

A Practice to Liberate the Mind

Dhamma Teaching by Luang Por Jamnian Seelasettho

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Transcribed and translated by Sukanya Kanthawatana, M.D., Ph.D.

Luang Por Jamnian teaches us how to practice to liberate the mind from the influence of fetters, latent tendencies, and mental defilements. Luang Por encourages his student to practice abiding in pure knowing while focusing on ManoDhamma (or Mano). We should understand that all defilements, wholesomeness, and unwholesomeness reside in the citta. The pure knowing, with its ability to discern wholesomeness and unwholesomeness, can see the ultimate truth in the citta. Use ManoDhamma to direct the citta so that the knowing element can be separated from the citta. In our practice, we should strive to stay abiding in the knowing element unaffected by suffering.

*“The pure knowing can see through both ManoDhamma and the citta.
Train ManoDhamma to see through the citta “*

Luang Por Jamnian

Citta: consciousness associated with memories and perceptions. The citta controls the functions of the brain and body.

Mano (ManoDhamma): the leader who can manage and train the mind.

The Pure Knowing (ñāṇa): can cognize without the influence of defilements, cravings, or clinging.

Intuitive Knowledge (Pañña ñāṇa) is wisdom possessing a clear realization of arising and passing away, and relinquishment of all phenomena.

“A guarded mind is conducive to happiness.”

Buddhist Proverb

When abiding in the knowing element and not indulged in the two extremes of sensual pleasure and self-affliction, the mind will be in the Middle Way without defilements. The knowing element will be at the location of the pure knowing where pañña ñāṇa: cakkhu-karani (producing vision) and ñāṇa-karani (producing knowledge), are realized. This leads to the direct knowledge of the arising and passing away of phenomena, to self-awakening (the realization of anicca, dukkha, anatta, and suññata), and to the unbinding (the relinquishment of suffering or Nibbana).

There are 121 types of consciousness buried deep in the subconscious of the citta. Those types can be further characterized and divided into subclasses depending on the type of mentality arising when there is contact to one of the sense doors (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind). For example, when the eye is contacted by sight, the eye-consciousness gets entangled with memory, perception, and clinging to the aggregates, resulting in imaginary visions and mental phenomena.

The only function of the knowing element is to cognize. It can cognize mental phenomena (arisen in the citta), name and form, sight, sound, odor, taste, and touch which are then recorded in the memory (saññā).

Pañña ñāṇa (intuitive knowledge) possesses a clear insight which can penetrate through the arising and passing away of all things, leading to the development of pañña vimutti, an insight knowledge or the wisdom associated with the fruition of liberation. **Pañña vimutti** is liberation through wisdom. In contrast, **ceto-vimutti** is liberation through concentration which can be observed internally inside the citta. Celestial beings possess consciousness or viññāṇa that is still under the influence of saṅkhāra. They can only practice Dhamma through the citta.

When practicing through the citta, extinguish, without any attachment, any arisen mental phenomena or nāma-rūpa (name and form) as soon as it appears internally. Do not let them exhibit externally or be further fabricated by saṅkhāra. Separate the pure knowing and Mano from the citta. Do not let the knowing element get entangled with the citta. Investigate any phenomena arising in the citta: mental phenomena, names and forms, and clinging to the aggregates without identifying or claiming ownership. Understand that anything arising is subject to passing away.

When seeing lust, greed, hatred, delusion, contentment, discontentment, or any of the five hindrances arising in the citta, realize that those arising are just mere mental phenomena and do not get attached or fabricate any further. Abiding in the pure knowing, witness the arising, existing, and passing away of all phenomena, and then their re-arising, existing, and passing away, and so on. Recognize the three types of suffering: the body, the mind, and the aggregates that one mistakenly claims as self. Recognize that all sufferings are subject to passing away and do not be affected by any suffering. Extinguish any mental phenomena arising by contact through the six sense-doors: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. If there is still an attachment to the aggregates, extinguishment cannot be accomplished.

“Be ardent, fully aware, and attentive to the arising and passing away of bodily phenomena; having overcome, in this world, covetousness and greed.”

Satipatthana Sutta

One who is in the quest for liberation of the mind needs to be ardent in cultivating mindfulness with a clear comprehension of the arising and passing away of all phenomena. Let go of worldly concepts as well as any fabrications of mental phenomena. Discern sensual pleasure and self-affliction, and then stay abiding in equanimity; in the Middle Way. Once the knowing element and its cognized subjects are discovered, then let go of the cognized subjects. The fruition of the practice occurs when one can consistently relinquish any phenomena after observing their arising and passing away. There are four paths (magga), four fruits (phala), and one Nibbana. Once Nibbana is reached, only the knowing element remains. This knowing element or liberated viññāṇa is not under the influence of defilements, cravings, or clinging to the aggregates. It is eternal and not subject to change or rebirth.

*“ The steps leading to the liberation of the mind
from all mental phenomena are:
knowing or understanding, experiencing or “seeing” ,
developing or “practicing” , relinquishing, and liberating”*

Luang Por Jamnian

Sotapanña or stream-enterer can completely relinquish the first three fetters: personality-belief, skeptical doubt, and clinging to mere rules and rituals. There are still 16 defilements that a sotapanña needs to abandon before attaining full enlightenment. Those are fetters and latent tendencies of sensual desire, mental irritation, craving for higher material existence, craving for non-material existence, conceit and pride, restlessness, and ignorance, along with conscience and concern. There are three kinds of sotapanña: *sattakkhattu-parama* has a maximum of seven rebirth rounds before attaining full enlightenment; *eka-bījī* has only one rebirth; whereas *kolankola* has between two to six rounds of rebirth (passing from one noble family to another). A sotapanña will not exhibit anger, jealousy, or ill-will.

Sakadāgāmī or once-returner has a relatively lesser degree of defilements. The grosser form of sensual desire and mental irritation have been overcome; only the latent tendencies remain. 14 defilements remain in a *sakadāgāmī*.

In an **anāgāmī or non-returner**, all five lower fetters are completely relinquished. The five higher fetters remaining in the citta of an *anāgāmī* are more refined than those of ordinary people despite the same name or category. 12 defilements remain in an *anāgāmī*. These are fetters and latent tendencies of craving for higher material existence, craving for non-material existence, conceit and pride, restlessness, and ignorance, along with conscience and concern.

An arahant is freed from all ten fetters and all defilements. The mind of an arahant behaves like a lotus leaf: not getting wet despite being in the water.

Buddha: the knowing element cognizing arising, existing, and passing away.

Buddho: the awakened one, bliss, and liberated.