Vajrayāna (Mahāyāna) Buddhism.<sup>4</sup> The four foundations of mindfulness have been popular and increasing in Theravāda and Western countries among monks, nuns, lay Buddhists, and even non-Buddhists. Whereas, the Vajrayāna tradition practice in Tibet, Bhutan<sup>5</sup>, and Western countries, they practice mindfulness combined with compassion, bodhicitta, visualization meditation, and so on.

The Buddha has expounded this discourse in several suttas such as Mahasatipaṭṭhānasutta,<sup>6</sup> Satipaṭṭhānasutta,<sup>7</sup> many other discourses in Pāli canon and Smṛtyupasthānasutra, Prajñāpāramitāsutra and others in Sanskrit and Tibetan canon. Although, there are diverse parallels between the Pāli and Tibetan Canons, unfortunately, Long Discourses, Middle-Length Discourses, Connected Discourses, and Numerical Discourses were not translated into Tibetan as collections.<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, various people have believed that these schools are totally different thus this research aims to comparatively explore: similarities and differences in two traditions and share to both traditions' fellows and practitioners around the world. The Similarities of the Foundations of Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*) between Theravāda and Tibetan Vajrayāna Buddhism.

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<sup>1</sup> Bhikkhu Anālayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization*, (Malaysia: Buddhist Wisdom Centre, 2006), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> U Ko Lay, *Manual of Vipassana Meditation*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, (Maharashtra, India: Vipassana Research Institute, 2002), p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> Bhikkhu Anālayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization*, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Hirakawa Akira, *A History of Indian Buddhism from Śākyamuni to Early Mahāyāna*, trans. Paul Groner, (USA: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Lylla Winzer, Bhubate Samutachak, and Rossarin Soottipong Gray, "Religiosity, Spirituality, and Happiness in Thailand from the Perspective of Buddhism," *Journal of Population and Social Studies* 26, no. 4 (2018): 334-5. <https://doi.org/10.25133/JPSSv26n4.023>

<sup>6</sup> D II 290.

<sup>7</sup> M I 55.

<sup>8</sup> Dalai Lama and Thupten Jinpa, *Science and Philosophy in the Indian Buddhist Classics: The Mind*. Vol. 2, trans. Dechen Richard and John D. Dunne, (New York: Wisdom Publications, 2020), p. 503.

The Buddha realized the ultimate truth and discovered the path of liberation from the Samsāra, by the great compassion he delivered all the teachings to fellow human beings before his *Mahāparinirvāna*. Out of his various teachings, the foundation of mindfulness is one of the core teachings for purification and liberation. Thus, this discourse is practice and learning in both traditions, but with time being, language has been modified and there are various interpretations and translations. So, in this article, the researcher is going to find what similarities and differences are between the foundation of mindfulness in these two traditions.

### **Meaning of *Sati* or *Smṛti***

Mindfulness (Pāli-*sati*, Skt. *smṛti*) is the foremost practice in Buddhist and the Buddha strongly emphasizes this discourse, thus both schools of Theravāda and Vajrayāna (Mahayāna) have focused this teaching as one of the core practices to liberate from cyclic-existence (*samsara*).

According to Pāli canon and commentaries, there are various meanings of the term *sati*. Traced back from the first translation of the term ‘mindfulness’, it was the British translator T.W. Rhys Davids,<sup>9</sup> who commented it in the introduction to his translation of the Mahāsatipatṭhānasutta and after that, it became the common term for word *sati*. In Abhidhamma and some other suttas, *sati* means recollection (*anussati*), remembering, state of recollecting, state of remembering, state of no-fading, state of non-forgetting.<sup>10</sup>

According to the Tibetan Vajrayāna translation of the Sanskrit canon of Buddhadharma (*bKa’gyur*) and commentaries (*bStan’gyur*), the word *smṛti* (Skt) equivalent of *sat* (Pāli) has many meanings based on different contexts. In Indian psychology apart from Buddhism, the word *smṛti* generally means to memory. Thus, Monier-Williams defines it as ‘remembrance, reminiscence, and memory.’<sup>11</sup>

With regard to Asanga’s “Compendium of Knowledge,” Mindfulness means to observe a familiar object and subjective aspect which is “not forgetful” and its function is to “keep your attention” from wandering from the object of mediation

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<sup>9</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi, “What Does Mindfulness Really Mean?”, *Contemporary Buddhism: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 12, No.1 (2011): 19-39.

<sup>10</sup> Phra Devedhi (Prayudh Payutto), *Sammāsati: An Exposition of Right Mindfulness*, (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 1988), p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi, “What Does Mindfulness Really Mean?”, *Contemporary Buddhism: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (2011): 19-39.

and fixing your attention on an object of meditation and operates without distraction.<sup>12</sup>

In Vasubandhu's book of the "*Treasury of Knowledge*," upper and lower Abhidharma texts, explained the foundations' mindfulness in terms of their objects, essential natures, accompanying factors. First, there are four objects of foundations of mindfulness: body, feelings, mind, and phenomena. The essential nature is mindfulness or wisdom.<sup>13</sup>

According to both traditions, mindfulness is one of those few qualities which appear in more than one set of conditions favorable to enlightenment. Mindfulness is fundamental not only to the foundations of mindfulness; it is also the third faculty of (*smṛtīndriya*), the third power of (*smṛtibala*), the first member of enlightenment (*smṛtysaṃbodhyanṅga*) and the seventh member of the noble eightfold path (*samyaksmṛti*)<sup>14</sup> which is related to the path and it's called as right mindfulness (*sammāsati*).<sup>15</sup>

### Types of Foundations of Mindfulness

According to Pāli and Sanskrit canon or Tibetan Vajrayāna tradition, there are four foundations of mindfulness which are observation of the body (*kāyānupassanā*, *kāyasmṛtyupasthāna*), observation of feeling (*vedanānupassanā*, *vedanāsmṛtyupasthāna*), the observation of mind (*cittānupassanā*, *cittāsmṛtyupasthāna*), and observation of mind-objects (*dhammānupassanā*, *dharmāsmṛtyupasthāna*)<sup>16</sup> based on four objects and they are taught orderly as oppositions to the four errors, belief in purity, happiness, permanence, and self. They are therefore four, no more, and no less.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Je Tsong-Kha-Pa, Lamrim Chenmo [The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment], Vol. 3, trans. The Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee, (New York: Snow Lion Publications, 2002), p. 49.

<sup>13</sup> Dalai Lama and Thupten Jinpa, Science and Philosophy in the Indian Buddhist Classics: The Mind. Vol. 2, trans. Dechen Richard and John D. Dunne, pp. 579-581.

<sup>14</sup> Daśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā [The Transcendent Perfection of Wisdom in Ten Thousand Lines], <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh11.html#UT22084-031-002-949> (accessed March 24, 2021).

<sup>15</sup> Caroline A. F Rhys Davids (trans.), *Dhamma-Sāngni: A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition., (London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1923), p. 14.

<sup>16</sup> Sanu Mahatthanadull, "Concepts and Principles of Buddhism 625 102", Teaching Document, Buddhist Studies Program, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition., (Ayyuthaya: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2020), p. 35.

<sup>17</sup> Vasubandhu, Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam, Vol. 3, trans. Leo M. Pruden, (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991), p. 929.

## The goal of Foundations of Mindfulness

Referring to the Satipaṭṭhānasutta, mindfulness meditation or practice is not merely for mundane goals, but rather this is based on purification or eradication of the root of suffering. For the mundane goal, the practice of mindfulness can develop and increase concentration (*jhāna*)<sup>18</sup> and peaceful or calm mind, with that it will promote the physical conditions.<sup>19</sup> The Buddha states the ultimate goal, Mendicants, these four kinds of mindfulness meditation when developed and cultivated, lead solely to disillusionment, dispassion, cessation, peace, insight, awakening, and extinguishment.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, the ultimate goal of the practice of mindfulness is taming and controlling one's body and the monkey mind, because all sufferings and problems from inner and outer world normally come from untamed minds. Way to attain the ultimate goal is that the mendicants need to gain four stages to become an Arahant (*Sotāpaṭṭi magga*, *Sakadāgāmi magga*, *Anāgāmi magga*, and *Arahanta*) therefore, one who develops these four kinds of mindfulness meditation in this way for seven years can expect one of two results.<sup>21</sup>

## The practice of Foundations of Mindfulness

According to both Pāli and Sanskrit canons, there are four foundations of mindfulness, which are the core teaching of the Buddha and he himself claimed and stated that these four practices are the one and only way (*ekāyano maggo*)<sup>22</sup> to attain enlightenment and path of purification.<sup>23</sup> Thus, in both traditions, they focus and emphasize this practice in different fields.

First, the Observation of the Body (*kāyanupassanā* or *kāyasmṛtyupasthāna*)

The observation of the body has been described as six distinct modes and fourteen sections in Satipaṭṭhānasutta and Prajñāpāramitāsutra: the sections of breathing; on postures; on the four kinds of clear-comprehensions; reflection on repulsiveness; on attention to elements; and on the nine charnel-ground

<sup>18</sup> Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga: The Path of Purification*, trans. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition., (Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 2010), p. 259.

<sup>19</sup> Sanu Mahatthanadull, "The Art of Breathing: Buddhist Principle and Methods", Commemorative Book, The 2nd MCU International Academic Conference, May 19, 2016, (Bkk: JPrint Mahadhat, 2016): 141-154.

<sup>20</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi (trans.), *Samyutta-nikāya* [The Connected Discourses of the Buddha], (Oxford: PTS., 2018), p. 1627.

<sup>21</sup> Bhikkhu Sujato (trans.), *Dīgha-nikāya* [Long Discourses], <https://suttacentral.net/dn22/en/sujato> (accessed May 26, 2021).

<sup>22</sup> Bhikkhu Anālayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization*, (Malaysia: Buddhist Wisdom Centre, 2006), p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3.

contemplations.<sup>24</sup> The practice of mindful observation of the body starts from breathing in and out and ends on the contemplation of decay corpse in the Pāli canon whereas Tibetan Vajrayāna, starts from bodily postures and ends with the charnel ground.

The practice of mindful breathing has four steps, practitioner is mindful of breathing in and out with knowing long or short, experiencing the whole body, and calming the body.<sup>25</sup> The mindfulness on four bodily postures; a practitioner or great bodhisattva knows and be mindful on walking, standing, sitting, and lying down<sup>26</sup> and whatever ways the body changes its posture, they are fully aware of it.<sup>27</sup> The session of clear-comprehension, after the bodily postures great bodhisattva or mendicants beings, maintain alertness on small activities such as going forward and returning, looking ahead and away, flexing, and extending limbs, wearing robes, carrying robes and bowl, eating, drinking, consuming food, urinating, talking, and so on.<sup>28</sup> Be mindful of anatomical parts or reflect on the repulsiveness section to bring unattractive aspects on the body which are from the top of the hair to the soles of the feet which consists of thirty-two parts including the brain.<sup>29</sup> Be aware and mindful of the four elements earth, water, fire, and air from which this body is formed.<sup>30</sup> And mendicants would realize this body is consists of four elements and nothing to attach. Practitioners go to charnel ground to observe the procedure of decaying dead bodies day by day and how it turned into the food of wild birds and animals, through this understanding and realization one can realize the unattractive and impermanent nature of the body.<sup>31</sup> With regards to this, the Buddha stated, great bodhisattva or mendicants beings who are diligent, alert, and mindful after eliminating worldly covetousness and

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<sup>24</sup> Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga: The Path of Purification*, trans. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition., (Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 2010), pp. 235-236.

<sup>25</sup> Bhikkhu Anālayo, *Buddhist Foundation of Mindfulness, Mindfulness in Behavioral Health*, (Switzerland: Spring International Publishing, 2015), pp. 72-73.

<sup>26</sup> T.W and C A F Rhys Davids (trans.), *Dīgha-nikāya [Dialogues of the Buddha]*, Vol. 3, Part. 2, (London: Oxford University Press, 1910), p. 329.

<sup>27</sup> Daśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā [The Transcendent Perfection of Wisdom in Ten Thousand Lines], <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh11.html#UT22084-031-002-949> (accessed July 23, 2021).

<sup>28</sup> Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi (trans.), *Majjhima-nikāya [The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha]*, (Oxford: PTS., 2001), p. 146.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>30</sup> Maurice Walshe (trans.), *Dīgha-nikāya [The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya]*, Vol. 2, (Oxford: PTS., 1987), p. 338.

<sup>31</sup> Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi (trans.), *Majjhima-nikāya [The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha]*, (Oxford: PTS., 2001), p. 147.

sadness without apprehending anything, with regards to the body, feeling, mind, and the phenomena.<sup>32</sup>

Second, the Observation of Feeling (*vedanānupassanā* or *vedanāsmṛtyupasthāna*)

The observation of feeling has been divided into three modes, contemplation of pleasant (*sukhā*), unpleasant (*dukkha*), and neutral (*adukkhaasukha*) feelings. These three feelings have been classified into sixfold, three for mundane and three for unmundane.<sup>33</sup> The mendicants or Bodhisattva would observe pleasant feeling as pleasant feeling, painful as painful feelings, and neither pleasant nor painful as neutral<sup>34</sup> with diligence, alert, and mindful, after eliminating worldly covetousness and sadness without apprehending anything and without generating any apperceptions dependent on feelings.”<sup>35</sup>

Third, the Observation of Mind (*Cittānupassanā* or *Cittasmṛtyupasthāna*)

According to Mahasatipatthānasutta, the observation of the mind has been divided into two modes: the ordinary and higher mind which is to be free from three roots of afflictions; and attain higher states of mind and liberated mind. Thus, mendicants abide contemplating mind as mind and know a lustful mind as lustful mind, a mind free from lust is free from lust, hate, and delusion, and so on.<sup>36</sup>

These sixteen states of mind (eight categories) can be subdivided into two sets: with contrast unwholesome and wholesome states of mind; and with the presence or absence of higher states of mind.<sup>37</sup>

Fourth, the Observation of Mind Object (*Dhammānupassanā* or *Dharmāsmṛtyupasthāna*)

The last observation of the foundations of mindfulness is concerned with mental-content or phenomena, which is the observation of dharma and is

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<sup>32</sup> Daśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā [The Transcendent Perfection of Wisdom in Ten Thousand Lines], <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh11.html#UT22084-031-002-949> (accessed February 24, 2021)

<sup>33</sup> Maurice Walshe (trans.), *Dīgha-nikāya [The Long Discourses of the Buddha]*, (England: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 422.

<sup>34</sup> Maurice Walshe (trans.), *Dīgha-nikāya [The Long Discourses of the Buddha]*, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1986), p. 422.

<sup>35</sup> Daśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā [The Transcendent Perfection of Wisdom in Ten Thousand Lines], <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh11.html#UT22084-031-002-949> (accessed July 07, 2021).

<sup>36</sup> Maurice Walshe (trans.), *Dīgha-nikāya [The Long Discourses of the Buddha]*, (England: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 340.

<sup>37</sup> Bhikkhu Anālayo, *Satipatthāna [The Direct Path to Realization]*, (Malaysia: Buddhist Wisdom Centre, 2006), p.170.

categorized into five sets, five hindrances (*Pañca Nīvaraṇa*), five aggregates (*Pañca Khandha*), six sense-spheres (*Cha Āyantana*), seven awakening factors (*Satta bojjhaṅga*), and four noble truths (*Catū Ariyasacca*).

Mendicant or Bodhisattva abides contemplating mind-object as mind-object in terms of five hindrances, five aggregates, six sense-spheres, seven awakening factors and four noble truths<sup>38</sup> with diligent, alert, and mindful, after eliminating worldly covetousness and sadness without apprehending anything, with regard to inner phenomena, outer phenome, and combined inner and outer phenomena.<sup>39</sup>

## **The Differences of the Foundations of Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*) between Theravāda and Tibetan Vajrayāna Buddhism**

The Buddhadhamma was founded 2500 years backward, and the Buddha shared and preached his experiences to the rest of the world to be free from suffering and to attain enlightenment and ultimate peace. Nevertheless, after his *Mahāparinirvāna*, there were few controversies between sangha, which have been led to three or four great Buddhist councils in India and it created two major sects Theravāda, and Vajrayāna (Mahāyāna). Between the two sects, there are many similarities and differences based on their interpretation of the Buddhadhamma, which made slightly different, for instance, the concept of *sati* or *smṛti*, the concept of Nirvāna, the Buddha, the Bodhisattva, the Arahant and so on.

### **1. Meaning of *Sati* or *Smṛti***

In these modern days, the practice of mindfulness has been increasingly famous in both Buddhist and non-Buddhist. Therefore, many modern scholars and practitioners interpreted this meaning in different forms.

In the various contexts, *sati* has different meanings and functions, also there are many translations and interpretations. The term *sati* can be translated as “bare attention” or “non-judgment” in the context of Satipaṭṭhānasutta, which is not the thinking, does not get involved with thoughts and concepts.<sup>40</sup> Also, the Buddha strongly emphasizes the importance of *sati* at every level of ethical conduct, and conducting one’s life constantly governed by *sati* is called

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<sup>38</sup> Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi (trans.), *Majjhima-nikāya [The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha]*, (Oxford: PTS., 2001), pp. 151-155.

<sup>39</sup> Daśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā [The Transcendent Perfection of Wisdom in Ten Thousand Lines], <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh11.html#UT22084-031-002-949> (accessed February 28, 2021).

<sup>40</sup> Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, *Mindfulness in Plain English*, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012) p. 81.

heedfulness (*appamāda*). *Appamāda* is of central importance to progress in a system of ethics and is usually defined as non-separation from *sati*.<sup>41</sup>

According to Tibetan Vajrayāna, the term *smṛti* or mindfulness means, in regard to a familiar object, the mind is not forgetful and operates without distraction.<sup>42</sup> But the root meaning of *smṛt* is “remembrance or memory”<sup>43</sup> and *dran pa* (Tib.). *upasthāna* means *nye bar gzhap pa* (Tib.) and ‘establishment’<sup>44</sup> or close placement.

## 2. The goal of the Foundation of Mindfulness

The promotion of intellectual well-being may be done by augmenting one’s wisdom by practicing the four foundations of mindfulness and fourfold path,<sup>45</sup> which leads to the attainment of perfect happiness and Nibbana by breaking the wheel of existence (*samsāra*).<sup>46</sup> Thus, by the practice of foundations of mindfulness, one can achieve four fruits *Sotāpana*, *Sakadāgāmi*, *Anāgāmi*, and *Arahant* by oneself cutting off all defilements and accomplish to help others through training mindfulness meditation.

According to the Tibetan Vajrayāna tradition by the practice of foundations of mindfulness Śrāvaka (hearer) could attain four-stream enterers and four abides, Pratyekabuddha (Solitary Buddha) could attain *Arhat* (Foe Destroyer) and Bodhisattvas could attain five paths, Path of accumulation (*sambhara mārga*), the path of preparation (*prayoga mārga*), the path of seeing (*darśana mārga*), the path of meditation (*bhāvānā mārga*), and path of no-more learning (*aśaikaṣamārga*), through this path one will attain the highest fruit called Samyaksambuddha.

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<sup>41</sup> Phra Debvedi Prayudh Payutto, *Sammāsati: An Exposition of Right Mindfulness*, trans. Dhamma Vijaya, (Bangkok, Thailand: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 1988), p. 4.

<sup>42</sup> Je Tsong-Kha-Pa, Lamrim Chenmo [The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment], Vol. 3, trans. The Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee, (New York: Snow Lion Publications, 2002), p. 49.

<sup>43</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi, “What Does Mindfulness Really Mean?”, *Contemporary Buddhism: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (2011): 19-39.

<sup>44</sup> Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary, (USA: UMA Institute for Tibetan Studies, 2016), p. 365.

<sup>45</sup> Sanu Mahatthanadull and Sarita Mahatthanadull, “Holistic Well-being Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology”, *JIBSC*, Vol. 6 No. 1 (January-June 2020): 111-121.

<sup>46</sup> Sanu Mahatthanadull, “Concepts and Principles of Buddhism 625 102”, Teaching Document, Buddhist Studies Program, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition., p. 49.

### 3.The practice of Foundations of Mindfulness

One drop of practice is better than an ocean of theories and a lot of resolution. No matter what tradition of Buddhism we practice, meditation is the heart, the gem of the Buddha's teachings. In this regard, Satipaṭṭhānasutta is among the most significant and well-known Buddhist discourses. It consists of details and a full exposition of the fourfold placement of mindfulness and clearly shows how the application of mindfulness of the body, feeling, mind, and phenomena are firmly established. This core teaching of the historical Buddha is said to be the direct path for eliminating the negative emotions present in our minds and for the realization of nibbāna.

First, the Observation of the Body (*Kāyanupassanā* or *Kāyasmṛtyupasthāna*)

According to the Pāli canon, the practice of mindfulness starts from the natural activity of breathing in and breathing out. This is followed by an explanation of how to develop a full awareness of one's engagement in the four types of behavior-standing, walking, lying down, and sitting. Then, by distinguishing outer from inner parts of the body and focusing on them separately, it explains how to become aware of the arising and disintegration of the body. Finally, it explains that how to become aware of the body as an impure substance, aware that the body is composed of the four elements earth, water, fire, and the wind, and how to meditate on impermanence by way of the nine signs of death, such as the decay and rotting of the body and so on.<sup>47</sup> This is the sequence of observation of the body in the Pāli canon.

Whereas, in Sanskrit or Tibetan Vajrayāna tradition, the sequence of body observation is different compared to the Pāli canon. According to Prajñāpāramitāsūtra, the practice of mindfulness of body starts from observation of bodily posture, where one can fully aware of posture of walking, standing, sitting, and lying to realize all these physical activities are nature of suffering.<sup>48</sup> Then, by distinguishing all the minor activities to maintain alertness whether they are looking outwardly or inwardly. This is followed by mindfulness of breathing in and out, and the fourth one is the contemplation of elements or analysis of the physical body in terms of its material elements, considering that their bodies comprise the elements of earth, water, fire, and the wind. Fifth, it explains mindful on thirty-six body parts to realize the impurities and detach on this body.

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<sup>47</sup> Dalai Lama and Thupten Jinpa, *Science and Philosophy in the Indian Buddhist Classics: The Mind*. Vol. 2, trans. Dechen Richard and John D. Dunne, p. 588.

<sup>48</sup> Je Tsong-Kha-Pa, Lamrim Chenmo [The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment], Vol. 1, trans. The Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee, (New York: Snow Lion Publications, 2002), p. 291.

Finally, to know the impermanence and impurity of this body and be mindful of the body and it turns into corpses, and day by day it decays, turns into a blue, rooting appearance. In end turned to be food of crows, vultures, worms<sup>49</sup> and this contemplation is related to visualization. Therefore, observation of the body is an antidote to one of the four wrong views, which is grasping the impure body as pure.<sup>50</sup>

Second, the Observation of Feeling (*Vedanānupassanā* or *Vedanāsmṛtyupasthāna*)

In the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*, the first part of *vedanānupassanā* statements explained, three kinds of observation of *vedanā*: pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral, where the Buddha said; when a mendicant feels a pleasant feeling he knows, pleasant, painful, and neutral feelings. The second parts of the instruction explain the contemplation of three worldly feelings (*sāmisa vedāna*) when they feel a sensual pleasant feeling, they know, sensual pleasant feeling, pain, and neutral feeling. The third part guides contemplation of three unworldly feelings (*nirāmisa vedāna*), when they feel a non-sensual pleasant feeling, pain, and neutral feeling.<sup>51</sup>

Whereas, in Sanskrit canon, it mentioned how Bodhisattvas observe inner, outer, and combined feeling to eliminate the covetousness and sadness<sup>52</sup> and meditates on feelings by examining their specific and general characteristics in order to see the faults of feelings.<sup>53</sup>

Third, the Observation of Mind (*Cittānupassanā* or *Cittasmṛtyupasthāna*)

According to *Mahasatipaṭṭhānasutta*, the Buddha teaches how to practice the observation of mind by applying it to sixteen types of minds with knowing a

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<sup>49</sup> Dechen Rochard and John D. Dunne (trans.), *Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā [The Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra in Eighteen Thousand Lines]*, (New York: Wisdom Publications, 2020), p. 582.

<sup>50</sup> Dalai Lama and Thupten Jinpa, *Science and Philosophy in the Indian Buddhist Classics: The Mind*. Vol. 2, trans. Dechen Richard and John D. Dunne, (New York: Wisdom Publications, 2020), p. 582.

<sup>51</sup> Maurice Walshe (trans.), *Dīgha-nikāya [The Long Discourses of the Buddha]*, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1986), p. 422.

<sup>52</sup> *Daśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā [The Transcendent Perfection of Wisdom in Ten Thousand Lines]*, <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh11.html#UT22084-031-002-949> (accessed February 28, 2021)

<sup>53</sup> Dalai Lama and Thupten Jinpa, *Science and Philosophy in the Indian Buddhist Classics: The Mind*. Vol. 2, trans. Dechen Richard and John D. Dunne, (New York: Wisdom Publications, 2020), p. 513.

lustful mind as lustful and a mind free from lust as free from lust..., and a liberated mind as liberated mind and unliberated mind as unliberated,<sup>54</sup> and these minds are divided into two-fold ordinary and higher states of mind.

In the contrast, Prajñāpāramitāsūtra, a section of observation of mind did not mention about sixteen states of minds, but in the Ārya Asaṅga's "Śrāvakabhūmi: Hearer Grounds" it mentioned twenty kinds of mind in the practice of observation of the mind. Also, divided into two sets, ordinary states of mind and higher states of mind. The way to meditate on the foundation of mindfulness regarding the mind entails examining the essential nature of the mind by observing how it ceases moment by moment. In this way, one analyzes and investigates both the specific and general characteristics of the mind's function, of the faults that occur under the power of the mental afflictions.<sup>55</sup>

Fourth, the Observation of Mind Object (*Dhammānupassanā* or *Dharmasmṛtyupasthāna*)

The last practice of the foundations of mindfulness is the observation of mind-object, which is categorized into five sets: five hindrances, five aggregates, the six sense-spheres, seven awakening factors, and the four noble truths. By contemplating mind-object as mind-objects in respect of five hindrances, five aggregates, and six sense-spheres with realizing the nature of each object by detaching and eliminating from all those will lead to attaining the seven awakening factors. Final contemplation of dhamma is a contemplation of four noble truths and mendicant observing an aspect of four noble truths, and it truly understands this is suffering, this is the origin of suffering, this is the cessation of suffering, and this is the path that leads to the cessation of suffering.

Whereas, in the Prajñāpāramitāsūtra five categorize of observation of mind-object is not mentioned.<sup>56</sup> However, it explained the way of practice; bodhisattva would diligent, alert, and mindful after eliminating worldly covetousness and sadness without apprehending anything.<sup>57</sup> In regard to phenomena, one abides in the application of mindfulness viewing phenomena,

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<sup>54</sup> Maurice Walshe (trans.), *Dīgha-nikāya [The Long Discourses of the Buddha]*, (England: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 423.

<sup>55</sup> Dalai Lama and Thupten Jinpa, *Science and Philosophy in the Indian Buddhist Classics: The Mind*. Vol. 2, trans. Dechen Richard and John D. Dunne, (New York: Wisdom Publications, 2020), p. 514.

<sup>56</sup> Bhikkhu Sujato, *A History of Mindfulness: How Insight Worsted Tranquility in The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, p. 265.

<sup>57</sup> Daśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā [The Transcendent Perfection of Wisdom in Ten Thousand Lines], on online, <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh11.html#UT22084-031-002-949> (accessed February 28, 2021).

and one meditates on whatever factors are conducive to enlightenment while abandoning whatever factors are incompatible with enlightenment.<sup>58</sup>

## Conclusion

The teaching of meditations as a means for training the mind has been illustrated as the practice of meditation with a brief presentation of the four applications or foundations of mindfulness, which have been taught in numerous contexts in Buddhist texts as a way to counter the four distorted conceptions. The sutta on the foundations of mindfulness (Satipaṭṭhānasutta) appears in the Theravāda scriptures in a more extended version in the Long Discourses, Middle-Length Discourses and also be found in Connected Discourses and the Numerical Discourses. As a result, there are many short Discourses on the foundations of mindfulness in the Pāli Canon. Although there are many numerous parallels or similarities between the Pāli and Tibetan canons such as Smṛtyupasthānasutra, Dharmacharkrasutra, and so on. But most of the above collections were not translated into Tibetan as collections and have not been found in the Tibetan canon as such, therefore there are many differences and similarities between the two traditions but the core or basic teaching of the Buddha is the same.

In summary, mindfulness meditation involves contemplating the internal and external body as impure to counter the perception of the body as pure; feelings as suffering to counter the perception of contaminated feelings as blissful; the mind as momentary to counter the perception of the mind as permanent; and phenomena as selfless to counter the perception of phenomena as possessing selfhood.

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<sup>58</sup> Dalai Lama and Thupten Jinpa, *Science and Philosophy in the Indian Buddhist Classics: The Mind*. Vol. 2, trans. Dechen Richard and John D. Dunne, (New York: Wisdom Publications, 2020), p. 514.

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