

# **Pali Buddhist Dictionary**

## **A Work-In-Progress**

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**akusula:** unwholesome; opposite of *kusula*; All acts of body, speech, or mind which are rooted in greed, aversion or delusion

**anagami:** “Non-Returner”; see Stages of Enlightenment

**anitarom:** disliking, displeasure

**anatta:** non-self ; the absence of an inherent or independent self; the lack of self-essence

Non-self; the truth that all phenomena are devoid of anything that can be identified as ‘self’. This means that none of the physical and mental components of personality (the 5 *khandhas*) make up an entity, either individual or collective, nor can a self-entity be found anywhere within the heart (*citta*). Therefore, what is experienced as being an abiding self is no more than a phantom personality born of ignorance and delusion— inherently transient, unstable, and bound up with suffering. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**anicca:** impermanence; The unstable, impermanent, transient nature of all phenomena . . . . In other words, all things arise and cease, are subject to change, and will become otherwise, making them all inherently unsatisfactory and bound to cause suffering. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**arahat:** fully enlightened being; see Stages of Enlightenment

**asava:** discharges, outflows, leaks, eruptions: the mental defilements which flow out from the mind’s depths in response to conditions. After the tendencies toward defilements (*anusaya*) build up, their pressure leaks out more or less strongly depending on conditions. The three *asavas* are listed as the eruptions of sense desire, of becoming (or existence), and of ignorance. Awakening is often expressed as the end of the *asava*. From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree by Buddhadasa

**atta:** self, ego

Self, ego, soul: the instinctual feeling (and illusion) that there is some “I” who does all the things to be done in life.’ Through ignorance and wrong understanding, this instinctual sensibility is attached to and becomes ‘ego’. Although theories about ‘self’ abound, all are mere speculations about something that exist only in our imaginations. In a conventional sense, the *atta* can be a useful concept (belief, perception), but that conventional ‘self’ is not-self (*anatta*). No personal, independent, self-existing, free-willing, lasting substance or essence can be found anywhere, whether within or without human life and experience, not even in ‘God.’ (Compare *anatta*, *idappaccayata* and *sunyata*). From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree by Buddhadasa

**avijja:** fundamental ignorance; first link in Dependent Origination

fundamental ignorance. This ignorance is the fundamental factor in the delusion about the true nature of oneself and therefore the essential factor binding living beings to the cycle of rebirth. *Avijja* exist entirely within the *citta* (the one who knows). Being an integral part of the *citta*’s conscious perspective since time-without-beginning, it has usurped the *citta*’s ‘knowing nature’ and distorted its intrinsic quality of simply ‘knowing’ by creating the false duality of the ‘knower’ and the ‘known’. From this individual view point spring right and wrong, good and evil, heaven and hell, and the whole mass of suffering that comprises the world of *samsara*. Thus, *avijja* is the seed of being and birth, the very nucleus of all existence. It is also the well-spring from which all other mental defilements arise. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**ayatana:** 6 sense bases and their objects; fifth link in Dependent Origination

There are two aspects or sets of *ayatana*, internal and external. The internal *ayatana* are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind (mental-sense): that is, the six sense doors, the sense organs, and their corresponding portions of the nervous system. The external *ayatana* are forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and mental concerns: that is the concerns or objects of sensory experience. From Mindfulness with Breathing; A Manual for Serious Beginners by Buddhadasa

**bhava:** the process of becoming; tenth link in Dependent Origination

LP Jamnean says *bhava* is the process of becoming

Becoming (*bhava*) means ‘the sphere of birth.’ Sensual desire is born at sights, sounds, tastes, smells, feelings, and thoughts. Identifying with these things, the mind holds fast and is stuck to sensuality. ...

“If you were (asked), ‘Why were you born?’ (you’d) probably have a lot of trouble answering because (you) can’t see it. (You’re) sunk in the world of the senses and sunk in becoming (*bhava*). *Bhava* is the sphere of birth, our birthplace. ... (W)here are beings born from? *Bhava* is the preliminary condition for birth. Wherever birth takes place, that’s *bhava*. ...

”For example, suppose we have an orchard of apple trees that we’re particularly fond of. ... If someone were to take an axe and cut one of them down, we, over here in our house, would ‘die’ along with the tree. We’d get furious and have to set things right. Maybe we’d fight over it. That quarreling is ‘birth.’ The ‘sphere of birth’ is the orchard we cling to as our own. We are ‘born’ right at the point where we consider it our own. ...

“Whatever we cling to as being us or ours, that is a place for birth.

“There must be a *bhava*, a sphere of birth, before birth can take place. Therefore the Buddha said, ‘Whatever you have, don’t *have* it. Let it be there but don’t make it yours. You must understand this having and not-having: know the truth of them. Don’t flounder in suffering.’” From The Collected Teachings of Ajahn Chah; Food for Thought.

**body, speech and mind:** the three spheres of action that can be observed and trained in Buddhist practice. From A Still Forest Pool by Ajahn Chah

**bojjhanga:** mental factors of awakening, of enlightenment

These seven mental factors must be perfected, in succession, for the mind to be liberated. First, *sati* (mindfulness) fixes on a certain *dhamma* (see below for definition). Then, *dhamma-vicaya* (analysis of *dhamma*) investigates that thing subtly, precisely, and profoundly. Next, *viriya* (effort, energy) arises, which leads to *piti* (contentment). Then, the mind develops *passaddhi* (tranquility) because of that contentment, such that there is *samadhi* (concentration) in the contemplation of that *dhamma*. Lastly, *samadhi* is continuously and evenly guarded by *upekka* (equanimity) as the

truth of that *dhamma* and All *Dhamma* is penetrated and realize. From Mindfulness with Breathing; A Manual for Serious Beginners by Buddhadasa

**brahma viharas:** here *Brhama* means sublime or noble, as in *Brahmacariya* (sublime life); *vihara* means mode or state of conduct, or state of living. They are also termed *appamanna* (limitless, boundless) because these thoughts are radiated towards all beings without limit or obstruction.

**metta:** loving kindness, benevolence, goodwill, is defined as that which softens the heart. It is not carnal love or personal affection. The direct enemy of *metta* is hatred, ill will or aversion (*kodha*); its indirect enemy is personal affection (*pema*). *Metta* embraces all beings without exception. The culmination of *metta* is the identification of oneself with all beings (*sabbattata*). It is the wish for the good and happiness of all. Benevolent attitude is its chief characteristic. It discards ill will.

**karuna:** (compassion) is defined as that which makes the hearts of the good quiver when others are subject to suffering, or that which dissipates the suffering of others. Its chief characteristic is the wish to remove the suffering of others. Its direct enemy is wickedness (*himsa*) and its indirect enemy is passionate grief (*domanassa*). Compassion embraces sorrow-stricken beings and it eliminates cruelty.

**mudita** is not merely sympathy but sympathetic or appreciative joy. Its direct enemy is jealousy and its indirect enemy is exhilaration. Its chief characteristic is happy acquiescence in others' prosperity and success. *Mudita* embraces all prosperous beings. It eliminates dislike and is the congratulatory attitude of a person.

**upekkha**—lit., to view impartially, that is, with neither attachment nor aversion. It is not hedonic indifference but perfect equanimity or well-balanced mind. It is the balanced state of mind amidst all vicissitudes of life, such as praise and blame, pain and happiness, gain and loss, repute and disrepute. Its direct enemy is attachment (*raga*) and its indirect enemy is callousness. *Upekkha* discards clinging and aversion. Impartial attitude is its chief characteristic.

Here *upekkha* does not mean mere neutral feeling, but implies a sterling virtue. Equanimity, mental equilibrium are the closest equivalents. *Upekkha* embraces the good and the bad, the loved and the unloved, the pleasant and the unpleasant. From The Buddha and His Teachings by Narada Maha Thera

**cetana:** volition or intention

**cetasika:** mental factor arising with consciousness

**citta:** mind, heart, heart-mind, consciousness: that which thinks, knows, and experiences, the four mental *khandhas*. In a more limited sense, *citta* is what “thinks”, can be defiled by *kilesa*, can be developed, and can realize *nibbana*. Although we cannot know *citta* directly, it is where all *Dhamma* practice occurs. From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree by Buddhadasa

LP Jamean says the *citta* is the receptacle or container of the *khandhas*

The *citta* is the mind’s essential knowing nature, the fundamental quality of knowing that underlies all sentient existence. When associated with a physical body, it is referred to as “mind” or “heart”. Being corrupted by the defiling influence of fundamental ignorance (*avijja*), its currents “flow out” to manifest as feelings (*vedana*), memory (*sanna*), thoughts (*sankhara*), and consciousness (*vinnana*), thus embroiling the *citta* in a web of self-deception. It is deceived about its own true nature. *The true nature of the citta is that it simply “knows”. There is no subject, no object, no duality; it simply knows. The citta does not arise or pass away; it is never born and never dies.*

Normally, the “knowing nature” of the *citta* is timeless, boundless, and radiant, but this true nature is obscured by the defilements (*kilesa*) within it. Through the power of fundamental ignorance, a focal point of the “knower” is created from which that knowing nature views the world outside. The establishment of that false center creates a “self” from whose perspective consciousness flows out to perceive the duality of the “knower” and the “known”. Thus, the *citta* becomes entangled with things that are born, become ill, grow old, and die, and therefore, deeply involved in it in a whole mass of suffering.

In this book, the *citta* is often referred to as the heart; the two are synonymous. The heart forms a core within the body. It is the center, the substance, the primary essence within the body. It is the basic foundation. Conditions that arise from the *citta*, such as thoughts, arise there. Goodness, evil, happiness, and suffering all come together in the heart. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**dana:** giving, generosity, charity: a fundamental virtue and practice

**Dependent Origination:** *paticca samuppada*; the chain of Conditioned Arising; causal genesis; The process, beginning in ignorance, which explains how the cycle of birth, death and rebirth (*samsara*) takes place

The chain of Dependent Origination runs as follows:

1. ignorance (*avijja*) is the causal factor
2. through ignorance are conditioned the karma formations (*sankharas*), i.e., all wholesome and unwholesome actions of body, speech and mind are conditioned by ignorance.
3. through karma-formations (in the past life) is conditioned consciousness (*vinnana*) (in the present life);
4. through consciousness are conditioned the mental and physical phenomena (*nama-rupa*) which makes up our so-called individual existence;
5. through the mental and physical phenomena are conditioned the 6 sense bases (*salayatana*), the 5 physical sense-organs, and consciousness as the 6<sup>th</sup>;
6. through the six sense bases is conditioned the (sensorial mental) impression (*phassa*);
7. through the impression is conditioned feeling (*vedana*);
8. through feeling is conditioned craving (*tanha*);
9. through craving is conditioned clinging (*upadana*), an intensified form of craving;
10. through clinging is conditioned the process of becoming (*bhava*), i.e., the wholesome and unwholesome active karma-process of becoming, as well as the karma-resultant passive process;
11. through the process of becoming is conditioned rebirth (*jati*);
12. through rebirth are conditioned old age and death (*jara-marana*) (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair.) Thus arises this whole mass of suffering again in the future. For, without birth, there can be no old age and death, no suffering and misery.

From Buddhist Dictionary; Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines by Ven. Nyanatiloka

**dhamma:** (skt. *dharma*) a very broad term that means **1.** any event or action; **2.** any phenomena in and of its self; **3.** any mental quality, factor or object of the mind; any discernible element, or quality present in consciousness

(dlf: when referring to the teachings of the Buddha, *Dhamma* is capitalized)

**Dhamma:** The four primary meanings of Dhamma are nature, the law and truth of nature, the duty to be performed in accordance with natural law, and the results of benefits that arise from the performance of that duty. From Anapanasati; Mindfulness with Breathing; Unveiling the Secrets of Life by Buddhadasa.

Also, the Teachings of the Buddha.

First, and foremost, Dhamma is the quintessential nature of perfect harmony existing in and of itself, independent of all phenomena, yet permeating every aspect of sentient existence. *Dhamma* is the right natural order of things that forms the underlying basis for all existence, though it is not dependent on or conditioned by any form of existence. Ultimately, *Dhamma* is the sum of those transcendent qualities, such as detachment, loving kindness and wisdom, the spiritual perfection of which brings the mind into harmony with the Supreme Truth. By further extension, *Dhamma* encompasses the basic principles that are the essence of the Buddha's Teaching, including the patterns of behavior that should be practiced so as to harmonize oneself with the right natural order of things. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**dosa:** hatred, ill-will: the second category of defilement (*kilesa*), which includes anger, aversion, dislike, and all other negative thoughts and emotions. It is characterized by the mind pushing away the object. From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree by Buddhadasa

**dukkha:** stress, suffering, misery, unsatisfactoriness, pain. Literally, "hard to endure, difficult to bear."

In its limited sense, *dukkha* is the quality of experience that results when the mind is conditioned by *avijja* into craving, attachment, egoism, and selfishness. This feeling takes on forms such as disappointment, dissatisfaction, frustration, agitation, anguish, dis-ease, despair—from the crudest to the subtlest levels. In its universal sense, *dukkham* is the inherent condition of unsatisfactoriness, ugliness, and misery in all impermanent, conditioned things (*sankhara*). This second fundamental characteristic is the result of *anniccama*: impermanent things cannot satisfy our wants and desires no matter how hard we try (and cry). The inherent decay and dissolution of things is misery. From Mindfulness with Breathing; A Manual for Serious Beginners by Buddhadasa

emptiness: see *sunyata*

**Four Foundations of Mindfulness:** see *Satipatthana*

**hinderance:** (*nivarana*), obstacles: semi-defilements that get in the way of success in any endeavor, especially mental development. The five hinderances are: desire, aversion, sloth and torpor, restlessness, and doubt

**itarom:** liking

**jati:** birth, often translated as rebirth; eleventh link in Dependent Origination

birth, this term has a literal meaning and a Dhamma or spiritual meaning. The first is physical birth of an infant from its mother's womb. The second meaning, the Dhammically significant one, is mental birth of the ego, the "I Am," through the process of dependent origination. From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree; The Buddha's Teaching on Voidness by Buddhadasa

**jhanas:** one-pointed focus of the mind on an object, for the purpose of developing tranquility or on impermanence, for the purpose of developing insight. Jhana is understood as both an activity of the mind (focusing, peering, looking intently and deeply) and the results of that activity. From Mindfulness with Breathing; A Manual for Serious Beginners by Buddhadasa

**jara marana:** aging (or old age) and death; twelfth link in Dependent Origination

**kama:** sensuality, sexuality: strong desire and its objects. Seeking and indulging in sensual pleasure; not to be confused with *kamma* (spelled with two “m”s) From Mindfulness with Breathing; A Manual for Serious Beginners by Buddhadasa

**kama tanha:** craving for sensual pleasure

**kamma:** (skt. *Karma*) action: actions of the body, speech and mind arising from wholesome or unwholesome volitions. Good intentions and actions bring good results; bad intentions and actions bring bad results. Unintentional actions are not *kamma*, are not *Dhammically* significant. *Kamma* has nothing to do with fate, luck or fortune, nor does it mean the result of *kamma*. From Mindfulness with Breathing; A Manual for Serious Beginners by Buddhadasa

One’s intentional actions of body, speech, and mind that result in birth and future existence. These actions carry with them a specific moral content – good, bad, or neutral – and leave in the ongoing continuum of consciousness a potential to engender corresponding results in the future. Buddhism holds that all unenlightened beings are bound to be born, live, die, and be reborn again and again in a variety of worlds and circumstances, a perpetual cycle of existence that is driven by the nature of their *kamma* and the inevitable manifestation of its consequences. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**karuna:** see Brahma Viharas

**khandhas:** (skt. *Skandhas*) The five aggregates, groups, or heaps, that make up a “person”: *rupa* (body); *vedana* (feeling); *sanna* (memory); *sankhara* (thought); *vinnana* (consciousness, sense awareness)  
The five are *rupa-khandha*, form-aggregate, particularly the body, its nervous system, and sense objects (the world); *vedana-khandha*, feeling-aggregate (compiler: not to be confused with emotions); *sanna-khandha*, recognition-aggregate; the discrimination, labeling, and evaluation of sense experience; *sankhara-khandha*, thought-aggregate; thought process and emotions, including volition, desire, attachment, and “birth”; and *vinnana-*

*khandha*, consciousness-aggregate; the bare knowing of a sense object, the most primitive function of mind through which physical sense stimulation becomes conscious although often without awareness). From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree; The Buddha's Teaching on Voidness by Buddhadasa

**kilesa:** mental defilement; Mental quality that defiles or stains the heart or mind, such as greed, hatred, delusion, restless agitation, and so on. From The Collected Teachings of Ajahn Chah; Food for the Heart

mental defilement. *Kilesa* are these negative psychological and emotional forces existing within the hearts and minds of all living beings. These defilements are of three basic types: greed, hatred, and delusion. All of them are ingenerate pollutants that contaminate the way people think, speak, and act, and thus corrupt from within the very intention and purpose of their existence, binding them (through the inevitable consequences of their actions) even more firmly to the perpetual cycle of rebirth. Their manifestations are many and varied. They include passion, jealousy, envy, conceit, vanity, pride, stinginess, arrogance, anger, resentment, etc., plus all sorts of more subtle variations that invariably produce the unwholesome and harmful states of mind which are responsible for so much human misery. These various *kilesa*-driven mental states interact and combine to create patterns of conduct that perpetuate people's suffering and give rise to all of the world's disharmony. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**kodha:** anger, jealousy, vengefulness

**kusala:** wholesome. Every mental state rooted in non-greed, non-aversion, non-delusion, the Three Roots of Wholesomeness, and the acts of the body and speech dependent on them. From Calm and Insight; A Buddhist Manual of Meditators by Bhikkhu Khantipalo

**kuti:** monastic dwelling, usually a small hut raised on pillars

**lobha:** greed. The mind's grasping onto a pleasant experience. With *dosa* and *moha*, one of the three forces which keep the minds of beings in darkness. From In This Very Life; The Liberation Teachings of the Buddha by Sayadaw U Pandita

**lokiya:** mundane, are all those states of consciousness and mental factors arising in the worldly (ordinary person), as well as in the Noble One, which are not associated with the supermundane paths and fruits of a *sotipanna* (see Stages of Enlightenment). From Buddhist Dictionary; Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines by Ven. Nyanatiloka

**lokuttara:** transcendent, above and beyond the world, supermundane; to be free of worldly conditions although living in the world.

**maha:** great; superior

**mahasati and mahapanna:** supreme-mindfulness and supreme-wisdom.

Mindfulness (*sati*) is the faculty of being keenly attentive to whatever arises within one's field of awareness. Wisdom (*panna*) is the faculty of intuitive insight that probes, examines, and analyzes the nature of phenomena as mindfulness becomes aware of them. Supreme-mindfulness and supreme-wisdom are these two faculties developed to an advanced level of proficiency characterized by heightened alertness, quickness, and agility, combined with incisive powers of reasoning. Constantly working in unison, without a moment's lapse in concentration, *mahasati* and *mahapanna* are said to be capable of automatically tracking and penetrating to the truth of all phenomena as they arise and cease. Being the only mental faculties capable of investigating the increasingly more subtle defilements at the highest state of the Transcendent Path (*arahattammagga*), their development is a prerequisite for reaching this level of practice and thus for attaining the ultimate goal, *Nibbana*. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**Mara:** In Pali, derived from a word meaning "death." Personification of the force of ignorance, delusion and craving that kills virtue as well as life. The lord of all conditioned realms.

**metta:** loving-kindness; impartially wishing happiness for all, including oneself

see also Brahma Viharas

**moha:** delusion: the third category of kilesa; includes stupidity, fear, worry, confusion, doubt, envy, infatuation, hope and expectation; characterized by the mind spinning around and object. From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree; The Buddha's Teaching on Voidness by Buddhadasa

**mudita:** see Brahma Viharas

**nama:** refers to the mental components of personality, which include feelings, memory, thoughts and consciousness. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**nama-rupa:** mental and physical formation; fourth link in Dependent Origination

**nibbana:** (skt. Nirvana) the extinction of the fires of greed, of hatred and of ignorance (*lobha, dosa, moha*); the extinction of all defilements and suffering

Literally meaning “extinguished”, *nibbana* is compared to a lamp or a fire going out. That is to say, the threefold fire of greed, hatred and delusion goes out in the heart due to a lack of fuel. The extinguishing of this fire frees the mind from everything that binds it to the cycle of rebirth and the suffering experienced therein. *Nibbana* is Absolute Freedom, the Supreme Happiness. As such, it is the ultimate goal of the Buddhist training. It is said to be Unborn, Deathless, and Unconditioned, but being totally detached from all traces of conventional reality, a description of what *Nibbana* is, or is not, lies wholly beyond the range of conventional figures of speech. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**nimitta:** sign, image, mark, characteristic

**nirodha:** quenching, cessation, extinction: occurring when something is thoroughly calmed, cooled and quenched such that it won't concoct, heat up, or become the basis for *dukkha* again.

**panna:** (skt. *Prajna*). Wisdom, discernment, understanding of the nature of existence.

wisdom, insight, intuitive understanding: correct seeing, knowing, understanding, experiencing of the things we must know in order to quench *dukkha*, namely, the Four Noble Truths, the three characteristics (*anicca*, *dhukkha*, *anatta*), dependent origination, and emptiness (*sunyata*). The various terms used for 'knowing' are not meant to express an intellectual activity, although the intellect has its role. The emphasis is on direct, intuitive, non-conceptual comprehending of life as it is here and now. Memory, language, and thought are not required. *Panna*, rather than faith or will power, is the characteristic quality of Buddhism. From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu.

**paramis:** (skt: paramita) the ten spiritual perfections: generosity, moral restraint, renunciation, wisdom, effort, patience, truthfulness, determination, kindness and equanimity.

Virtues accumulated for lifetimes manifesting as wholesome dispositions. From The Collected Teachings of Ajahn Chah; Food for the Heart by Ajahn Chah

**pathiga: irritation**

**phassa:** sense contact; (see *ayatana*, 6 sense base); sixth link in Dependent Origination

contact, sense experience: the meeting and working together of sense organ, sense object, and sense consciousness (*vinnana*). When a sensual stimulus makes enough of an impact upon the mind to draw a response, either positive or negative, beginning with *vedana*. There are six kinds of phassa corresponding to the six senses. From Mindfulness with Breathing; A Manual for Serious Beginners by Buddhadasa

**pathigha: irritation**

**piti:** rapture, spiritual joy and bliss associated with one of the *jhana* states rapture. Varying degrees of stimulation in the body, usually pleasant but not always so, which grows stronger towards *jhana* but is abandoned on entering the third *jhana*. From Calm and Insight; A Buddhist Manual of Meditators by Bhikkhu Khantipalo

**raga:** lust

**rupa:** the body and physical phenomena in general

When opposed to *nama* (mental phenomena), *rupa* is the strictly physical component of personality. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**salayatana:** 6 sense bases

**sakadagami:** “Once Returner”; see Stages of Enlightenment

**samadhi:** concentration, one-pointedness of mind; state of concentrated calm resulting from meditation practice.

meditative calm and concentration. *Samadhi* is experienced by practicing various meditation techniques that are designed to calm the mind’s emotional turbulence and mental distraction by fixing it firmly on a single object of attention and mindfully holding it there until the mind becomes fully absorbed in that single preoccupation to the exclusion of everything else, and thus wholly integrated within a simple, unified state of awareness. By concentrating one’s attention on just one object, distracting thoughts and currents of the mind that would normally flow out into the sensory environment are gradually gathered into one inner point of focus, one still, calm, concentrated state called *samadhi*.

This does not mean that the mind is striving to concentrate on one point (an outward focus), but rather that by assiduously following the method with mindful attention, the mind naturally, on its own accord, converges into a unified state of awareness. The resulting experience is a feeling of pure and harmonious being that is so wondrous as to be indescribable. Upon withdrawing from *samadhi*, this calm, concentrated mental focus then serves as a basis for successfully pursuing investigative techniques to develop wisdom and gain insight into the true nature of all phenomena. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**samatha:** calm, tranquility. Usually the first result of practicing meditation.

**sampajanna:** ‘clarity of consciousness’, clear comprehension. This term is frequently used in combination with mindfulness (sati).

In Digha Nikaya 22, and Majjhima Nikaya 10 it is said: “Clearly conscious is he in going and coming, clearly conscious in looking forward and backward, clearly conscious in bending and stretching his body; clearly conscious in eating, drinking, chewing and tasting, clearly conscious in discharging excrement and urine; clearly conscious in walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep and awakening; clearly conscious in speaking and keeping silent.” From Buddhist Dictionary; Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines by Ven. Nyanatiloka

**samsara:** literally, “perpetual wandering”; the continuous process of being born, getting sick, growing old, and dying –an uninterrupted succession of births, deaths, and rebirths.

**sankhara:** anything formed or fashioned by conditions, or as one of the five khandhas, thought formations within the mind. The second link in Dependent Origination. From Straight from the Heart by Ajahn Maha Boowa

LP Jamnean says briefly *sankhara* (*khandha*) refers to karmic formation

as a general term, *sankhara* refers to all forces that form or condition things in the phenomenal world of mind and matter, and to those formed or conditioned phenomena that result. As the fourth component of personality (*sankara khandha*), it refers to thought and imagination; that is, the thoughts that constantly form in the mind and conceptualize about one’s personal perceptions. *Sankhara* creates these ideas and then hands them on to *sanna*, which interprets and elaborates on them, making assumptions about their significance. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**sanna:** memory and perception; it is the awareness of an object’s distinctive marks (“one perceives blue, yellow, etc. Samyutta Nikaya, XXII, 79). If, in repeated perception of an object, these marks are recognized, *sanna* functions as ‘memory’ (Abhidhamma Studies, p. 68f)

Memory; recognition of physical and mental phenomena as they arise. As the third component of personality, *sanna khandha* is associated with the function of memory; for instance, recognition, association and interpretation. *Sanna* both recognizes the known and gives meaning and significance to all of one's personal perceptions. Through recollection of past experience, the function of memory gives things specific meanings and then falls for its own interpretation of them, causing one to become either sad or glad about what one perceives. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

**sati:** mindfulness, attentiveness, awareness

**satipatthana:** The four foundations or applications of mindfulness: the four bases on which *sati* must be established in mental development: **1.** contemplation of body; **2.** contemplation of feeling; **3.** contemplation of mind; and **4.** contemplation of Dhamma (Supreme Truth) in dhammas (phenomena).

The Satipatthana Sutta forms an illustration of the way in which these four contemplations relating to the five *khandhas* simultaneously come to be realized and finally lead to insight into the impersonality of all existence.

1. the contemplation of the body consists of the following exercises: mindfulness with regard to in-and-out-breath, minding the four postures (standing, sitting, lying down, walking), mindfulness and clarity of consciousness, reflection on the 32 parts of the body, analysis of the four physical elements (earth, air, fire, water), and cemetery meditations.
2. all feelings that arise in the meditator, he clearly perceives, namely: agreeable and disagreeable feeling of body and mind; sensual and super-sensual feeling; indifferent feeling.
3. he further clearly perceives and understands any state of consciousness of mind, whether it is greedy or not, hateful or not, deluded or not, cramped or distracted, developed or undeveloped, surpassable or unsurpassable, concentrated or unconcentrated, liberated or unliberated.
4. concerning the mind-objects, he knows whether one of the five hindrances is present in him or not, knows how it arises, how it is overcome, and how in future it does no more arise. He knows the nature of each of the five *khandhas*, how they arise, and how they are

dissolved. He knows the 12 bases of all mental activity: the eye and the visual object, the ear and the audible object, ... mind and mind-object; he knows the fetters based on them, knows how they arise, how they are overcome, and how in the future they do no more arise. He knows whether one of the seven factors of enlightenment is present in him or not, knows how it arises, and how it comes to full development. Each of the Four Noble Truths, he understands according to reality.

From Buddhist Dictionary; Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines by Ven. Nyanatiloka

**sila:** morality, abstaining from physical and vocal actions that cause harm to others and oneself.

normalcy, morality, right conduct: verbal and bodily action in line with the *Dhamma*, the way of living in society which is truly peaceful because it does no harm. Much more than following rules or precepts, true *sila* comes from wisdom and is undertaken joyfully. From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu

**sotapanna:** “Stream Enterer”; see Stages of Enlightenment

**Stages of Enlightenment:** **1. sotapanna:** “Stream Enterer”; one who has attained The First Stage of Enlightenment by experiencing *nibbana* for the first time. Such a person uproots the illusion of self as well as doubt in the efficacy of meditation practice; will not be reborn as an animal or in hell due to the weakening of his or her defilements; and ceases to believe that a any rite or ritual can bring about liberation. **2. sakadagami:** “Once Returner”; one who has attained The Second Stage of Enlightenment. Because of weakened craving and anger, this being will be reborn in only one more plane of existence. **3. anagami:** “Non-Returner”; one who has attained The Third Stage of Enlightenment by experiencing *nibbana* at its third level of depth. This person will experience no more rebirths in sensual and material realms, but will attain final enlightenment from the Brahma realm, where there is mind, but no matter. An *anagami* has uprooted the defilements of greed and anger, but may still experience subtle defilements such as restlessness. **4. arahat:** fully enlightened being; one who has uprooted all the defilements and experiences no more mental suffering. Having attained The Fourth and Final Stage of Enlightenment, he or she will

not be reborn again in any form, passing entirely into the unconditioned state upon death. From In This Very Life; The Liberation Teachings of the Buddha by Sayadaw U Pandita

**sunnata:** (skt. Sunyata) emptiness, voidness. All things, without any exception, are void of ‘self’ and ‘belonging to self,’ are void of any meaning or value of ‘self,’ are void and free of ‘I’ and ‘mind.’” *Sunnata* is an inherent quality or characteristic of everything, including ‘Ultimate Reality,’ ‘God,’ and *nibbana*. *Sunnata* also refers to the mind which is free of attachment, which is void of greed, anger, and delusion. *Nibbana* is the ‘supreme voidness,’ free and void of *atta* and *attaniya*, void of ignorance, desire, attachment, ego, defilement, and *dukkha*. From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree by Buddadasa Bhikkhu.

**sutta:** discourse attributed to the Buddha and certain of his disciples

**tanha:** desire, craving, thirst, blind want; eight link in Dependent Origination

*Tanha* is always ignorant and should not be confused with “wise-want” (*samma-sankappa*, right aspiration). The Buddha distinguished three kinds of desire: sensual desire; desire for being (having, becoming); and desire for not being (not having). Conditioned by foolish *vedana*, *tanha* in turn concocts *upadana* (clinging). From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree by Buddadasa Bhikkhu.

**Tipitaka:** the “three baskets” of scriptures: the *Vinaya* (discipline for monks and nuns), the *Sutta* (discourse of the Buddha and leading disciples) and the *Abhidhamma* (psycho-philosophical texts). Called “baskets” after the containers which held the original palm leaf manuscripts.

**upadana:** attachment, clinging, grasping; ninth link in Dependent Origination

to hold onto something foolishly, to regard things as “I” and “Mine,” to take things personally. Not the things attached to, but the lustful-satisfaction (*chanda-raga*) regarding them. The Buddhs distinguished four kinds of *upadana*: attachment to sensuality, to views, to precepts and practices, and

to words concerning self. Note that to hold something wisely is *samadana*. From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree by Buddadasa Bhikkhu

**upekkha:** see *Brahma Viharas*

**vedana:** feeling: the mental reaction to or coloring of sense experience (*phassa*). Feeling comes in three forms: pleasant or agreeable, unpleasant or painful, and indeterminate, neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant. (Not to be confused with “feeling” in a conventional sense, i.e., emotions); seventh link in Dependent Origination

Vedana’s responsibility is to sense present experience.

Vedana is a mental factor and should not be confused with physical sensation. This primitive activity of mind is not emotion, which is far more complex and involves thought, or the more complicated aspects of “feeling,” as this word is understood in English. From Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree by Buddadasa Bhikkhu

**vibhava tanha:** craving for non-becoming, (craving for something other than what is

**vinnana:** consciousness; simple cognizance. It simply registers sense data, feelings, and mental impressions as they occur. For instance, when visual images make contact with the eye, or when thoughts occur in the mind, consciousness of them arises simultaneously. When that object subsequently ceases, so too does the consciousness that took note of it. third link in Dependent Origination. From Venerable Acariya Mun Bhuridatta Thera by Ajahn Maha Boowa

vinnana has the responsibility of embellishing, i.e., like it a little, very hot

**vipassana:** insight, seeing clearly: to see directly into the true nature of things: impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, non-self

insight: literally, “clear seeing”; to see clearly, distinctly, directly into the true nature of things, into *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anatta*. *Vipassana* is popularly used to refer to the practice of mental development for the sake of true insight. It is important not to confuse the physical posture, theory, and

method of such practices with true realization (or experience) of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self. *Vipassana* cannot be taught, although methods to nurture it are taught. From Mindfulness with Breathing; A Manual for Serious Beginners by Buddhadasa

**wisdom:** see *panna*