

## How to Develop Four-Elements Meditation

In the Pāli texts there are two ways for developing the four-elements meditation, in brief and in detail. The brief method which will be explained here is meant for those of quick understanding. The detailed method is meant for those who have difficulty with the brief method. The Buddha taught the brief method in the Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta:

bhikkhu reviews this very body however it be positioned or placed as consisting of just elements thus, here are in this body just the earth-element, the water-element, the fire-element, and the air-element.”

The Visuddhimagga (Ch.XI, para.41-43) explains further:

o firstly, one of quick understanding who wants to develop this meditation should go into solitary retreat. Then he should advert to his entire material body, and discern the elements in brief in this way, in this body what is hard or rough is the earth-element, what is flowing or cohesion is the water-element, what is maturing (ripening) or heat is the fire-element, what is pushing or supporting is the air-element,” and he should advert and give attention to it and review it again and again as earth-element, water-element, fire-element, air-element,” that is to say, as mere elements, not a being, and soulless. As he makes effort in this way it is not long before concentration arises in him, which is reinforced by understanding that illuminates the classification of the elements, and which is only access and does not reach absorption because it has states with individual essences as its object.

r alternatively, there are these four [bodily] parts mentioned by the Elder Sāriputta for the purpose of showing the absence of any living being in the four great primary elements thus: hen a

space is enclosed with bones, sinews, flesh, and skin there comes to be the term material form (*rūpa*)” (M.1.p.190). And he should resolve each of these, separating them out by the hand of knowledge, and then discern in the way already stated thus (above): “In these what is hardness ... as its objects.”

As taught at Pa-Auk Meditation Centre, discern in the whole body:

1. Earth-element: hardness, roughness, heaviness, softness, smoothness, lightness.
2. Water-element: flowing, cohesion.
3. Fire-element: heat, coldness.
4. Air-element: supporting, pushing.

To learn this meditation, you must begin by learning how to discern each of the twelve qualities or characteristics of the four elements one at a time. Usually the beginner must be taught the characteristics which are easier to discern first, and the more difficult ones later. They are usually taught in this order: pushing, hardness, roughness, heaviness, supporting, softness, smoothness, lightness, heat, coldness, flowing, cohesion. Each characteristic must be discerned first in one place in the body, and then one must try discern it throughout the body.

1. To discern pushing, you may begin by being aware, through the sense of touch, of the pushing in the centre of the head as you breathe in and breathe out. When you can discern the characteristic of pushing, you should concentrate on it until it becomes clear to your mind. Then you should move your awareness to another part of the body nearby, and look for pushing there. In this way you will slowly be able to discern pushing first in the head, then the neck, the trunk of the body, the arms, and the legs and feet. You must do this again and again, many times, until wherever you place your awareness in the body you can easily see pushing.

If the pushing of the breath in the centre of the head is not easy

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to discern, then try being aware of pushing as the chest expands when breathing, or as the abdomen moves. If these are not clear, try to discern the pulse beat as the heart pumps, or any other obvious form of pushing. Wherever there is movement there is also pushing. Wherever you begin, you must continue to slowly develop your understanding so that you can discern pushing throughout the body. In some places it will be obvious, and in other places subtle, but it is present everywhere throughout the body.

2. When you are satisfied that you can do this, try to discern hardness. Begin by discerning hardness in the teeth. Bite your teeth together and feel how hard they are. Then relax your bite and feel the hardness of the teeth. When you can feel this, try to discern hardness throughout the body in a systematic way from head to feet, in the same way as you did to discern pushing. Care should be taken to not deliberately tense the body.

When you can discern hardness throughout the body, again look for pushing throughout the body. Alternate between these two, pushing and hardness, again and again, discerning pushing throughout the body, and then hardness throughout the body, from head to feet. Repeat this process many times until you are satisfied that you can do it.

3. When you can discern pushing and hardness, try to discern roughness. Rub your tongue over the edge of your teeth, or brush your hand over the skin of your arm, and feel roughness. Now try to discern roughness throughout the body in a systematic way as before. If you cannot feel roughness, try looking at pushing and hardness again, and you may discern it with them. When you can discern roughness, continue to discern pushing, hardness, roughness, one at a time, again and again, throughout the body from head to feet.

4. When you are satisfied that you can discern those three characteristics, look for heaviness throughout the body. Begin by placing one hand on top of the other in your lap, and feel that the top hand is heavy, or feel the heaviness of the head by bend-

ing it forward. Practise systematically until you can discern heaviness throughout the body. Then continue to look for the four characteristics: pushing, hardness, roughness, and heaviness, in turn throughout the body.

5. When you are satisfied that you can discern those four characteristics, look for supporting throughout the body. Begin by relaxing your back so that your body bends forward. Then straighten your body and keep it straight and erect. The force which keeps the body straight, still, and erect is supporting. Practise systematically until you can discern supporting throughout the body from head to feet. If you have difficulty in doing this, you can try to discern supporting together with hardness as this can make it easier to discern supporting. Then when you can discern supporting easily, you should look for pushing, hardness, roughness, heaviness, and supporting throughout the body.

6. When you can discern these five, look for softness by pressing your tongue against the inside of your lip to feel its softness. Then relax your body and practise systematically until you can discern softness throughout the body. You can now look for pushing, hardness, roughness, heaviness, supporting, and softness throughout the body.

7. Next look for smoothness by wetting your lips and rubbing your tongue over them from side to side. Practise as above until you can discern smoothness throughout the body. Then look for the seven characteristics throughout the body, one at a time.

8. Next look for lightness by wagging a single finger up and down, and feeling its lightness. Practise until you can discern lightness throughout the body, and then look for the eight characteristics as explained before.

9. Next look for heat (or warmth) throughout the body. This is usually very easy to do. You can now discern nine characteristics.

10. Next look for coldness by feeling the coldness of the breath as it enters the nostrils, and then discern it systematically

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throughout the body. You can now discern ten characteristics.

Note: The above ten characteristics are all known directly through the sense of touch, but the last two characteristics, flowing and cohesion, are known by inference based upon the other ten characteristics. That is a good reason to teach them last.

11. To discern cohesion, be aware of how the body is being held together by the skin, flesh, and sinews. The blood is being held in by the skin, like water in a balloon. Without cohesion the body would fall into separate pieces and particles. The force of gravity which keeps the body stuck to the earth is also cohesion. Develop it as before.

12. To discern flowing begin by being aware of the flowing of saliva into the mouth, the flowing of blood through the blood vessels, the flowing of air into the lungs, or the flowing of heat throughout the body. Develop it as before.

If you experience difficulty in trying to discern flowing or cohesion, you should discern the previous ten qualities again and again, one at a time throughout the body. When you have become skilled in this, you will find that the quality of cohesion also becomes clear. If cohesion still does not become clear, then pay attention again and again to just the qualities of pushing and hardness. Eventually you should feel as if the whole body is wrapped up in the coils of a rope. Discern this as the quality of cohesion. If the quality of flowing does not become clear, then look at it with the quality of coldness, heat, or pushing, and you should then be able to discern the quality of flowing.

When you can discern all twelve characteristics clearly throughout the body, from head to feet, you should continue to discern them again and again in this same order. When you are satisfied that you can do this, you should rearrange the order to the one first given above, which was: hardness, roughness, heaviness, softness, smoothness, lightness, flowing, cohesion, heat, coldness, supporting, and pushing. In that order try to discern each characteristic, one at a time from head to feet. You should try to develop this until you can do it quite quickly, at least three

rounds in a minute.

While practising in this way, the elements will for some meditators not be balanced, some elements may become excessive and unbearable. Particularly hardness, heat, and pushing can become excessively strong. If this occurs, you should pay more attention to the quality opposite the one that is in excess, and continue to develop concentration in that way. You may find that this will balance the elements again, and it is for this reason twelve characteristics were taught in the first place. When the elements are balanced it is easier to attain concentration.

For balancing the elements the opposites are: hardness and softness, roughness and smoothness, heaviness and lightness, flowing and cohesion, heat and coldness, and supporting and pushing.

If one member of these pairs is in excess, balance it by paying attention to its opposite. For example, if flowing is in excess pay more attention to cohesion, or if supporting is in excess pay more attention to pushing. The rest can be treated in a similar way.

Having now become skilled in the discernment of the twelve characteristics in the whole body, and those characteristics having become clear, you should note the first six together at one glance as the earth-element, the next two together at one glance as the water-element, the next two as the fire-element, and the last two as the air-element. You should continue to discern earth, water, fire, and air, in order to calm the mind and attain concentration. You should do this again and again hundreds, thousands, or millions of times.

At this point, a good method to use is to take an overview of the body all at once and to continue to perceive the four elements. In order to keep the mind calm and concentrated, you should not move the awareness from one part of the body to another as before. Instead take an overall view of the body. It is usually best to take the overview as if you were looking from behind the shoulders. It can also be done as if looking from

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above the head down, but this may lead to tension and imbalance of the elements in some meditators.

The sub-commentary to Visuddhimagga also says to develop concentration by giving attention in ten ways: in order, not too fast, not too slow, warding off distractions, going beyond the concept, discarding what is not clear, discerning the characteristics, and developing according to the Adhicitta Sutta, Anuttarasītibhāva Sutta, and Bojjhaṅga Sutta.

### 1. In order (*anupubbato*)

The order refers to the order taught by the Buddha, which is earth, water, fire, and air.

### 2. Not too fast (*nāṭisīghato*)

### 3. Not too slow (*nāṭisaṃkato*)

If you note too fast, the four elements, which are the object of this meditation, will not be seen clearly. If you note too slowly you will not reach the end of the meditation.

### 4. Warding off distractions (*vikkhepaṭṭibāhanato*)

You should be sure to keep the mind with the object of meditation only, the four elements, and to not let it wander off to other objects.

### 5. Going beyond the concept (*paññattisamatikkamanato*)

You should not just mentally recite, earth, water, fire, air', but be aware of the actual realities they represent: hardness, roughness, heaviness, softness, smoothness, lightness, flowing, cohesion, heat, coldness, supporting, and pushing.

### 6. Discarding what is unclear (*anupaṭṭhānamuñcanato*)

When you can discern all twelve characteristics, and are trying to develop calmness and concentration, you may temporarily leave out those characteristics which are unclear. This is not advisable if it leads to pain or tension because of an imbalance of the elements. You need also to keep at least one characteristic for each one of the four elements. You cannot just work on three, two, or one element. If all twelve characteristics are clear that is the best, and you should not discard any.

### 7. Discerning the characteristics (*lakkhaṇato*)

When you begin to meditate, and the natural characteristics of each element are not clear, you can also pay attention to their function. When the concentration gets better, you should concentrate on the natural characteristics (*sabhāva-lakkhaṇa*) of each of the four elements; the hardness and roughness of the earth-element, the flowing and cohesion of the water-element, the heat and coldness of the fire-element, and the supporting of the air-element. At this point you will see only elements, and see them as not a person or self.

8-9-10. The sub-commentary further recommends to develop according to the (8) Adhicitta Sutta, (9) Anuttarasītibhāva Sutta, and (10) Bojjhaṅga Sutta. These three suttas advise balancing the five faculties (*indriya*) of faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and understanding; and balancing the seven factors of enlightenment.

As you continue to develop concentration based upon the four elements, and begin to approach access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*), you will see different kinds of light. For some meditators the light begins as a smoke-like grey. If you continue to discern the four elements in this grey light, it will become whiter like cotton wool, and then bright white, like clouds. At this point, your whole body will appear as a white form. You should continue to concentrate on discerning the four elements in the white form, and you will find it becomes transparent like a block of ice or glass.

This transparent materiality is the five sensitivities (*pasāda*) and these we call 'transparent-elements'. Of these five transparent-elements, the body transparent-element (*kāya-pasāda*) is found throughout the body. When at this stage the body transparent-element, eye transparent-element, ear transparent-element, nose transparent-element, and tongue transparent-element are seen as a transparent lump or block. This is because you have not yet removed the three kinds of compactness (*ghaṇa*).

If you continue to discern the four elements in that transparent



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lump or block, you will find that it sparkles and emits light. When you can concentrate on this light continuously at least half an hour, you have reached access concentration. With that light try to discern the space-element in that transparent form, by looking for small spaces in it. You will find that the transparent form breaks down into small particles which are called *rūpa kalāpas*. Having reached this stage, which is purification of mind (*citta-visuddhi*), you can proceed to develop purification of view (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*), by analysing these *rūpa kalāpas*.

That access concentration is the resting place for bare-insight meditators who have no previous Samatha *jhāna*, as they start their practice directly with the four-elements meditation. If tiredness occurs during Vipassanā, they can rest in this access concentration, just as the Samatha meditator rests in *jhāna*. Then they emerge clear and refreshed again for Vipassanā.

The use of *jhāna* as a resting place is explained by a simile in the commentary to the Dvedhāvitakka Sutta of Majjhima Nikāya. Sometimes during a battle, the warriors would feel tired. Also, the enemy might be strong. At that time many arrows would be flying. The warriors, feeling some weakness, would retreat to their fort. Behind its walls they were safe from the enemy arrows. They would rest and their tiredness would gradually disappear. Then, feeling strong and powerful again, they would leave their fort and return to the battle field. Similarly, *jhāna* is just like the fort, a resting place for Vipassanā meditation. There is much to discern in Vipassanā meditation; so, meditators greatly benefit from having a resting place.

### How to Analyse Rūpa Kalāpas

The *rūpa kalāpas* fall into two groups, those which are transparent and those which are opaque. Only the *rūpa kalāpas* which contain one of the five material transparent-elements (*pasāda-rūpa*) are transparent. All other *rūpa kalāpas* are opaque.

You should first begin to practise discerning the four elements, earth, water, fire, and air, in individual transparent and opaque

rūpa kalāpas. You will probably find that the rūpa kalāpas arise and pass away very, very quickly. At this point, you will still not be able to analyse the rūpa kalāpas, because you still see the rūpa kalāpas as small particles with size. Since you have not yet removed the three kinds of compactness, compactness of continuity (*santati-ghana*), compactness of group (*samūha-ghana*), and compactness of function (*vicca-ghana*), you are still in the realm of concepts (*paññatti*), and have not yet arrived at ultimate reality (*paramattha*).

It is because you have not removed the concept of group and shape, there is the concept of a small lump or block remaining. If you do not analyse the elements (*dhātu*) further than this, but instead attempt to do Vipassanā by contemplating the arising and passing-away of these rūpa kalāpas, then you would be trying to do Vipassanā on concepts. So you must continue to analyse the elements further, until you can see them in single kalāpas: this is in order to reach ultimate reality.

If you are unable to discern the four elements in single kalāpas, because of their extremely fast arising and passing-away, you should ignore their arising and passing-away. It is just like pretending not to see or notice someone whom you do not want to meet, but have met by accident. Ignore the arising and passing-away; simply concentrate, and pay attention to the four elements in individual rūpa kalāpa, and stay aware of only that. It is the power of your concentration which allows you to ignore their arising and passing-away.

If you are still unsuccessful, you should pay attention to the earth-element alternately in the whole body at once, and then in a single kalāpa. Then pay attention to the water-element in the whole body at once, and in a single kalāpa. Then pay attention to the fire-element in the whole body at once, and in a single kalāpa. Then pay attention to the air-element in the whole body at once, and in a single kalāpa. If you practise in this way, you will be able to discern the four elements in the transparent rūpa kalāpas and opaque rūpa kalāpas.

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When you have succeeded in this, discern the four elements in rūpa kalāpas of the eye-base, ear-base, nose-base, tongue-base, body-base, and heart-base each in turn. Discern the four elements in both the transparent and opaque rūpa kalāpas of those six bases.

Each rūpa kalāpa contains at least eight types of materiality. They are: earth, water, fire, air, colour, odour, taste, and nutritive-essence. Therefore, after you have discerned the four elements in both the transparent and opaque rūpa kalāpas of the six sense-bases, you should also try to discern the colour, odour, taste, and nutritive-essence in those rūpa kalāpas.

Colour (*vaṇṇa*) is found in every rūpa kalāpa, and is the object of seeing (*rūpārammaṇa*). It is very easy to discern this kind of object.

Odour, or smell (*gandha*) is present in every rūpa kalāpa. You should begin by discerning both the nose transparent-element and the bhavaṅga mind transparent-element. To see these, you should discern the four elements in the nose, and then you will easily find the nose transparent-element. This nose transparent-element must be seen in the appropriate rūpa kalāpas in the nose.

If you have successfully discerned the four elements in the transparent kalāpas and opaque kalāpas of the six sense-bases, you will easily be able to discern the bright, luminous bhavaṅga mind transparent-element, the mind-door (*manodvāra*). It is located in the heart, and depends on the heart-base (*hadayavatthu*), which is made up of opaque kalāpas called heart-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpas or heart-decad kalāpas (*hadaya-dasaka-kalāpa*).

Having thus discerned the nose transparent-element and bhavaṅga mind transparent-element, proceed to discern the odour of a rūpa kalāpa which you have chosen to examine. Odour is a dhamma which can be known by either the nose consciousness or the mind consciousness. The nose consciousness arises resting on the nose transparent-element. The mind consciousness arises attracted by the bhavaṅga mind transparent-element which itself rests upon heart-base materiality. This is why when you

wish to discern odour in rūpa kalāpas, both the transparent-elements of this process must be discerned.

Taste (*rasa*) is present in every rūpa kalāpa. Having discerned both the tongue transparent-element and bhavaṅga mind transparent-element, discern the taste of a rūpa kalāpa that you have chosen to examine. You can begin by discerning the taste of saliva which is on the tongue. As with the odour above, the taste of an object can be known by either the tongue consciousness or the mind consciousness. Both these elements must therefore be discerned.

The Abhidhamma Commentary (Abhi.Com.2.p.388) says: *abbopi panesa pabhedo manodvārikajavaneyeva labhati.* This explains that the colour, odour, and taste of a rūpa kalāpa, can be known by the mind consciousness alone. Before your meditation becomes strong, you use the nose and tongue consciousness to assist you to learn how taste and odour can be known by the mind consciousness. When your meditation is strong and powerful, you can know taste and odour of rūpa kalāpas by mind consciousness alone.

Nutritive-essence (*ojā*) is present in every rūpa kalāpa. It is of four types: nutritive-essence produced by kamma, consciousness (*citta*), temperature (*utu*), and nutriment (*āhāra*). Look inside any rūpa kalāpa and you will find the nutritive-essence. From this nutritive-essence, rūpa kalāpas are seen to multiply forth again and again.

After having discerned the basic eight kinds of materiality in rūpa kalāpas, you should try to discern the remaining types of materiality in specific rūpa kalāpas

Life-faculty (*jīvita*) is the materiality which sustains the life of materiality produced by kamma. It is not found in rūpa kalāpas produced by consciousness, temperature, or nutriment, but only in those produced by kamma. The transparent rūpa kalāpas are produced by kamma only, so this is where you should begin to look for it. You should discern the transparent rūpa kalāpas and then search for life-faculty in them. The life-faculty materiality

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sustains the life of other materiality in its own kalāpa, and not the materiality in other kalāpas.

After having discerned life-faculty in the transparent rūpa kalāpa, you should also try to discern it in the opaque rūpa kalāpa. There are three types of opaque kalāpa found in the body which contain life-faculty. One type, heart-decad kalāpas or heart-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpas (*hadaya-dasaka-kalāpa*) are found only in the heart. The other two, sex-decad kalāpas or sex-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpas (*bhāva-dasaka-kalāpa*) and life-nonad kalāpas or life-faculty-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpas (*jīvita-navaka-kalāpa*), are found throughout the body. Therefore, if you can discern life-faculty in an opaque kalāpa somewhere in the body besides the heart, you know it must be either a sex-decad kalāpa or life-nonad kalāpa. To tell these two apart you need to be able to discern sex-determining-materiality.

Sex-determining-materiality (*bhāva-rūpa*) is found in opaque kalāpas throughout the body, in all six sense-bases. After you have discerned life-faculty in both transparent and opaque kalāpas, you should look for sex-determining-materiality in the opaque kalāpa where you found life-faculty. If you find sex-determining-materiality the kalāpa, it is a sex-decad kalāpa (*bhāva-dasaka-kalāpa*), and not a life-nonad kalāpa (*jīvita-navaka-kalāpa*). In a male there is only male sex-determining-materiality, and in a female only female sex-determining-materiality. Male sex-determining-materiality is a quality by which you know, 'his is a man.' Female sex-determining-materiality is a quality by which you know, 'his is a woman.' When you are able to discern sex-determining-materiality, look for it in each of the six bases: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and heart.

Heart-base materiality (*hadaya-rūpa*) is the materiality which supports the bhavaṅga mind transparent-element (also called mind-element and mind-door), and mind-consciousness-element (*manoviññāṇa-dhātu*). The mind-consciousness-element includes all types of consciousness except the five sense con-

sciousnesses: eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body. The heart-base is the place where the mind-element and mind-consciousness-element occur, and it has the characteristic of being the materiality on which they depend.

To discern the heart-base materiality, focus the mind on the bhavaṅga mind transparent-element. Then try to discern the rūpa kalāpas which support the bhavaṅga mind transparent-element. You should be able to find these rūpa kalāpas in the lower part of the bhavaṅga mind transparent-element. They are heart-decad kalāpas. They are opaque kalāpas and the heart-base materiality (*hadayavatthu-rūpa*) in them is the support for the mind-element and mind-consciousness-element.

### **How to Analyse the Transparent-Elements Materiality**

The organ of the eye contains several kinds of rūpa kalāpa which are interspersed like rice flour and wheat flour mixed together. In the eye there are two kinds of transparent-element mixed together, the eye transparent-element and body transparent-element. This means that the eye-decad kalāpa or eye-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpa (*cakkhu-dasaka-kalāpa*) and body-decad kalāpa or body-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpa (*kāya-dasaka-kalāpa*) are interspersed. The body-decad kalāpas which contain body transparent-element are found spread throughout the six sense-bases. They are interspersed with the eye-decad kalāpas in the eye, with the ear-decad kalāpas (*sota-dasaka-kalāpa*) in the ear, with the nose-decad kalāpas (*ghāna-dasaka-kalāpa*) in the nose, with the tongue-decad kalāpas (*jivhā-dasaka-kalāpa*) in the tongue, and with the heart-decad kalāpas (*hadaya-dasaka-kalāpa*) in the heart. Sex-decad kalāpas are also spread throughout the six sense-bases, and are also interspersed with the transparent kalāpas. To be able to see this, you need to analyse the materiality of the transparent kalāpas.

(1) Eye transparent-element (*cakkhu-pasāda*): The eye transparent-element is sensitive to the impingement of colour, whereas the body transparent-element is sensitive to the impingement

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of touch, or tangible objects. This difference in sensitivity to objects allows you to analyse and know which is the eye transparent-element, and which is the body transparent-element. First discern the four elements in the eye and discern the transparent rūpa kalāpa. Then look at the colour of a rūpa kalāpa that is a little far away from the eye. If you see that colour impinge on the transparent-element you chose to examine, it is an eye transparent-element, and the rūpa kalāpa which contains it is an eye-decad kalāpa (*cakkhu-dasaka-kalāpa*). If the colour does not impinge on the transparent-element you are looking at, it is not an eye transparent-element. It must be a body transparent-element because there are only two types of transparent-element in the eye.

(2) Body transparent-element (*kāya-pasāda*): The body transparent-element is sensitive to the impingement of tangible objects, which are the earth, fire, and air-elements. Discern the transparent rūpa kalāpa. Then look at the earth, fire, or air-element of a rūpa kalāpa that is nearby. If you see one of the three elements impinge on the transparent-element you chose to examine, it is a body transparent-element, and the rūpa kalāpa which contains it is a body-decad kalāpa (*kāya-dasaka-kalāpa*). In the same way as you did in the eye discern the body-decad kalāpas in the ear, nose, tongue, body, and heart.

(3) Ear transparent-element (*sota-pasāda*): The ear transparent-element is sensitive to the impingement of sound. Discern the four elements in the ear and discern the transparent rūpa kalāpa. Then listen to a sound, and if you see it impinge on the transparent-element you chose to examine, it is an ear transparent-element, and the rūpa kalāpa which contains it is an ear-decad kalāpa (*sota-dasaka-kalāpa*). The discernment of the body-decad kalāpa follows the same method as shown above for the eye.

(4) Nose transparent-element (*ghāna-pasāda*): The nose transparent-element is sensitive to the impingement of odour. Discern the four elements in the nose and discern the transparent

rūpa kalāpa. Then smell the odour of a nearby rūpa kalāpa in the nose. If you see that odour impinge on the transparent-element, it is a nose transparent-element, and the rūpa kalāpa which contains it is a nose-decad kalāpa (*ghāna-dasaka-kalāpa*).

(5) Tongue transparent-element (*jivhā-pasāda*): The tongue transparent-element is sensitive to the impingement of taste. Discern the four elements in the tongue and discern the transparent-element. Then taste the flavour of a rūpa kalāpa near it. If you see it impinge on that transparent-element, it is a tongue transparent-element, and the rūpa kalāpa which contains it is a tongue-decad kalāpa (*jivhā-dasaka-kalāpa*).

The body-decad kalāpa and sex-decad kalāpa are found in all six sense-bases and must be seen in each place in turn.

### **The Fifty-Four Types of Materiality in the Eye**

So, if you analyse the materiality in the eye you will find there are fifty-four kinds of materiality present in six types of rūpa kalāpa. The six types of rūpa kalāpa are:

1. The eye-decad kalāpa (*cakkhu-dasaka-kalāpa*) which is sensitive to the impingement of the colour of light, and is produced by kamma.
2. The body-decad kalāpa (*kāya-dasaka-kalāpa*) which is sensitive to the impingement of tangible objects (earth, fire, and air-elements), and is produced by kamma.
3. The sex-decad kalāpa (*bhāva-dasaka-kalāpa*) which is opaque and is produced by kamma.
4. The nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa or nutritive-essence-as-the-eighth-factor kalāpa (*cittaja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) which is opaque and produced by consciousness.
5. The nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) which is opaque and produced by temperature.
6. The nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) which is opaque and produced by



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nutriment.

I have already given examples of how to discern the first three of these six types of rūpa kalāpa. The last three are all rūpa kalāpas which consist of eight types of materiality. The only difference between them is their origin: consciousness, temperature, or nutriment. So I will now give examples of how to discern which of these rūpa kalāpas is produced by consciousness, which by temperature, and which by nutriment.

### **How to See Materiality Produced by Consciousness**

All consciousnesses that occur depending on the heart-base materiality in the heart during one whole life are capable of producing consciousness-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa (*cittaja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*). Every single mind produces a great number of these nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas, which spread throughout the body.

If you concentrate on the bhavaṅga mind transparent-element, you will see that many consciousnesses supported by the heart-base materiality continuously produce rūpa kalāpas. If this is not clear at first, then having concentrated on the bhavaṅga mind transparent-element, wiggle one of your fingers. You will see a large number of rūpa kalāpas being produced because of the mind wanting to move the finger. You will also see these rūpa kalāpas spread throughout all six sense-bases of the body, including the eye. These are the nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) which are opaque and produced by consciousness.

### **How to See Materiality Produced by Temperature**

The fire-element in rūpa kalāpas produced by kamma, consciousness, temperature, or nutriment, is called temperature (*utu*). This fire-element is capable of producing new temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-*

*ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*), which are the first generation produced by temperature. These temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) also contain fire-element, and can again produce more temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas, which are the second generation produced by temperature. If the fire-element is that which is present in a kamma-produced kalāpa, such as the eye-decad kalāpa, then this fire-element, which is temperature (*utu*), can in the same way produce four or five generations of temperature-produced kalāpas. This happens only when the temperature has reached its standing phase (*ṭhiti-kāla*)<sup>1</sup>. It is a law of materiality that it has strength only when it reaches its standing phase.

There is also consciousness-produced fire-element (*cittaja-utu*) which is temperature. When a normal sensual-realm consciousness causes the production of consciousness-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*cittaja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*), these also contain fire-element which is temperature. This temperature can also produce temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) (first generation from consciousness-produced fire-element). These temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas also contain fire-element which can produce a further generation of temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*). This process can carry on for two or three generations.

The consciousnesses present during the practice of preparatory, access, and absorption concentration in Samatha meditation, or during the practice of Vipassanā, and the path and fruition consciousnesses are all capable of producing consciousness-produced rūpa kalāpas (*cittaja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*). These consciousness-produced rūpa kalāpas contain fire-element, temperature, which can produce many generations of nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas, not only internally but also externally. Depending

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<sup>1</sup> All conditioned phenomena have three phases: arising, standing, and passing-away.

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on whether the power of understanding is great or little, or depending on the power of concentration, these rūpa kalāpas are produced in large or small number spreading out from the body. (See Vsm. sub-com.2. p.428, 429, 403).

This process of multiplication and production of rūpa kalāpas occurs only when the fire-element, temperature (*utu*), has reached its standing phase (*ṭhiti-kāla*).

The nutriment-produced rūpa kalāpas (*āhāraja-kalāpa*) that will be mentioned below contain also fire-element that is temperature. When this temperature reaches its standing phase it can produce many generations of temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*). In this way, it may produce ten to twelve generations of rūpa kalāpas, and with the assistance of special food, such as the nutritive-essence of devas (divine nutritive-essence), this process can continue for a long period of time. The temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) produced in this way also contain nutritive-essence (*ojā*), and with assistance form nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*), they can produce many generations of nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) inside the body.

## How to See Materiality Produced by Nutriment

Four parts of the body, namely, undigested food, faeces, pus, and urine, consist of nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas that are produced by temperature (*utu*) only. Therefore, newly eaten food inside the stomach consists of only nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas. With the assistance of the fire-element in the life-nonad kalāpas (*jīvita-navaka-kalāpa*), which make up the kammically produced digestive heat, the nutritive-essence (*ojā*) in these nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas produces many generations of nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*). These are nutriment-produced kalāpas (*āhāraja-kalāpa*), and spread throughout the six sense-bases. Nutriment taken in one day can

produce nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) for up to seven days. Divine nutriment can do this for up to one or two months. The nutriment taken on one day also, with the assistance of kammically produced digestive-heat, gives support for the next seven days to the nutritive-essence in kamma-produced, consciousness-produced, temperature-produced, and succeeding nutriment-produced kalāpas.

In order to see these things you can meditate at the time of eating. The nutriment-produced kalāpas can be seen to spread throughout the body beginning from the mouth, throat, stomach, and intestines. Discern the four elements in the newly eaten food in the mouth, throat, stomach, and intestines, and see the rūpa kalāpas there. Continue to look until you can see that, with the assistance of the kammically produced digestive heat, the nutritive-essence in the rūpa kalāpas in the food produces new rūpa kalāpas which spread throughout the body.

Alternatively, you can see these things if you meditate after having eaten. Having progressively developed concentration stage by stage, discern the four elements in the newly eaten food in the stomach, or in the intestines. Continue to look until you can see that with the assistance of kammically produced digestive heat (the fire-element in the life-nonad kalāpas), the nutritive-essence in the nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) in the food produces the nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) which spread throughout the body. See that these kalāpas are opaque. Then analyse them and discern the eight types of materiality found in each.

Develop concentration and then discern these nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) spreading out through the body and reaching the eye. Discern the eight types of materiality found in those kalāpas in the eye, and note that the nutritive-essence found in those kalāpas is nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*).

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When this nutriment-produced nutritive-essence meets with the nutritive-essence contained in the eye-decad kalāpas (*cakkhudasaka-kalāpa*), it assists the kamma-produced nutritive-essence (*kammaja-ojā*) found in the eye-decad kalāpas in producing four or five generations of rūpa kalāpas. The number of generations depends on the strength of assistance of both kamma-produced nutritive-essence (*kammaja-ojā*) and nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*). Again, in those four or five generations of rūpa kalāpas, there is fire-element, which is temperature. This temperature (*utu*), at its standing phase, produces many generations of temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*). Try to discern this.

Also try to discern that the nutritive-essence of the body-decad kalāpas, and sex-decad kalāpas, with the assistance of the nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*), can produce four or five generations of nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*). The fire-element, temperature, contained also in these many generations produces many more generations of temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*).

In every consciousness-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa (*cittaja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) in the eye there is nutritive-essence. This consciousness-produced nutritive-essence (*cittaja-ojā*), when assisted by the nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*), produces two or three generations of nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*). The fire-element (*utu*) in these also produces many generations of the temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*).

When a consciousness is a Samatha, Vipassanā, Path, or Fruition Consciousness, it is capable of producing many generations of the consciousness-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*cittaja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) within the body. The fire-element in these kalāpas produces the temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) both inside

and outside the body. Light is the brilliance of colour of the colour-materiality in these consciousness-produced kalāpas and temperature-produced kalāpas.

As shown above in the eye, in every temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa produced from temperature or fire-element, whether it be kamma-produced fire-element, consciousness-produced fire-element, temperature-produced fire-element, or nutriment-produced fire-element, there is also nutritive-essence. This temperature-produced nutritive-essence (*utuja-ojā*) can, with the assistance of nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*), produce ten or twelve generations of rūpa kalāpas. (See Vsm.sub-com.p.403)

Also the fire-element (temperature) contained in the nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) is capable of producing many temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*).

The way in which nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas are produced from food eaten and spread to be present in the eye has already been explained above. The nutritive-essence in these is called nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*). When the nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*) of a previous nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa is given assistance by the nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*) of a later nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa, it can produce many or a few generations of rūpa kalāpas. This depends on the quality of the food and strength of the digestive fire-element. In these nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) there is also fire-element, temperature, and this can produce many new temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*).

When temperature and nutritive-essence produce new kalāpas as described above they do it when they reach their standing phase only. In the production of rūpa kalāpas whether it be for two, three, ten, or twelve generations, the last generation con-

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tains temperature and nutritive-essence which cannot produce new temperature-produced kalāpas and nutriment-produced kalāpas.

You should read through this description of the production of rūpa kalāpas carefully and look also at the following charts. Then by having a proper teacher and practising systematically, you will become proficient in the discernment of kalāpas produced by the four causes of kamma, consciousness, temperature, and nutriment. In the same way as has been shown in the case of the eye-base, you should discern all the rūpa kalāpas in the other five bases and also the forty-two parts of the body (which will be explained after the following charts).

## Eye-Door: Fifty-Four Types of Materiality

	eye-decad kalāpa	body-decad kalāpa	sex-decad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
9	life-faculty	life-faculty	life-faculty
10	eye transparent-element	body transparent-element	sex-materiality
	produced by kamma	produced by kamma	produced by kamma
	transparent	transparent	opaque
	sensitive to the impingement of light	sensitive to the impingement of touch (earth, fire, and air)	quality conveying gender

	consciousness-produced octad kalāpa	temperature-produced octad kalāpa	nutriment-produced octad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
	produced by consciousness	produced by temperature	produced by nutriment
	opaque	opaque	opaque

Out of these fifty-four types of materiality, the eye-transparent-element is called *pasāda cakkhu* or *sasambhāra cakkhu*, the other fifty-three types of materiality are called just *sasambhāra cakkhu*.



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### Ear-Door: Fifty-Four Types of Materiality

	ear-decad kalāpa	body-decad kalāpa	sex-decad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
9	life-faculty	life-faculty	life-faculty
10	ear transparent-element	body transparent-element	sex-materiality
	produced by kamma	produced by kamma	produced by kamma
	transparent	transparent	opaque
	sensitive to the impingement of sound	sensitive to the impingement of touch (earth, fire, and air)	quality conveying gender

	consciousness-produced octad kalāpa	temperature-produced octad kalāpa	nutriment-produced octad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
	produced by consciousness	produced by temperature	produced by nutriment
	opaque	opaque	opaque

Out of these fifty-four types of materiality, the ear-transparent-element is called *pasāda sota* or *sasambhāra sota*, the other fifty-three types of materiality are called just *sasambhāra sota*.

## Nose-Door: Fifty-Four Types of Materiality

	nose-decad kalāpa	body-decad kalāpa	sex-decad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
9	life-faculty	life-faculty	life-faculty
10	nose transparent-element	body transparent-element	sex-materiality
	produced by kamma	produced by kamma	produced by kamma
	transparent	transparent	opaque
	sensitive to the impingement of odour	sensitive to the impingement of touch (earth, fire, and air)	quality conveying gender

	consciousness-produced octad kalāpa	temperature-produced octad kalāpa	nutriment-produced octad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
	produced by consciousness	produced by temperature	produced by nutriment
	opaque	opaque	opaque

Out of these fifty-four types of materiality, the nose-transparent-element is called *pasāda ghāna* or *sasambhāra ghāna*, the other fifty-three types of materiality are called just *sasambhāra ghāna*.

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### Tongue-Door: Fifty-Four Types of Materiality

	tongue-decad kalāpa	body-decad kalāpa	sex-decad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
9	life-faculty	life-faculty	life-faculty
10	tongue transparent-element	body transparent-element	sex-materiality
	produced by kamma	produced by kamma	produced by kamma
	transparent	transparent	opaque
	sensitive to the impingement of taste	sensitive to the impingement of touch (earth, fire, and air)	quality conveying gender

	consciousness-produced octad kalāpa	temperature-produced octad kalāpa	nutriment-produced octad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
	produced by consciousness	produced by temperature	produced by nutriment
	opaque	opaque	opaque

Out of these fifty-four types of materiality, the tongue-transparent-element is called *pasāda jivhā* or *sasambhāra jivhā*, the other fifty-three types of materiality are called just *sasambhāra jivhā*.

## Body-Door: Forty-Four Types of Materiality

	body-decad kalāpa	sex-decad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour
6	odour	odour
7	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
9	life-faculty	life-faculty
10	body transparent-element	sex-materiality
	produced by kamma	produced by kamma
	transparent	opaque
	sensitive to the impingement of touch (earth, fire, and air)	quality conveying gender

	consciousness-produced octad kalāpa	temperature-produced octad kalāpa	nutriment-produced octad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
	produced by consciousness	produced by temperature	produced by nutriment
	opaque	opaque	opaque

Out of these forty-four types of materiality, the body-transparent-element is called *pasāda kaya* or *sasambhāra ghāna*, the other fifty-three types of materiality are called just *sasambhāra ghāna*.

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### Mind-Door: Forty-Four Types of Materiality

	heart-decad kalāpa	body-decad kalāpa	sex-decad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
9	life-faculty	life-faculty	life-faculty
10	heart-materiality	body transparent-element	sex-materiality
	produced by kamma	produced by kamma	produced by kamma
	opaque	transparent	opaque
	supporting the mind-element and mind-consciousness element	sensitive to the impingement of touch (earth, fire, and air)	quality conveying gender

	consciousness-produced octad kalāpa	temperature-produced octad kalāpa	nutriment-produced octad kalāpa
1	earth-element	earth-element	earth-element
2	water-element	water-element	water-element
3	fire-element	fire-element	fire-element
4	air-element	air-element	air-element
5	colour	colour	colour
6	odour	odour	odour
7	taste	taste	taste
8	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence	nutritive-essence
	produced by consciousness	produced by temperature	produced by nutriment
	opaque	opaque	opaque

Out of these fifty-four types of materiality, heart-materiality is called heart-base (*hadaya-vatthu*) or *sasambhāra hadaya*, the other fifty-three types of materiality are called just *sasambhāra hadaya*.

## Detailed Method for Developing Four-Elements Meditation

(By Way of the Forty-Two Parts of the Body)

There are twenty parts of the body in which earth-element is predominant:

- |                                      |                                    |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Head hair ( <i>kesā</i> )         | 11. Heart ( <i>hadayam</i> )       |
| 2. Body hair ( <i>lomā</i> )         | 12. Liver ( <i>yakanam</i> )       |
| 3. Nails ( <i>nakhā</i> )            | 13. Membrane ( <i>kilomakam</i> )  |
| 4. Teeth ( <i>dantā</i> )            | 14. Spleen ( <i>pihakam</i> )      |
| 5. Skin ( <i>taco</i> )              | 15. Lungs ( <i>papphāsam</i> )     |
| 6. Flesh ( <i>marīsam</i> )          | 16. Intestines ( <i>antam</i> )    |
| 7. Sinews ( <i>nahāru</i> )          | 17. Mesentery ( <i>antagunam</i> ) |
| 8. Bone ( <i>aṭṭhi</i> )             | 18. Gorge ( <i>udariyam</i> )      |
| 9. Bone marrow ( <i>aṭṭhimijam</i> ) | 19. Faeces ( <i>karisam</i> )      |
| 10. Kidneys ( <i>vakkam</i> )        | 20. Brain ( <i>matthaluṅgam</i> )  |

Of these twenty parts, all except gorge and faeces (dung) contain forty-four types of materiality, as shown in the charts above for the body-door. Gorge and faeces contain only eight types of materiality, and are made of only temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas.

There are twelve parts in the body in which water-element is predominant:

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Bile ( <i>pittam</i> )     | 7. Tears ( <i>assu</i> ) (16)                  |
| 2. Phlegm ( <i>semham</i> )   | 8. Grease ( <i>vasā</i> )                      |
| 3. Pus ( <i>pubbo</i> ) (8)   | 9. Saliva ( <i>kheḷo</i> ) (16)                |
| 4. Blood ( <i>lohitaṃ</i> )   | 10. Nasal discharge ( <i>siṅghānika</i> ) (16) |
| 5. Sweat ( <i>sedo</i> ) (16) | 11. Synovial fluid ( <i>lasikā</i> )           |
| 6. Fat ( <i>medo</i> )        | 12. Urine ( <i>muttam</i> ) (8)                |

Of these, all except pus, sweat, tears, saliva, nasal discharge,

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and urine contain forty-four types of materiality as shown in the charts for the body-door. Pus and urine have eight types of materiality, being only temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas. Sweat, tears, saliva, and nasal discharge have sixteen types of materiality being consciousness-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas and temperature-produced kalāpas, and they are produced by consciousness and temperature respectively.

In order to see and discern all these types of materiality in each part of the body, first develop concentration systematically. Then analyse the rūpa kalāpas in the six sense-bases as shown in the charts above. When you are able to do this, discern the part of the body which you wish to examine. When you can discern that part, discern the four elements in it. When you see that part as a transparent form, look for the space in it and you will easily see the kalāpas, which make up that part of the body. If your meditation is strong, then as soon as you look for the four elements in a given part of the body, you will easily see the rūpa kalāpas. When you can see the rūpa kalāpas, analyse them and discern the different kinds of kalāpa present there. With knowledge divide and discern as they really are the kalāpas produced by kamma, consciousness, temperature, and nutriment.

To discern the kalāpas in body hair and head hair, pay attention to the base of the hairs which are inside the skin. Look for the forty-four types of materiality there first because the hair outside the skin has an extremely small amount of body-decad kalāpas, and they are very difficult to discern. In a similar way with the nails of the fingers and toes, you should pay more attention to their parts that are close to the flesh.

There are four parts (here we would rather say components) of the body in which heat is predominant:

1. Heat that warms the body (*santappana tejo*),
2. Heat that causes maturing and aging (*jīrana tejo*),
3. Heat of fever (*daha tejo*),

4. Digestive heat (*pācaka tejo*), a mode of life-nonad kalāpas.

These four components of the body do not possess shape or form like the parts in which earth-element or water-element are predominant. They are made of only not-transparent rūpa kalāpas in which heat is predominant, and so you will have to look for kalāpas in which fire-element is predominant in order to see these components of the body. If they are not clear then examine them at a time when you have had a fever.

There are six components in which air-element is predominant:

1. Air that rises up (*uddharīgamaṃ vātā*)
2. Air that goes down (*adhogamaṃ vātā*)
3. Air in the abdomen outside the intestines (*kucchisayā vātā*)
4. Air inside the intestines (*koṭṭhāsayaṃ vātā*)
5. Air that pervades through the limbs (*aṅgamaṅgānu-sārino vātā*)
6. In-and-out-breath (*assāsa passāsa*)

Of these, all except in-and-out-breath consists of thirty-three types of materiality each. They are made up of four types of kalāpa:

1. Life-faculty-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpa or life-nonad kalāpa (*jīvita-navaka-kalāpa*) (nine types of materiality).
2. Consciousness-produced nutritive-essence-as-the-eighth-factor kalāpa or consciousness-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa (*cittaja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) (eight types of materiality).
3. Temperature-produced nutritive-essence-as-the-eighth-factor kalāpa or temperature-produced nutritive-



## How to Develop Four-Elements Meditation

essence-octad kalāpa (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*)  
(eight types of materiality).

4. Nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-as-the-eighth-factor kalāpa or nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) (eight types of materiality).

These four types of kalāpa contain a total of thirty-three types of materiality.

The in-and-out-breath contains only nine types of materiality found in what is called a consciousness-produced sound-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpa (*cittaja-sadda-navaka-kalāpa*). This type of kalāpa contains earth-element, water-element, fire-element, air-element, colour, smell, taste, nutriment, and sound.

The in-and-out-breath is produced by consciousness. To see this you have to discern that it is produced by consciousness present in the bhavaṅga mind transparent-element, supported by heart-base materiality. When you see this breath being produced there, discern the four elements in it and you will see the kalāpas which make it up. In each of these kalāpas you will find nine types of materiality including sound. Practise until you can see this.

To analyse the other five types first discern each type of air, and then discern the four elements in each. You will see the rūpa kalāpas which then should be analysed to see all thirty-three types of materiality present in them.

### **Nine Kinds of Rūpa Kalāpa Produced by Kamma**

In examining the rūpa kalāpas in the six sense-bases and forty-two parts of the body, you will find that there are nine kinds of rūpa kalāpa produced by kamma:

1. Eye-decad kalāpa (*cakkhu-dasaka-kalāpa*)
2. Ear-decad kalāpa (*sota-dasaka-kalāpa*)
3. Nose-decad kalāpa (*ghāna-dasaka-kalāpa*)

4. Tongue-decad kalāpa (*jivha-dasaka-kalāpa*)
5. Body-decad kalāpa (*kāya-dasaka-kalāpa*)
6. Female-sex-decad kalāpa (*itthi-bhāva-dasaka-kalāpa*)
7. Male-sex-decad kalāpa (*pumbhāva-dasaka-kalāpa*)
8. Heart-base-decad kalāpa (*hadayavatthu-dasaka-kalāpa*)
9. Life-nonad kalāpa (*jīvita-navaka-kalāpa*).

These kamma-produced rūpa kalāpas arise in the present because of kamma performed in the past life. Kamma-produced rūpa kalāpas present in the past life were caused by kamma performed in the life previous to that. Kamma-produced rūpa kalāpas that arise in the next life are caused by either kamma done in this present life or that performed in a previous life. To know which kamma they are the result of, whether giving (*dāna*), virtuous conduct (*sīla*), or meditation (*bhāvanā*), you will need to discern materiality and mentality of the past and future. Only then will you understand and experience this for yourself. This will come later in the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*). At the present stage you just have to accept provisionally that these rūpa kalāpas are produced by kamma.

It should also be noted that the above materiality produced by kamma, consciousness, temperature, or nutriment, which is real materiality, will later be comprehended by insight-knowledges as impermanent, suffering, and non-self. There is also not-real materiality<sup>2</sup> mixed together with materiality produced by consciousness, temperature, and nutriment. This is explained below.

### **Eight Kinds of Rūpa Kalāpa Produced by Consciousness**

1. Consciousness-produced pure-octad kalāpa (*cittaja-suddhaṭṭhaka-kalāpa*). It is found in all six sense-bases and most of the forty-two parts of the body. It is real

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<sup>2</sup> See page 63-66 for the explanation of the ten types of not-real materiality.

## How to Develop Four-Elements Meditation

materiality and can be used as the object of Vipassanā practice.

2. Bodily-intimation-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpa (*kāya-viññatti-navaka-kalāpa*). Having discerned the mind transparent-element wiggle one of your fingers back and forth. You will see many kalāpas produced by consciousness which when analysed contain only eight types of materiality. When the movement of bodily intimation is added it makes nine.
3. Lightness-as-the-eleventh-factor kalāpa (*lahutā-ekadasaka-kalāpa*) is a kalāpa with eleven factors; the eight basic factors<sup>3</sup> plus lightness (*lahutā*), softness (*modutā*), and wieldiness (*kammaññatā*).
4. Bodily-intimation-as-the-twelveth-factor kalāpa (*kāya-viññatti-lahutā-dvadasaka-kalāpa*) is a kalāpa which has twelve factors, the basic eight plus bodily intimation, lightness, softness, and wieldiness.
5. Verbal-intimation-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpa (*vacī-viññatti-dasaka-kalāpa*) is a kalāpa which contains ten types of materiality; the basic eight plus verbal intimation and sound. Say letters , b, c' aloud. Now, discern the mind transparent-element and then say the letters , b, c' again and see the kalāpas caused by consciousness spreading to the throat, vocal chords, and other places involved in producing sound. Also discern separately the earth-element present in the consciousness-produced kalāpa rubbing against the earth-element in the kamma-produced kalāpas (which produces sound) in the place where sound is produced and the verbal intimation is involved.
6. Verbal-intimation-as-the-thirteenth-factor kalāpa (*vacī-viññatti-sadda-lahutā-terasaka-kalāpa*) is a kalāpa

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<sup>3</sup> The eight basic factors are earth-element, water-element, fire-element, air-element, colour, odour, taste, and nutritive-essence.

with thirteen factors; the basic eight plus verbal intimation, sound, lightness, softness, and wieldiness.

7. Consciousness-produced sound-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpa of in-and-out-breath (*assāsa-passāsa-cittaja-sadda-navaka-kalāpa*) is a consciousness-produced kalāpa with nine factors: the basic eight plus sound. This is a real materiality and a suitable object for Vipassanā.
8. Consciousness-produced sound-as-the-twelveth-factor kalāpa of in-and-out-breath (*assāsa-passāsa-cittaja-sadda-lahutādi-dvādasaka-kalāpa*) is a consciousness-produced kalāpa with twelve factors: the basic eight plus sound, lightness, softness, and wieldiness.

Note: In 7. and 8. the sound is the sound of breathing. The kalāpas containing not-real materiality mixed with real materiality should be discerned at the time of discerning mentality and materiality, but later, when meditating on the three characteristics during Vipassanā, they should not be included.

### **Four Kinds of Rūpa Kalāpa Produced by Temperature**

1. Temperature-produced pure-octad kalāpa (*utuja-suddhatthaka-kalāpa*) is a kalāpa produced by temperature containing eight factors: the basic eight. It is real materiality.
2. Temperature-produced sound-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpa (*utuja-sadda-navaka-kalāpa*) is a kalāpa produced by temperature containing nine factors: the basic eight plus sound. It is real materiality.
3. Lightness-as-the-eleventh-factor kalāpa (*lahutādeka-dasaka kalāpa*) is a kalāpa with the basic eight factors plus lightness, softness, and wieldiness. It is not-real materiality.
4. Sound-as-the-twelveth-factor kalāpa (*sadda-lahutādi-dvādasaka-kalāpa*) is a kalāpa containing twelve factors: the basic eight plus sound, lightness, softness, and

wieldiness. It is not-real materiality.

Of these, the first is found throughout the six sense-bases and in most of the forty-two parts of the body. The second is the kalāpa involved in making sound in the stomach, and similar types of sound. These first two kalāpas can be found internally and externally. The third and fourth have not-real materiality mixed up in them and are not objects for Vipassanā meditation, but should be discerned at the stage in the practice when mentality and materiality are discerned. These last two are not found in inanimate objects, but are found in living beings internally and externally.

### **Two Kinds of Rūpa Kalāpa Produced by Nutriment**

1. Nutriment-produced pure-octad kalāpa (*āhāraja-suddaṭṭhaka-kalāpa*) is a nutriment-produced kalāpa with nutritive-essence as the eighth factor.
2. Lightness-as-the-eleventh-factor kalāpa (*lahutādekadasaka-kalāpa*) is a nutriment-produced kalāpa with lightness as the eleventh factor. It contains the basic eight factors plus lightness, softness, and wieldiness.

Of these two kalāpas, the first consists of real materiality, is found throughout the six sense-bases and in most of the forty-two parts of the body, and is suitable for Vipassanā meditation. The second is found throughout the six sense-bases and in most of the forty-two parts of the body. This kalāpa consists of the eight basic factors which are real materiality and three factors (lightness, softness, and wieldiness) which are not-real materiality. The eight factors which are real materiality are suitable for Vipassanā meditation, but the three factors which are not-real materiality are not suitable for Vipassanā meditation. Both these kalāpas are found internally in oneself, and externally in other living beings.

## Three Kinds of Sound

1. The sound of consciousness-produced sound-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpas of in-and-out-breath (*assāsa-passāsa-cittaja-sadda-navaka-kalāpa*) is the sound of breathing.
2. The sound of verbal-intimation-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpas (*vacīviññatti-dasaka-kalāpa*) is the sound of speech.
3. The sound of temperature-produced sound-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpas (*utuja-sadda-navaka-kalāpa*) is the sound of the stomach, of the wind, etc.

Of these three types of kalāpa, the first and second are only found in living beings and the third (temperature-produced sound-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpa) is found in both living and inanimate objects. The third includes all sounds except the first two. The verbal intimation materiality in the verbal-intimation-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpa is not-real materiality and is not suitable for Vipassanā meditation, but the other types of materiality present in the kalāpa are real and are suitable for Vipassanā meditation. All types of materiality in the consciousness-produced sound-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpa and the temperature-produced sound-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpa are suitable for Vipassanā meditation.

## Discerning the Four Characteristics of Materiality

Only when you are able to discern the materiality present at the time of conception and development of the embryo in the womb, will you be able to discern growth of materiality (*upacaya*). As for continuity (*santati*), aging (*jaratā*), and impermanence (*aniccatā*) of materiality they are just the arising, standing, and passing-away of the real materiality of the six sense-bases or forty-two parts of the body. Firstly discern an individual rūpa kalāpa and analyse it to see if it contains eight,

nine, or ten factors. Then try to see all types of real materiality present in a kalāpa arising, standing, and passing-away together. After that discern the arising, standing, and passing-away of all materiality present in the six sense-bases and forty-two parts of the body all at once. The rūpa kalāpas do not all arise, stand, and pass away simultaneously; they are not in phase.

### **The Time for Discerning as ‘Materiality’**

Firstly discern separately in each of the six sense-bases the fifty-four or forty-four types of real materiality present. Then try also to discern in each as many types of not-real materiality as you can. Then discern all types of materiality in one base together according to their characteristic of being molested by change. Then, taking all types of materiality in each base together, meditate on them as ‘materiality, materiality’ or ‘these are materiality’ or ‘these are material dhammas’. You must do the same for each of the forty-two parts of the body.

### **The Characteristic of Being Molested by Change**

This means that all types of materiality change in intensity, such as from hot to cold, hard to soft, rough to smooth, but their natural characteristic of hardness, flowing, heat, and supporting does not change. When it is hot the heat of materiality in the body can increase to unbearable levels, and when it is cold the coldness can reach unbearable levels. Thus, there is a constant change in all types of materiality in a kalāpa as they continuously molest each other internally and externally.

To summarise:

1. Before you have seen the rūpa kalāpas, develop concentration up to access concentration by seeing the four elements: earth, water, fire, and air.
2. When you can see the rūpa kalāpas analyse them to see all the materiality in each kalāpa, for example: earth, water, fire, air, colour, odour, taste, nutriment, life-faculty, and eye transpar-

ent-element.

3. Then discern: all the materiality in a single sense-base, all the materiality in a single part of the body, all the materiality in all six sense-bases, and all the materiality in all forty-two parts of the body. Having seen that they all have the characteristic of being molested by change, note them as 'materiality, materiality', 'material dhammas, material dhammas' or 'this is materiality, this is materiality'.



## Theory for Discernment of Materiality

### The Dhammas That Must Be Comprehended by One Practising Vipassanā Meditation

hikkhus, without fully knowing, without comprehending, without detaching from, without abandoning the All, one is unable to end suffering ... Bhikkhus, by fully knowing, by comprehending, by detaching from, by abandoning the All, one is able to end suffering.’

*abbaṃ bhikkhave anabhijānaṃ aparijānaṃ avirājayaṃ apajahaṃ abhabbo dukkhakkhayāya ... Sabbam ca kho bhikkhave abhijānaṃ parijānaṃ virājayaṃ pajahaṃ bhabbo dukkhakkhayāya.*’ (Sālayatana Saṃyutta, Sabbavagga, Pathama Aparijānana Sutta)

The commentary to this sutta explains further that this refers to the three types of full understanding (*pariññā*). It says:

*ti imasmimṃ sutte tissapi pariññā kathita honti. Abhijāna ti hi vacanena ñātāpariññā kathitā, parijāna ti vacanena tīraṇāpariññā, virājayaṃ pajaha ti dvīhi pahānapariññāti.*’

This means that fully knowing refers to full understanding as the known (*ñātāpariññā*), comprehending refers to full understanding as investigating (*tīraṇāpariññā*), and the last two, detaching from and abandoning, refer to full understanding as abandoning (*pahānapariññā*).

Therefore, only by fully understanding all types of materiality and mentality of the five aggregates of clinging with these three types of full understanding, can one do away with desire and craving for materiality and mentality, and make an end to suffering. Furthermore, the sub-commentary to Visuddhimagga says:

*añhi anavasesato pariññeyyaṃ, ekaṃsato virajjitabbaṃ.*’

(Vsm. sub-com.2.p.358)

This means that the five aggregates of clinging which are the objects of Vipassanā understanding must first be completely discerned without exception or remainder. So, in order to remove desire and craving for that mentality-and-materiality, the sub-commentary says one must comprehend the three characteristics of all types of materiality and mentality which are the objects of Vipassanā meditation.

According to the texts a meditator must first be able to discern all types of materiality and mentality which make up the five aggregates of clinging individually. That is: The knowledge that discerns all types of materiality individually is called the Knowledge of Analysing Materiality (*rūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*). The knowledge that discerns all types of mentality individually is called the Knowledge of Analysing Mentality (*nāma-pariccheda-ñāṇa*). The knowledge that discerns materiality and mentality as two separate groups is called the Knowledge of Analysing Mentality-and-Materiality (*nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*).

These three knowledges are also known as the Knowledge of Discerning Materiality (*rūpa-pariggaha-ñāṇa*), the Knowledge of Discerning Non-Materiality (*arūpa-pariggaha-ñāṇa*), and the Knowledge of Discerning Mentality-and-Materiality (*nāmarūpa-pariggaha-ñāṇa*). Furthermore, at this stage the knowledge, which clearly sees 'here is no person, being, or soul, but only materiality and mentality exist' is called the Knowledge of Delineating Mentality-and-Materiality (*nāmarūpa-vavatthāna-ñāṇa*).

A person who endeavours to discern all types of materiality and mentality may leave out those connected with jhāna if he has not attained jhāna. If, however, he is able to attain jhāna he should discern and meditate with insight-knowledge on the materiality and mentality associated with whichever jhānas he has attained.

Second, the causes of those materiality and mentality must be known correctly as they really are. This is the Knowledge of

Discerning Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*).

Because by these two knowledges, the Knowledge of Analysing Mentality-and-Materiality and Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition, he knows clearly, distinctly, and properly the dhammas that are the objects of insight-knowledge, these two are also called full understanding as the known (*ñāṭapariññā*).

Third, the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of all materiality, mentality, and their causes must be clearly seen. During the stages of insight from the Knowledge of Comprehension (*sammasana-ñāṇa*) onwards, which constitute Vipassanā, the materiality, mentality, and their causes are comprehended by seeing the three characteristics of each of them.

Of these insight-knowledges, the two of the Knowledge of Comprehension and Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*), whose functions are to investigate and discern the impermanent, suffering, and non-self characteristics of all materiality, mentality, and their causes, are called full understanding as investigating (*tīraṇapariññā*).

From the Knowledge of Dissolution (*bhaṅga-ñāṇa*) up through the remaining insight-knowledges, only the passing-away of all materiality, mentality, and their causes, is known, and perceived as impermanent, suffering, and non-self. As at that time the defilements that should be abandoned are temporarily absent, these insight-knowledges are called full understanding as abandoning (*pahānapariññā*).

With the Four Path Knowledges (*ariyamagga-ñāṇa*), ignorance (*avijjā*), also known as delusion (*moha*), which clouds the mind and makes it unable to know the Four Noble Truths, is done away with completely. All materiality and mentality which are the Noble Truth of Suffering (*dukkha-sacca*), the causes of these materiality and mentality which are the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering (*samudaya-sacca*), and the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of the Noble Truth of Suffering and the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering are known. Because of the Four Path Knowledges' function and power to com-

plete the function of knowing these dhammas, and to complete the function of investigating these dhammas as impermanent, suffering, and non-self, they are given the name of full understanding as the known and full understanding as investigating. They are also called full understanding as abandoning because they remove defilements without remainder.

A meditator must endeavour to attain complete knowledge of all the materiality and mentality which make up the five aggregates of clinging by developing these three types of full understanding. For this reason the meditator should first know, learn, and memorize all types of materiality and mentality. Below is an explanation of materiality.

## **Twenty-Eight Types of Materiality**

### **Four Great Elements (*Mahā-Bhūta*):**

1. Earth-element (*paṭhavī-dhātu*),  
 Heavy-earth group    Light-earth group
  - a. Hardness                      b. Softness
  - c. Roughness                    d. Smoothness
  - e. Heaviness                    f. Lightness
2. Water-element (*āpo-dhātu*),
  - a. Flowing                      b. Cohesion
3. Fire-element (*tejo-dhātu*),
  - a. Hot                              b. Cold
4. Air-element (*vāyo-dhātu*).
  - a. Supporting                    b. Pushing

### **Five Types of Transparent-Element Materiality (*Pasāda-Rūpa*)**

This group of materiality is also called sensitivity:

1. Eye transparent-element (*cakkhu-pasāda*),

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2. Ear transparent-element (*sota-pasāda*),
3. Nose transparent-element (*ghāna-pasāda*),
4. Tongue transparent-element (*jivhā-pasāda*),
5. Body transparent-element (*kāya-pasāda*). This is dispersed throughout the body.

### Seven Types of Field Materiality (*Gocara-Rūpa*)

This group of materiality is also called objective materiality:

1. Colour (*vaṇṇa*) or light,
2. Sound (*sadda*),
3. Smell or odour (*gandha*),
4. Flavour or taste (*rasa*),
5. Touch (*phoṭṭhabba*). = 5. earth-element  
6. fire-element  
7. air-element

The earth-element, fire-element, and air-element taken together constitute the objects of touch. If they are counted separately as three fields or objects, there are seven objects or fields of materiality. When calculating the twenty-eight types of materiality, touch by itself is excluded, because the three types of touch materiality, earth-element, fire-element, and air-element, have already been counted separately within the four great-elements.

### Two Types of Sex-Materiality (*Bhāva-Rūpa*):

1. Female-sex-materiality (*itthi-bhāva-rūpa*) which causes one to be female,
2. Male-sex-materiality (*purisa-bhāva-rūpa*) which causes one to be male.

In any individual only one of these two types of materiality is present: in females only the materiality which causes one to be female and in males only the materiality which causes one to be male. Sex-materiality is found throughout the body.

## **Heart-materiality (*Hadaya-Rūpa*)**

1. Heart-base materiality (*hadayavatthu-rūpa*) is the materiality dependent upon which the mind-element, or mind-consciousness-element rests.

The heart-materiality is found in heart-decad kalāpas, which are distributed in the blood in the cavity of the heart. Because it is the place where the mind-element, or mind-consciousness-element resides, it is called the heart-base.

## **Life-Materiality (*Jīvita-Rūpa*)**

1. Life-faculty materiality (*jīvitindriya*)

This type of materiality is found throughout the body and it sustains the life of materiality produced by kamma (*kammajarūpa*).

## **Nutrient-Materiality (*Āhāra-Rūpa*)**

1. Nutrient (*kabalīkāra āhāra*) is the nutritive-essence (*ojā*) found in food.

Nutrient-materiality is present in all kalāpas, even the ones originated by kamma, consciousness, and temperature. In those cases it is called kamma-produced nutritive-essence, consciousness-produced nutritive-essence, and temperature-produced nutritive-essence respectively. In these notes, in order not to create confusion for the meditator, it should be remembered that only the nutritive-essence contained in the nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas, derived from nutritive-essence in the food which has been swallowed, is called nutrient-produced nutritive-essence. Or to be more precise, when one has swallowed fresh food, and it is inside the stomach, and has not yet been absorbed and distributed throughout the body, then the nutritive-essence is still called temperature-produced nutritive-essence.

With the aid of the digestive fire of the life-faculty-nonad kalāpas which is fire-element, the fresh food is digested and this

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produces a new supply of nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas. These kalāpas are called nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas. The nutritive-essence in these nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas is called nutriment-produced nutritive-essence. The materiality dealt with so far may be given five different names:

1. The above eighteen types of materiality are called natural materiality (*sabhāva-rūpa*) because they each possess a natural characteristic such as hardness.
2. These eighteen types of materiality are also called general characteristic materiality (*salakkhaṇa-rūpa*) because they possess the general characteristics of all mentality and materiality: they are impermanent because they arise and pass away, they are suffering because they are oppressed by arising and passing-away, and they are non-self because they are not possessed of any permanent, stable essence, soul, or self.
3. Because these eighteen types of materiality arise with kamma, consciousness, temperature, and nutriment as their causes, they are also called produced materiality (*nipphanna-rūpa*).
4. Because these eighteen types of materiality are constantly unstable and change in intensity from hot to cold, hard to soft, etc., they are called concrete or real materiality (*rūpa-rūpa*).
5. Because these eighteen types of materiality are suitable for perceiving the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and non-self, and are therefore suitable objects for Vipassanā meditation, they are also called materiality suitable for meditation (*sammasana-rūpa*).

The remaining ten types of materiality that will be listed later are not like those eighteen above but may be given these five

name:

1. Materiality without natural characteristics (*asabhāva-rūpa*).
2. Materiality without the three characteristics (*asalakkhaṇa-rūpa*).
3. Unproduced materiality (*anipphanna-rūpa*).
4. Not-real materiality (*arūpa-rūpa*).
5. Materiality not suitable for Vipassanā meditation (*asammasana-rūpa*).

### **Delimiting Materiality (*Pariccheda-Rūpa*)**

1. Space element (*ākāsa-dhātu*)

The materiality which keeps each rūpa kalāpa from mixing with another, which causes the rūpa kalāpas to be delimited into separate units, and which is the space between rūpa kalāpas, is called delimiting materiality.

### **Two Types of Materiality of Intimation (*Viññatti*):**

2. Bodily intimation (*kāyaviññatti*); actions or movements of the body which cause communication (body language).
3. Verbal intimation (*vacīviññatti*); actions of speech which cause communication.

The actions which cause another person to know one thoughts or desires are called materiality of intimation. Bodily intimation is the communication of one thoughts or desires through bodily movements such as beckoning a person with a gesture of the hand.

Verbal intimation is the communication of one thoughts or desires through the sound of speech such as beckoning a person by saying, 'please, come here'. It is said that because bodily and verbal intimations are caused or produced by consciousness, the-



se types of materiality cannot be put into non-living things which do not have consciousness (eg. audio tapes). They are found only in the sounds and movements of speech and body of living beings.

### **Five Types of Materiality as Alteration (*Vīkara-Rūpa*):**

4. Lightness (*lahutā*)
  - (a) The lightness of real materiality produced by consciousness.
  - (b) The lightness of real materiality produced by temperature or fire-element.
  - (c) The lightness of real materiality produced by nutriment.
5. Softness (*mudutā*)
  - (a) The softness of real materiality produced by consciousness.
  - (b) The softness of real materiality produced by temperature.
  - (c) The softness of real materiality produced by nutriment.
6. Wioldiness (*kammaññatā*)
  - (a) The wioldiness or pliancy of real materiality produced by consciousness.
  - (b) The wioldiness or pliancy of materiality produced by temperature.
  - (c) The wioldiness or pliancy of real materiality produced by nutriment.

These three types of materiality, softness, lightness, and wioldiness, together with the preceding two types of materiality, bodily intimation and verbal intimation, are called the five kinds of materiality as alteration.

### **Four Types of Materiality as Characteristic (*Lakkhaṇa-***

## **Rūpa):**

7. Growth of materiality (*upacaya*)
  - (a) It has the characteristic of occurring at the beginning of real materiality of one life.
  - (b) It is the cause of growth or completion of the faculties. It causes the appropriate materiality to reach sufficiency and to grow and increase.
8. Continuity of materiality (*santati*). It ensures the continuity of real materiality in a life after the faculties have developed.

The Buddha taught the arising of materiality in the above two ways by dividing it up into two time periods, one from conception till the full development of the faculties of eye, ear, etc., and one after the full development of the faculties. These two types of materiality are just the arising (*upādā*) of real materiality.

9. Aging or maturing of real materiality (*jaratā*). It is the stage of standing (*thiti*) of real materiality.
10. Impermanence of real materiality (*aniccatā*). It is the stage of dissolution, disappearance (*bhaṅga*) of real materiality.

The eighteen types of real materiality and the ten types of not-real materiality give a total of twenty-eight kinds of materiality. Of these twenty-eight types of materiality the earth, water, fire, and air materiality are called elements (*dhātu*), great elements (*mahā-dhātu*) or primary materiality (*bhūta-rūpa*). The other twenty-four kinds of materiality are called derived materiality (*upādā-rūpa*) because they arise depending on the four great elements.

## **The Nature of Materiality**

These twenty-eight types of materiality cannot exist independently or individually but only in a group called a rūpa kalāpa. The smallest combination or agglomeration of materiality is called compactness (*ghana*). All types of materiality in one rūpa kalāpa:

## Theory for Discernment of Materiality

1. Arise at the same time (*ekuppāda*),
2. Cease at the same time (*ekanirodha*),
3. Depend on the same materiality in the same kalāpa (*ekanissaya*).

The derived materiality present in one rūpa kalāpa is derived from or depends on the four elements present in that same kalāpa. Furthermore the four elements in one kalāpa are dependent on each other. But the four elements and the derived materiality in one kalāpa are not dependent on the four elements in another kalāpa.

In order to see with knowledge these types of materiality as they truly are, at the level of ultimate reality, and to see that the derived materiality is dependent on great elements, and great elements are dependent on great elements, it is first necessary to be able to see the rūpa kalāpas. When a meditator is able to see rūpa kalāpas, he will also be able to see the ultimate realities present in each and whether there are eight, nine, ten, or more types of materiality in each. Then he must also endeavour to know the natural characteristics and properties of each of these types of materiality by separating each with knowledge. Only then will he be able to know the ultimate reality of materiality. In these notes this method of seeing rūpa kalāpas is called 'analysis of elements'.

In the Mahāgopālāka Sutta of Majjhima Nikāya, Mūlapaṇṇāsa, Mahāyamaka-vagga, the Buddha says: hikkhus, in this same way a bhikkhu possessed of eleven qualities is incapable of growth, development, or greatness in this Teaching and Discipline.'

Of these eleven qualities, one enumerated by the Buddha is: ere, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu does not know materiality.'

This is explained further by the Buddha: hikkhus, here in this Teaching a bhikkhu does not know as it really is, whatever materiality there is, all materiality is the four great elements and

materiality derived from the four great elements”. Bhikkhus, by not knowing thus a bhikkhu does not know materiality.’

The commentary to this says: he ot knowing materiality” of the four great elements is the not knowing them in two ways, as to number and as to cause of arising. Not knowing the number means not knowing the twenty-five types of materiality that come in the Pāli texts: eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body base; sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches; female, and male faculty; life faculty; bodily, and vocal intimation; space element; water-element; lightness, softness, and wieldiness of materiality; growth, continuity, aging, and impermanence of materiality; nutriment of food.’

Thus, like a cowherd who does not know the number of his cows, a bhikkhu who does not know the number of types of materiality is not capable of discerning materiality; of distinguishing what is not materiality (ie. mentality); of discerning mentality, materiality and their causes; of comprehending the three characteristics and of reaching the goal of meditation.

Just as that cowherd herd does not increase or grow, so too in this dispensation that bhikkhu does not grow in virtue, concentration, insight, path, fruition, or Nibbāna. Just as that cowherd does not enjoy the five products of cows, so too that bhikkhu does not enjoy the five groups of Dhamma that are the virtue, concentration, understanding, freedom, and the knowing and seeing of freedom of an arahant.

Not knowing the cause of arising of materiality means not knowing, these types of materiality have one cause of arising, these have two causes, these have three causes, and these have four causes’. Just like a cowherd who does not know the colours, or appearance of his cows, a bhikkhu who does not know the causes of arising of materiality, is not capable of discerning materiality, of distinguishing what is not materiality, ... does not enjoy the five groups of Dhamma ... (as above) ... freedom of an arahant.

A meditator who really wishes to attain path, fruition, and

Nibbāna should pay special attention to these words of the Buddha. To be able to know the number of types of materiality and their causes of arising, it is necessary to be able to discern and analyse rūpa kalāpas individually. The reason is that without being able to analyse rūpa kalāpas, one will not be able to differentiate in any way whatsoever which rūpa kalāpas are caused by kamma, which by consciousness, which by temperature, and which by nutriment. Therefore, without being able to analyse rūpa kalāpas, there is no way whatsoever one can be said to have seen ultimate reality.

### Three Kinds of Compactness of Materiality

To be able to see the ultimate reality of materiality, a meditator has to break down the three kinds of compactness of materiality (*rūpa-ghana*). The sub-commentary explains that there are three kinds of compactness related to materiality: *hana-vinibbhogan i santati-samūha-kicca-ghaññānaṃ vinibbhujānaṃ vivecanāṃ.*' (M.sub-com. 1.p.365)

Translation: The breaking down of compactness means the breaking down of compactnesses of continuity (*santati*), grouping (*samūha*), and function (*kicca*).

#### 1. Compactness of Continuity (*Santati-ghana*)

In all rūpa kalāpas, whether they are produced by kamma, consciousness, temperature, or nutriment, there is always fire-element (*tejo-dhātu*). This fire-element is also called temperature (*utu*). This fire-element or temperature causes the arising and multiplication of new temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas which are kalāpas produced by temperature with nutritive-essence as the eighth factor. These contain earth-element, water-element, fire-element, air-element, colour, odour, taste, and nutritive-essence.

Let us take the case of an eye-decad kalāpa as an example. If we analyse this kalāpa we will find ten factors: the above eight

plus life-faculty and eye transparent-element. Amongst these ten factors there is also fire-element. That fire-element causes the production and multiplication of those kalāpas with nutritive-essence as the eighth factor that are produced by temperature.

In this way, every time materiality reaches its standing phase, the fire-element in eye-decad kalāpas causes temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas to arise four or five times. The last kalāpa of this series contains fire-element which cannot produce further kalāpas produced by temperature. Other rūpa kalāpas should be understood to behave in a similar way.

The fire-element of some rūpa kalāpas causes multiplication of kalāpas four or five times, while some others may be able to cause it to happen many more times. All the temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas produced in these various ways are called rūpa kalāpas produced by temperature.

In a way similar to what has been shown above, nutriment that is consumed is made of temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas, each of which contains nutritive-essence. This nutritive-essence, while not yet absorbed into the body and dispersed, is still temperature-produced materiality. Of the forty-two parts of the body it is known as gorge. This temperature-produced nutritive-essence is digested with the aid of the kammically derived fire of the stomach (the fire contained in a type of life-nonad kalāpa). This nutritive-essence is absorbed and spread throughout the body in the form of nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas. These nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas are called nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (kalāpas derived from food).

With the aid of this nutriment-produced nutritive-essence the nutritive-essence of the kamma-produced kalāpas, consciousness-produced kalāpas, and temperature-produced kalāpas is able to multiply and produce a series of nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas from three to twelve times in succession. If the food that is consumed has nutritive-essence which is strong, then according to that strength, many generations of nutritive-essence-octad

kalāpas can be produced in succession.

When a meditator can see all these processes distinctly and separately, and can discern each individual rūpa kalāpa in these processes, then he is said to have removed the compactness of continuity.

## **2. Compactness of Grouping (*Samāha-ghana*)**

The breaking down of the compactness of grouping comes with the separation of ultimate materiality, the seeing with knowledge of the individual natural characteristics of each individual ultimate materiality in each rūpa kalāpa, whether there are eight, nine, or ten types of materiality in a kalāpa.

## **3. Compactness of Function (*Kicca-ghana*)**

The breaking down of the compactness of function occurs when one is able to see with wisdom the functions performed by each individual ultimate materiality present in a rūpa kalāpa.

To break down all three forms of compactness, a meditator will need to be able to discern the characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause of each ultimate materiality present in any particular rūpa kalāpa. To see these things a meditator will need to develop one of the two levels of concentration, either access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) or absorption concentration (*appanā-samādhi*).

## **The Purification of Mind**

Do all the eight factors of the Noble Eightfold Path need to be developed?

A meditator who wishes to attain Nibbāna should recall that in the Dhammacakka Sutta, the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta, and in other suttas, the path of practice that leads to the cessation of suffering is always taught to consist of eight factors, from right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) up to right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*). Only when all eight factors are present can a meditator reach Nib-

bāna, which is the cessation of suffering.

Of these eight factors, right concentration is defined as the first, second, third, and fourth jhānas by the Buddha in various suttas. This method of teaching is called either *ukkaṭṭha-niddesa* method or *majjhedīpaka* method. The *ukkaṭṭha-niddesa* method shows the best concentration upon which to base one Vipassanā practice. The *majjhedīpaka* method points to the middle four of all nine types of concentration. It points to the fine-material-plane concentration (*rūpāvacara-samādhī*). This must be taken together with the highest concentration of the sensual plane (*kāmāvacara*), which is access concentration, and with the immaterial-plane concentration (*arūpāvacara-samādhī*) which occur on either side of the fine-material-plane concentration. Therefore, when the Buddha gives the four jhānas as an example of right concentration it should be understood that all nine types of concentration are meant. Thus, it can be seen that a meditator must possess right concentration to practise Vipassanā and to attain Nibbāna.

To develop the seven stages of purification a meditator must first develop the purification of virtue (*sīla-visuddhi*), followed by the purification of mind (*citta-visuddhi*). Having achieved the purification of mind he can develop the purification of view (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*).

In the Abhidhammattha-Saṅgaha it is stated:

*akkhaṇa-rasa-paccupaṭṭhāna-padaṭṭhāna-vasena nāma-rūpa-pariggaho diṭṭhivisuddhi nāma.*’ (chapter 9, visuddhibhedo)

This can be translated as:

he discerning of mentality and materiality according to characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause is called the purification of view.’

A meditator who wishes to complete the development of purification of view must first endeavour to achieve the purification of mind. The Visuddhimagga defines the purification of mind saying: *ittavisuddhi nāma saupacārā atṭha samāpattiyo.*’



Which means: 'the purification of mind is the eight attainments together with access concentration.' (Vsm. XVIII, 1)

So, the four fine-material and four immaterial jhānas plus access concentration constitute the purification of mind. Therefore one must endeavour to achieve either access concentration or one of the jhānas, or all of them together to attain the purification of mind.

The Samādhī Sutta of Saṃyutta Nikāya (Khandavagga Saṃyutta) states:

*amādhim bhikkhave bhāvētha, samāhito bhikkhave bhikkhu yathābhutaṃ pājānāti, kiñca yathābhutaṃ pājānāti, rūpassa samudayañca atthaṅgamañca, vedanāya samudayañca atthaṅgamañca, saññāya samudayañca atthaṅgamañca, sañkhārānaṃ samudayañca atthaṅgamañca, viññāṇassa samudayañca atthaṅgamañca.'*

This can be translated as:

hikkhus, develop concentration. Bhikkhus, a bhikkhu who is concentrated knows things as they really are. And what does he know as they really are? The arising of materiality and its causes, and its passing-away and its causes. The arising and causes of origination and the passing-away and causes of dissolution of feelings (*vedanā*), ... perception (*saññā*), ... formations (*sañkhārā*), ... consciousness (*viññāṇa*).'

In this sutta the Buddha has shown that concentration must be developed to be able to know the following as they really are:

1. Materiality, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness, which are ultimate dhammas.
2. The causes of origination of the five aggregates, which are ignorance (*avijjā*), craving (*taphā*), clinging (*upādāna*), volitional formations (*sañkhāra*), kamma, etc.
3. The causes of the dissolution of the five aggregates, which are the cessation of ignorance, craving, clinging, volitional formations, kamma, etc.

4. The arising and passing-away of the five aggregates and their causes.

Any person who wishes to attain Nibbāna should pay attention to this Teaching of the Buddha because it demonstrates the necessity of developing concentration. If, however, meditators were to meditate without developing concentration, then because they did not possess concentration, the following would be beyond their ability:

1. To know correctly how in the past, present, and future, resultant dhammas are produced because of causal dhammas, and how the cessation of these causal dhammas causes the cessation of the resultant dhammas.
2. To see rūpa kalāpas, or if they can see them, to analyse them, remove compactness, and discern ultimate dhammas.
3. To know as they really are the arising and passing-away of the five aggregates, and their causes, internally and externally, as well as in the past, present, and future.

Therefore, for those who as yet do not know these things, it is advisable to respectfully follow the Buddha's advice and develop concentration. In this way one will, with the three understandings (*pariññā*), be able to discern the five aggregates completely, and attain Nibbāna. The Buddha taught this in order that we may be able to reach the end of suffering.

### **Momentary Concentration of the Purification of Mind**

Let us explain a little about the momentary concentration (*khaṇika-samādhi*) of a bare-insight-vehicle individual (*suddha-vipassanā-yānika*) at the time of attaining the purification of mind, and, then the momentary concentration subsequently pre-

sent at the time of actual Vipassanā practice.

A tranquillity-vehicle individual (*samatha-yānika*) is one who has developed one of the jhānas and, therefore, completed the purification of mind. When he wishes to complete the purification of view, he should enter into one of the jhānas, although not the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Having emerged from that jhāna he should discern the jhāna factors, beginning with applied thought (*vitakka*), etc., and all the mental-concomitants (*cetasika*) associated with that jhāna consciousness. Each should be discerned according to characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause. After that, he should take them all together as mentality because they all have the characteristic of bending towards the object.

Then he should discern the heart-base materiality where those types of mentality reside, the four elements on which that heart-base materiality depends, and the other types of derived materiality present there. They should also be discerned according to characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause (according to Vsm. XVIII, 3).

If, however, that tranquillity-vehicle individual wishes to begin by discerning material dhammas, without having discerned the mental dhammas, he should proceed in the exact same way as a bare-insight-vehicle individual. A bare-insight-vehicle individual develops the purification of view as follows:

*uddhaviṣṣāṇāyāniko pana ayameva vā samathayāniko cattudhātu vavatthāne vuttānaṃ tesaṃ tesaṃ dhātu-pariggahamukhānaṃ aññātara mukhavasena saṅkhepato vā vitthārato vā catasso dhātuyo pariggaṇhāti.*'

This means: bare-insight-vehicle individual, or a tranquillity-vehicle individual who wishes to begin insight practice by discerning materiality instead of mentality, should discern the four elements in brief, or in detail, in one of the various ways given in chapter XI on the definition of the four elements.' (Vsm. XVIII, 4)

According to these instructions from the Visuddhimagga, a

person who wishes to proceed directly to the practice of Vipassanā without any jhānas as a foundation, or a person who has attained one or all of the eight jhānas, but wishes to begin Vipassanā by discerning materiality first, must begin by discerning the four elements in brief, in detail, or both in brief and in detail.

Vipassanā is made up of two sections: contemplation of materiality and contemplation of mentality. These two are also called discernment of materiality (*rūpa-pariggaha*) and discernment of mentality (*arūpa-pariggaha*).

The Majjhima commentary and the Abhidhamma commentary say:

*attha bhagavā rūpa-kammaṭṭhānaṃ kathento sarikkhepa-manasikāravasena vā vitthāra-manasikāravasena vā catudhātu-vavathānaṃ kathesi.* (Abhi.com.2.p.252; M.com.1.p.280)

This means: f these two, discernment of materiality refers to the defining of the four elements in the brief way or the detailed way.'

These instructions found in the commentaries, on how to discern materiality in Vipassanā, show that the Buddha taught that a bare-insight-vehicle individual, or a tranquillity-vehicle individual who wishes to begin by discerning materiality, must begin by discerning the four elements in brief or in detail. If a meditator practises according to the Teaching of the Buddha, it will produce the most beneficial result.

The Visuddhimagga clearly states that four-elements meditation, which is one of the forty subjects of Samatha meditation, is included in the group of meditation subjects which can lead to access concentration. This means that it is a meditation subject which must be developed up to access concentration.

How to develop the four-elements meditation has been described in detail in Part 2 of this book. The Buddha taught the brief method in the Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta saying:

*una caparaṃ bhikkhave bhikkhu imameva kāyaṃ yathā-thitaṃ yathā-paṇihitaṃ dhātuso paccavekkhati, tthi imasmimṃ kāye pathavīdhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātu i.* (D. ii,

294; M. 1, 57)

This means: gain, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu reflects about this very body, however it be positioned or placed, as consisting of just elements thus: here exists in this body just the earth-element, water-element, fire-element, and air-element.’

The Visuddhimagga further says that a meditator should discern the four elements, in the bones, sinews, flesh, and skin, separating each out with the hand of wisdom, and do this again and again one hundred, one thousand, and even one hundred thousand times.

The Visuddhimagga further states:

*assevaṃ vāyamamānassa na cireneva dhātupphedā-  
vabhāsa paññāpariggahito sabhāvadhammārammaṇattā ap-  
panaṃ appatto upacāramatto samādhi uppajjati.’*

This means: s he makes effort in this way, it is not long before concentration arises in him, which is reinforced by understanding that illuminates the classification of the elements, and which is only access (*upacāra*) and does not reach absorption because it has states with individual essences (*sabhāva-dhamma*) as its object.’ (Vsm. XI, 42)

Attention should be paid to the fact that the Visudhimagga clearly states that meditation on the four elements can lead to access concentration.

The sub-commentary to Visuddhimagga states:

*amathayānikassa hi upacārappanā-bhedaṃ samādhiṃ  
itarassa khaṇikasamādhiṃ ubhayesampi vimokkhamukhattayaṃ  
vinā na kadācipi lokuttarādhigamo sarābhavati.’* (Vsm. sub-  
com.1.p.15)

This means: ithout access and absorption concentration in one whose vehicle is tranquillity, or without momentary concentration in one whose vehicle is bare-insight, and without the gateways to liberation (knowledge of impermanence, suffering, and non-self), the supramundane can in either case never be reached.’

Here the sub-commentary uses the term omentary concen-

tration’ to describe the concentration developed by the bare-insight-vehicle individual, and the Visuddhimagga uses the term ‘access concentration’. This distinction in usage should be understood.

Concerning this usage the sub-commentary explains:

*pacārasamādhīti ca ruḥhī vasena veditabbarā. Appanāmbhi upecca cāri samādhī upacārasamādhī appanācetha natthi. Tādisassa pana samādhissa samānalakkhaṇatāya evarā vuttaṁ.*’ (Vsm. sub-com.1.436)

This means: When the commentary uses ‘access concentration’ to define the highest concentration attainable in four-elements meditation, it must be understood that it is used in the sense of comparison or similarity. Only the concentration close to jhāna can be called ‘access’ and in this four-elements meditation there is no jhāna to be attained because it has states with individual essences as its object. However, since the level of concentration attained in four-elements meditation is similar to access concentration, the commentators call it ‘access concentration’.

Thus it can be seen that the author of the sub-commentary believed that only the highest sensual-plane concentration which has a tranquillity object and is prior to or close to jhāna, can truly be called ‘access concentration’. He believed the highest sensual-plane concentration attained by doing four-elements meditation to be called ‘access concentration’ by the commentators because it is similar. However, he thought it should be called ‘momentary concentration’ because in this meditation subject there is no jhāna to which one can strictly say there is an ‘access’.

## **Insight and Momentary Concentration**

The Visuddhimagga says that a meditator should try to develop the insight-knowledges from the Knowledge of Comprehension (*sammasana-ñāṇa*) upwards only after he has completed five kinds of discernment. They are:

## Theory for Discernment of Materiality

1. Discernment of materiality (*rūpa-pariggaha*).
2. Discernment of mentality (*arūpa-pariggaha*).
3. Discernment of mentality and materiality (*nāmarūpa-pariggaha*).
4. Discernment of dhammas which are causes and dhammas which are results of the present mentality and materiality (*paccaya-pariggaha*).
5. Discernment of dhammas which are causes and dhammas which are results of the past and future mentality and materiality (*addhāna-pariggaha*).

The objects of insight meditation are mentality, materiality, dhammas that are causes, and dhammas that are effects. These are also called formations or conditioned phenomena (*saṅkhāradhamma*).

The understanding (*paññā*) that sees all these conditioned phenomena as impermanent, suffering, and non-self is called insight (*vipassanā*). Therefore, a meditator who wishes to develop Vipassanā beginning from the Purification by Knowledge and Vision of What Is and What Is Not Path (*maggāmagga-ñānadassana-visuddhi*) onwards, must first have completed the Purification of View and the Purification by Overcoming Doubt (*kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi*). This is because it is the mentality, materiality, and causes and effects discerned in those purifications (*visuddhi*) where the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and non-self must be perceived and seen with insight.

In the practice of insight the meditator must alternately perceive the three characteristics in the five internal aggregates and in the five external aggregates, and in materiality and mentality (see Vsm. XXI, 86). The Visuddhimagga says one should also perceive the three characteristics in the dhammas in the past and future at the time of practising insight on the factors of dependent-origination during the Knowledge of Comprehension (*sammasana-ñāṇa*) and the Knowledge of Arising and Passing-

Away (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*) (see Vsm. XX, 6-9 ). The concentration that occurs while practising insight is called momentary concentration, because it does not remain on a single object continuously as it does in Samatha.

To be able to practise insight systematically, as described above, the practice must be based upon access or absorption concentration. Here access concentration refers to that produced by four-elements meditation or Samatha meditation. Only the concentration that occurs when doing insight in the above way can be called insight momentary-concentration (*vipassanā-khaṇika-samādhī*).

Please note that if the meditator is as yet unable to see rūpa kalāpas or individual types of mentality, to analyse them, to discern the causes and results in the past, present, and future, to perceive the three characteristics of all these dhammas, then his concentration cannot be called insight momentary-concentration.

To summarize: When developing concentration, the bare-insight-vehicle individual highest concentration reached in four-elements meditation is called access concentration by comparison to the access concentration preceding jhāna. This highest concentration is also called momentary concentration by the sub-commentary. When a bare-insight-vehicle individual is practising Vipassanā, he bases his insight upon access concentration, which for him is the purification of mind (*citta-visuddhi*). When he proceeds to see with insight conditioned phenomena, he has at that time concentration called insight momentary-concentration. When the tranquillity vehicle individual, who develops access or absorption concentration as his purification of mind, arises from that concentration, and sees with insight conditioned phenomena, he has at that time concentration likewise called insight momentary-concentration.

## All Three Characteristics

The Visuddhimagga says:     ne man comprehends formations



as impermanent at the start. But emergence does not come about through merely comprehending them as impermanent, since there must be comprehension of them as suffering and non-self too, so he comprehends them as suffering and non-self.’ (Vsm. XXI, 88)

This shows that by comprehending impermanence only, suffering only, or non-self only one cannot attain the noble paths (*ariyamagga*), but only by comprehending each of the three characteristics alternately, will a meditator be able to reach the noble paths.

### **Falling into Bhavaṅga**

In this book we have written briefly about how to develop absorption *jhāna* using mindfulness-of-breathing. This meditation subject produces two classes of concentration, access concentration and absorption concentration. The concentration that precedes close to the entering into *jhāna* concentration is called access concentration and the concentration present when one has entered into *jhāna* is called absorption concentration.

The *Visuddhimagga* mentions the potential of the meditator mind to fall into a *bhavaṅga* state during the time of access concentration. It states:

ow concentration is of two kinds, that is to say, access concentration and absorption concentration: the mind becomes concentrated in two ways, that is, on the plane of access and on the plane of obtainment. Herein, the mind becomes concentrated on the plane of access by the abandonment of the hindrances, and on the plane of obtainment by the manifestation of the *jhāna* factors. The difference between the two kinds of concentration is this: the factors are not strong in access. It is because they are not strong that when access has arisen, the mind now makes the sign its object and now re-enters the life-continuum (*bhavaṅga*), just as when a young child is lifted up and stood on its feet, it repeatedly falls down on the ground. But the factors are strong in absorption. It is because they are strong that when absorption

concentration has arisen, the mind, having once interrupted the flow of the life-continuum, carries on with a stream of profitable impulses for a whole night and for a whole day, just as a healthy man, after rising from his seat, could stand for a whole day.' (Vsm. IV, 32-33)

### **Something to Be Careful of**

A meditator who develops either access or absorption concentration as a basis for the development of insight will, when a sufficient degree of concentration has been developed, begin to see particles of materiality called *rūpa kalāpas* when he is discerning the four elements. Then he must continue further to analyse those *rūpa kalāpas* and to discern in each *rūpa kalāpa* the four primary-elements, and also the derived types of materiality present, according to their individual characteristics, function, manifestation, and proximate cause. When he is able to discern these things this is called the Knowledge of Analysing Materiality (*rūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*). At that time he will have realised and penetrated for himself, by right view, the ultimate reality of materiality.

Further, he must continue to discern various types of consciousness (*citta*), and each and every individual mental-concomitant (*cetasika*) that occurs together with the consciousness in every mind-moment (*cittakkhaṇa*). These groups of consciousness and mental-concomitants that occur together in every mind-moment we call *nāma kalāpas* or mental groups. When he can discern the consciousness and each individual mental-concomitant present in each mental group (*nāma-kalāpa*) according to characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause, then this is the knowledge that discerns mentality (*nāma-pariccheda-ñāṇa*). At that time he will have realised and penetrated for himself, by right view, the ultimate reality of mentality.

So if a meditator is not able to discern materiality and mentality in this way then he has not yet achieved the Knowledge of

Analysing Mentality-and-Materiality (*nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*).

Furthermore, if a meditator has not also discerned by direct knowledge the mentality and materiality in the past and future, then there is no way he can know or see, by direct knowledge, which causes in the past produced the present mentality and materiality, or which causes in the present will produce which mentality and materiality in the future. So without knowing the mentality and materiality of the past and future and their causes, a meditator cannot be said to have achieved the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*).

Thus, if a meditator has not yet really achieved these three knowledges he is as far away as the sky is from the ground from attaining real insight-knowledge, and also in turn from the realisation of the Noble Path, Noble Fruition and Nibbāna.

If a meditator is that far away from attaining Nibbāna, because he has not developed true insight, he should really take heed of the statement in the Visuddhimagga that a person who develops any particular meditation subject and attains access concentration or something equivalent to access concentration, can fall into bhavaṅga.

This is because there are some meditators who fall into bhavaṅga and say 'knew nothing' or 'both the objects and the mind noting them ceased'. They believe wrongly that they have realised Nibbāna, but actually all they have done is to fall into bhavaṅga.

It is because they do not have the ability to discern the bhavaṅga mind and its object, they say that 'knew nothing' or 'both the objects and the mind noting them ceased.'

However, if they go on to really develop the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition, they will find that at that time there were still bhavaṅga consciousnesses present which have as their objects the object of near-death-impulsion-consciousness (*marañāsanna-javana-citta*) in the previous life. In other words, a meditator who has properly completed that insight-knowledge

can look back and directly see the bhavaṅga consciousness and its object. It is simply because of the subtlety of that consciousness and their lack of true knowledge of mentality, materiality and causes that some meditators are not able to perceive it.

It must be also pointed out that there is no cessation of consciousness when one realises the unconditioned state of Nibbāna. The Path Consciousness (*magga-citta*) and Fruition Consciousness (*phala-citta*) both have as their object the unconditioned state, which is Nibbāna.

The only time that consciousness can be suspended is during the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) which is only attainable by arahants and non-returners (*anāgāmi*) who have also attained the eight attainments consisting of the four fine-material jhānas and the four immaterial jhānas. So to say that 'consciousness ceased' or 'the mind ceased', as some meditators report, is not possible or in accordance with the real attainment of Nibbāna.

## Glossary of Untranslated Pāli Terms

**Abhidhamma** the third of what are called the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) of the Theravāda Canon; teachings of the Buddha on a far deeper level than in the suttas; deals only with ultimate reality; seen in Vipassanā meditation. (cf. sutta)

**arahant** ultimate stage in Theravāda meditation development; an arahant has eradicated all defilements, and at his or her death (Parinibbāna) there is no rebirth. (cf. kamma)

**bhavaṅga** continuity of identical consciousnesses, broken only when thought-processes occur, the object of which is the same as that which arose at time near death in past-life; the bhavaṅga and its object are visible only in light of concentration. (cf. Abhidhamma)

**bhikkhu** Buddhist monk with two hundred and twenty-seven precepts to observe; a bhikkhu's major duty is to work at trying to escape from the round of rebirths.

**Buddha** a person fully enlightened without teacher, who has by himself discovered and teaches the Four Noble Truths.

**Dhamma** (capitalized) the Teachings of the Buddha; the noble truth.

**dhamma** (uncapitalized) phenomenon; state; mind-object.

**jhāna** increasingly advanced and subtle state of concentration on a specific object, with mind aware and increasingly pure. (cf. Samatha)

**rūpa kalāpa** small particle; the smallest unit of materiality seen in conventional reality; invisible to human-eye, visible to light of concentration.

**kamma** (Sanskrit: *karma*) action; force from volition which makes good actions produce good results, and bad actions produce bad results.

**Nibbāna** (Sanskrit: *nirvana*) final enlightenment; the cessation element; an ultimate reality, attained after discerning and surpassing the ultimate realities of mentality-and-materiality; it is seen after the insight knowledges have been matured; it is non-self

and uniquely permanent and peaceful; not a place. (Language is at a loss to describe Nibbāna, because Nibbāna is beyond the range of concepts upon which language relies.)

**nimitta** sign; image upon which meditator concentrates; product of the mind, which depends on perception and level of concentration.

**parikamma-nimitta** preparatory sign in meditation.

**uggaha-nimitta** taken-up sign, image which is exact mental replica of object of meditation.

**paṭibhāga-nimitta** purified and clear version of uggaha-nimitta, appears at stable perception and concentration.

**Samatha\*** serenity; practice of concentrating the mind on an object, and developing higher and higher states of concentration, whereby the mind becomes serene. (cf. jhāna, Vipassanā)

**sutta** single discourse in the second basket of what is called the Three Baskets (Tipiṭaka) of Pāḷi Canon; teachings of the Buddha on a practical level; deals only with conventional truth. (cf. Abhidhamma)

**Vipassanā** discernment of specific characteristics of materiality and mentality, causes and results, in ultimate reality, and their general characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and non-self. (cf. Abhidhamma, arahant, Nibbāna)