

The Instinct

by Buddhādāsa Bhikkhu

Interpreted into English by Santikaro Bhikkhu

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In the late 80s and early 90s, until his health deteriorated too much, Ajahn Buddhādāsa gave regular lectures during the monthly international retreats held at Suan Mokkh and then Suan Mokkh International Dharma Hermitage. Usually, Ajahn spoke in Thai and Santikaro Bhikkhu interpreted into English live. Audio recordings are now available from www.suanmokkh.org and www.bia.or.th. The following is a transcription generously made by a Dhamma volunteer. If you noticed possible improvements to the text and would like to contribute, please kindly contact the volunteer and the Buddhādāsa Indapañño Archives in Bangkok (suanmokkhbkk@gmail.com).

Before everything else, I would like to express my joy and happiness that you have come to this place in order to study and practice the Dhamma. In short, the Dhamma is the thing which will allow us to make most use of this opportunity of human life. As much as possible, we will be able to make use of this human good through the study and practice of the Dhamma.

If you feel that there is something lacking or missing in your lives, or if you feel that your happiness and peacefulness is less than complete, if this is so, then it will be quite easy for you to come to study and practice Dhamma. If you think that your life is perfectly and completely wonderful, that you are completely and totally satisfied with everything, that there are no problems, no difficulties, no frustration, no *dukkha*, if this is the case, then there is no point in you studying the Dhamma.

At a minimum, we should at least take a look and check out our lives and see how much we are experiencing the following kinds of difficulties – how much the following things are making our lives rough. These things are love, anger, hate, fear, worry, envy, jealousy, possessiveness, selfishness – how much of these things causing problems in our lives – this is something we all ought to take a look at.

You ought to be able to make a little bit of a guess and see what life would be or what life is like when it is not disturbed by these things such as love, hate, fear, jealousy, etc. How peaceful and joyful life would be if it were to be free of

these things – you ought to take a look at this also. If you are certain that you would like to have a life that is free of these disturbances – love, hatred, anger, fear, etc. – if you are certain of this, then it will be very easy for you to study and practice the Dhamma. Take a look and see how difficult it is when a lovely object comes by. See how difficult it is to control oneself so we don't fall in love with that thing. Take a look and see the difficulties in this kind of self-control. When something hateful or ugly comes by, look and see how difficult it is – very difficult or not very difficult – to control the mind, for the mind to control itself so that one doesn't fall into hatred towards that thing. Or, when something fearful comes by, how difficult is it to not be afraid. Or something that usually incites worry, how difficult is it to keep from worrying, to keep from being jealous, to avoid envy, possessiveness, and other mental difficulties. Dhamma is the knowledge and the way of practice which develops the mind, which trains the mind so that it can be free of all the lovely, hateful, fearsome, worrisome things. With the Dhamma, the mind can master itself so that there is no love, no hate, no fear, no envy, no jealousy, etc. If we look, we can see that in all living things, whether plants, animals, or human beings, there are some things which we call the *sanchattayan* in Thai or the 'instincts.' These instincts are something that arises in all, or that exists in all living things. They arise with the instinct of self and egoism and the instincts that protect the 'self,' which protect the ego (the individual identity). So the instincts dominate our lives, the instinct of finding food, the instinct of fleeing dangers, the instinct to struggle and fight when necessary, and all the other instincts which allow for life, the individual life to be maintained. If we look, we will see these instincts in all living things and we will also see how difficult it is to control them and see how difficult it is to keep these instincts under control so that they do not lead to problems, so that they do not cause dukkha. You may not think that it is possible to control these instincts. However, Dhamma stands firm and asserts that it is very possible to control the instincts, to control them in such a way that life is free of *dukkha*, is free of unsatisfactoriness, and all problems. It is very important to understand that these things which we call 'instincts' are neutral – the instincts themselves are neutral. However, they can develop into different ways or directions. The first direction, the most common one, is where they develop in the direction of defilement. This is because *satipaṇṇā* (mindfulness and wisdom) are lacking. When mindfulness and wisdom are not present, the instincts are not kept under control, and they develop in a defiled way – this leads to dukkha. But it doesn't have to be that way. If there is *satipaṇṇā* (mindfulness and wisdom), then the instincts can be mastered and controlled so that they do not lead into defilement and dukkha. Say, for example, egoistic feeling or a feeling that there is an individual entity – if there is no mindfulness

and wisdom, this feeling turns into selfishness. The selfishness is very defiled and leads to all sorts of problems and dukkha. But that's not necessary. If this basic egoistic feeling is kept within limits and bounds, then it can be developed in a direction of enlightenment, of *bodhi*. If this egoistic feeling is preserved and developed in an enlightened way, then there is no dukkha and problems are avoided. This is very important to know that the instincts are in themselves neutral. It's a matter whether they are out-of-control or in-control – whether they develop in a defiled way or an enlightened way.

When we talk about the instincts, it leads us to think or recall a system of practice which we call 'meditation' or in particular *ānāpānasati* – the mindfulness of breathing meditation that you have been learning and practicing during this retreat. *Ānāpānasati* is one method of development. It's the best method of mental development or meditation for controlling the instincts. Through *ānāpānasati*, *sati* (the mindfulness; awareness) is developed. Wisdom, (*paññā*) is developed. *Sampajañña* – sometimes called 'comprehension,' other times called 'wisdom in action' – is developed. And also *samādhi* (the one-pointed concentration) is developed. Through *ānāpānasati*, these four things – mindfulness, wisdom, wisdom in action, and the one-pointed mind – are developed enough to control the instincts. This happens through the practice of *ānāpānasati*. So in this practice of learning to control the instincts so that they do not go in a defiled direction but rather go in an enlightened direction, we begin to study Buddhism with the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind – with the six sense organs – this is where we start our study. We start with the eyes and the sights (forms) that are seen, the ears and the sounds that are heard, the nose and odors that we smell, the tongue and the tastes which we taste, the body and the tactile sensations, and the mind and mental objects. They are these six inner sense organs and six external sense objects – they come in pairs – there are six pairs like this. The six sense pairs (the sense bases, the internal and external) are where the problems of life arise, so we begin our study with these. Let's take the example of the eye and of form. There is the eye and the form, and when they come into relationship with each other – when that happens – consciousness arises. This is based on the eyes so we call it the 'eye consciousnesses.' There is the eye, the form or sight that is seen, they come into relationship and then eye consciousness arises, and when these three come together we call them *phassa* or 'contact.' This contact is very important. We have to be aware of it if we want to solve our problem. Through the practice of *ānāpānasati*, we develop mindfulness and wisdom so that they can be there at that point of the contact. Every time one of these contacts arises, there is mindfulness of that contact and wisdom regarding it, and there will also be *sampajañña* (wisdom-in-action)

right there and the mind will be *samādhi* (one pointed and clear) regarding that contact. If these four things are present at the contact, whether it is eye contact, ear contact, nose, tongue, body, or mind contact – whichever one of these six kinds of contacts – if there is sati, paññā, sampajañña, and samādhi, then the instincts will develop in the direction of enlightenment. But if the contact occurs without mindfulness, without wisdom, without wisdom-in-action, and without a clear one-pointed mind, then the instincts will go in a defiled direction leading to problems and dukkha. This is why we begin our study with the sense organs – the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

We would like to stress that, at the moment of contact when an external sense object strikes one of the internal sense organs; this is a very important moment. It's a moment – this isn't a continuous ever-lasting thing but they are momentarily things that arise – these contacts happen from moment to moment. When there is a contact, if there is no mindfulness and wisdom, then the instincts, which are always sort of hanging around the mind, will lead the mind in a defiled direction towards greed, anger, and delusion. But if there is mindfulness and wisdom, the instincts will not be able to do that and then the mind will be able to develop in an enlightened way. For example, when something strikes the eye, and then there is eye contact, if mindfulness is lacking – if mindfulness isn't there at that moment of contact – then there will be a reaction of liking or disliking, of being pleased with or being displeased with that sense contact in that sense object. When this happens, selfishness arises regarding this liking and disliking, and when this germ of selfishness (a seed of egoism) then develops into greed or lust, anger and hatred, ignorance, stupidity, which leads our life with dukkha and fills our lives with problems. However, if when something strikes the eye at that moment of eye contact, there is mindfulness governing, covering, controlling, dominating that eye contact, then it will bring wisdom to that contact. This wisdom will be able to function – it will be wisdom-in-action in order to prevent any problems from arising. Mindfulness will draw on the store of wisdom that has been gained through life and apply the necessary wisdom in that specific situation and that specific eye contact, and then problems will be avoided. The defilements of greed, anger, and ignorance will not arise. Now, if the mind doesn't quite have enough strength or energy to do this, then *samādhi* (the one-pointed focused unified mind) needs to be developed so that the mind has the strength to be mindful and to apply wisdom to the situation. When these four things are covering the contact, then the mind continues to go and develop in an enlightened way building and developing more and more wisdom and being more skillful in the use of these four things.

You can observe that if there is no control of these moments of contact, or if we take just one moment of these contact, if there is no control of this contact, then the various defiled mind states will arise – lust, greed, ignorance – these sorts of things will arise toward that sense object and when this happens, you can see very well for yourself that these things are dukkha, these things are unpleasant, they are no fun, they are unsatisfactory, and cause us endless problems – you can see this for yourself. However, at the moment of contact, if there is mindfulness, wisdom, applied-wisdom, and one-pointedness, then these problems don't arise. Without these things, the instincts are out-of-control and lead in the direction of dukkha. When these four *dhammas* are working and functioning, then the contact does not lead to dukkha – it is free of dukkha. Or, we can say that dukkha is 'extinguished,' which is enlightenment. There are these two directions that it can go. The key are these four *dhammas* – *sati*, *paññā*, *sampajañña*, and *samādhi*. Please remember these four things – these four *dhammas*. Remember them, develop them, know them fully, become as skillful and expert as you can in bringing these things into existence and using them in your lives in order to control all the sense contacts that arise. So remember these four things, *sati* (the mindfulness), *paññā* (the wisdom), *sampajañña* (the wisdom in action), and *samādhi* (the one-pointed, clear, unified mind). These four dhammas are something that you need to know and you need to bring them into existence and be able to use them properly.

Let's look at our contact that is lacking in the four dhammas – *sati*, *paññā*, *sampajañña*, and *samādhi*. There is the sense contact. Without these four governing dhammas, to keep it in control, then we can say that it is an ignorant or stupid contact. It's stupid – there is no knowledge or wisdom brought into use. When there is a stupid contact, this will condition or cause an ignorant reaction of the mind to that contact. The mind will stupidly or foolishly like what's happening, dislike it, or be so confused that it doesn't know if it should be liked or disliked. These three kinds of ignorant reactions are called *vedanā* or 'feeling.' When we are using the English word 'feeling' in a very specific way, please don't confuse it with some of the other meaning of 'feeling.' We are talking about this ignorant reaction of the mind through sense experience – liking, disliking, or confusion. This feeling – things don't stop with feeling (the *vedanā*). *Vedanā* conditions craving or desire, which is also ignorant because we have got a string of ignorance, conditioning stupidity, conditioning further stupidity. So we have this stupid desire or craving for the sense objects. This is conditioned by the feeling the mind reacts, after it reacts it starts desiring. It wants to get what it likes and it wants to get rid of what it doesn't like – so this we call 'craving' or 'desire.' Once there is desire, this conditions attachment

(*upādāna*). Attachment is the feeling of the desirer – the one who craves. At first there was desire, now there is the one who desires. Here we have the egoistic feeling is building, this too is ignorance. Attachment to conditions where we have this ‘I’ – there is this ‘I’ which desires and craves to get or get rid of. This begins to build into a state which we can call the ‘condition of self’ or ‘coming into existence’ – the becoming of the ‘self.’ Here the ‘self’ is complete. And this finally conditions birth – not the birth from the mother’s womb but the birth of ‘self,’ of the ego, of the big fat ‘I’ which is attaching to all the things around it as ‘me’ or ‘mine.’ And this ‘self’ and all this possessiveness is completely and utterly *dukkha*. In everything that the mind – this egoistic mind that has arisen – in everything that it claims to be ‘me,’ there is unsatisfactoriness. And everything that it attaches to as ‘mine,’ there is *dukkha*. This is what happens when there is sense contact that lacks the four *dhammas* we have been talking about – mindfulness, wisdom, wisdom-in-action, and the one-pointed mind. This points out the importance of developing these four *dhammas* in order to avoid this ignorant development – this defiled progression which leads to *dukkha*. If you understand what’s been said, then you will understand that birth doesn’t just refer to what happens in our mother’s womb. That kind of birth is only the physical or material birth. It is only the birth of the material elements that make up life or make up human life. But at that physical birth, the ego or the ‘self,’ or the ‘soul’ if we wish, has not yet been born – it is just a physical birth. But as was described, there is the ignorant process – the defiled path which leads to the birth of ‘self.’ It is only when the ‘self’ is born that we can say that birth is complete because then there is both the physical birth and the mental birth – birth of the body and birth of the ‘self’ – then birth is complete. Now the thing about this ‘self’ or the ‘soul’ that is born that is very important to realize is that it is an illusion – it is illusive or illusionary, and there is nothing real about it. It is just a concept or a pigment in the mind – not real. So the birth of the ‘self’ or the ‘soul’ that is different from the physical birth – this is the problem. This is our problem because with this birth of the ‘self’ or ‘soul,’ then there is attachment, there is grasping and clinging to all sorts of things as ‘me’ and ‘mine’ which is purely illusion – none of this real. We genuinely understand the process leading up to this point to the birth of the ‘self,’ and then we will see that there is no real self involved but this ‘self’ is just a deluded concept or idea in the mind.

Now this, the point leading up to that, you can see that *phassa* (the moment of contact) is the fork in the road. At the *phassa*, there is the possibility of going in one of two directions. And it’s the choice or the direction that one follows at that fork in the road which governs whether there will be *dukkha* or freedom

from dukkha – whether there will be problems or not. At the moment of phassa, if there is no wisdom, mindfulness, wisdom-in-action, and one-pointedness, i.e. if there is ignorance, then the mind takes the path of dukkha, of defilement, and falls into states of mind such as lust, anger, and delusion. As this path is taken over and over again, that becomes a well-worn path. Each time one goes past and goes in this direction, one becomes more and more familiar with it, which increases the odds of following this path later. So this tendency can develop to go in this ignorant direction. This tendency – this familiarity with ignorance – can develop to the point where it's a habit (the habit of stupidity) where mindfulness, wisdom, wisdom-in-action, and one-pointedness are missing. That's one fork in the road (the fork that leads to dukkha). The other path is the path to enlightenment – rather than ignorance, it is governed by knowing and wisdom – by *podhi* [Thai] or *bodhi* [Pāli] – it is the enlightened way. So at the moment of contact, of sense experience, then the mind doesn't fall into this egoistic grasping as 'I' and 'my' and as 'my-self.' So this illusion of a 'self' or 'soul' doesn't arise. And all the problems that are caused by all of this illusion do not arise as well. And so there is freedom from all of these problems and freedom from dukkha. So come to study and understand the path – the fork in the road that happens at the moment of *phassa*, sense contact.

We would like to stress further the importance of contact, of this fork or split in the road. Observe in your own life, observe each and every day. Take today for instance, for each of you, observe today how many times you have come to this fork in the road. How many times this sense contact happens for you today? How many times? Do you know? Find out how many times you have come to this fork in the road. And then observe whether you go the right way or the wrong way – observe this. Are the mental defilements, are they just let go of or allowed to run out of control and drag the mind along in a way of greed, anger, hatred, fear, worry, and all these other unskillful mind states which lead to dukkha? Is this the way that is followed? Do we develop this familiarity with this defiled path? Does this become a habit, a tendency? If we look around us in the world – watching TV, reading newspaper, or whatever – we see that this path is the common one. This is the path that is most often followed in the world today – the defiled path where the instincts are out of control. But observing your life (this fork in the road), see how many times the wrong way is followed and how many times the right way is followed. See each time that one comes to the path, or to the fork in the path in one's mind, one chooses the enlightened way or the defiled way where the four *dhammas* – mindfulness, wisdom, wisdom-in-action, and one-pointedness – are able to govern and master the instincts so the mind goes in an enlightened way which leads to freedom

from dukkha and ultimately the utter cessation of dukkha. So don't overlook these moments of contact, these sense experiences where that are happening who knows how many times they are happening each day. See for yourself how many times they are happening to you today. How many times does the mind go in the right direction and how many times in the wrong? And then tomorrow, and the day after, each and every day. See how many times you come to this fork in the road and develop these four dhammas so that familiarity with the defiled path weakens and diminishes, and one comes to follow the enlightened path more and more. See this in your own minds, in your own lives today, now.

Dhamma offers us two opportunities with which to use life. We've been talking about the first opportunity that is whenever a sense object strikes one of the sense organs causing consciousness to arise – whenever one of these sense objects catches the mind – the way to use that opportunity is to further use the mindfulness, wisdom, wisdom-in-action, and one-pointedness at that moment of contact in order to govern and control that sense experience. These four things, we can call them 'four comrades' – 'four Dhamma comrades.' Wherever they go, these four comrades have to go together. If one is missing, it's like they are all missing. We need to develop all four of them so that each is sufficient at each moment of sense contact, so that there is mindfulness of the contact, so that enough wisdom has been developed and stored for that contact to be understood, that wisdom in action draws in that store of knowledge and applies the exact wisdom that is necessary to deal with that situation, and where one-pointedness provides the strength and power for the mind to deal with the situation that each sense contact as it arises. This is the first opportunity of living which Dhamma offers us to make use of all these sense experiences in a wise enlightened way by applying the four comrades of Dhamma that we have been developing and continue to develop in the practice of *ānāpānasati* – this is the first opportunity. Life gives us a second opportunity in which to study and practice Dhamma. These sense contacts are not happening all the time. In between them are moments where we can make use of the second opportunity. We can call this second opportunity *vipassanā* – 'insight' which means 'clear seeing,' 'seeing things as they really are.' So in these moments when there is no sense contact to make use of, then it is the time for *vipassanā*. In *vipassanā*, reality is examined, it is observed until it is seen clearly until the truth is realized regarding this reality. It is not a matter of rationally or intellectually convincing oneself of anything nor is it a matter of blind belief in the doctrines of one sect or another. Rather, it is direct intuitive realization of truth or reality – this is what *vipassanā* is about. The truth revealed in *vipassanā* is *anicca*, *dukkha*, [*anattā*] or *aniccam*, *dukkham*, *anattā* – these three characteristics of all

conditioned reality. Everything which has arisen in this world due to causes of any kind or any sort are subject to *aniccam* – impermanence, change, or flux. All conditioned things are in a process of ceaseless change. Because of this, all these conditioned things are unsatisfactory – they are *dukkha*. They can never satisfy in any way. They can never fulfill desires or delight, or give us what we want. So they are *dukkham*. And all these conditioned things which include everything in universe except for one thing which is ‘Nibbāna’ or in Sanskrit ‘Nirvāna.’ Except for Nibbāna or Nirvāna, all things are conditioned and all these conditioned things are impermanent and unsatisfactory. In addition, they are *anattā*. In them, there is no permanent individual entity which can be labeled as ‘self’ or ‘soul.’ These three things – impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-self – are the subjects of vipassanā. These are the meditation objects of seeing reality as it truly is. So in those moments between sense contacts, it’s a chance to make vipassanā. And as these three characteristics – the impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self – are realized, we can go deeper and deeper in understanding and wisdom.

These three characteristics can be summarized as *suññatā* (‘voidness’ or ‘emptiness’). Now, this voidness doesn’t mean physical voidness like in outer space or like in a vacuum. We are talking about spiritual emptiness meaning the emptiness of all egoistic and selfish thoughts – the emptiness, the freedom from, the voidness of any ideas of ‘I,’ ‘mine,’ ‘my-self’ – this is *suññatā*. It is when impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self are realized in a more profound and penetrating way. And then to go more deeper still, is to realize *tathatā* – or suchness, thusness, the ‘isness’ of everything – in Thai *chen nan eng* (‘that’s the way things are’) – the ‘just this way and not any other way,’ ‘just like this, that’s all there is.’ So in the moments between sense contacts, it’s the opportunity for vipassanā to realize that all conditioned things are impermanent – *anicca*; that they are all unsatisfactory – *dukkha*; and that they are completely void, completely lacking of any ‘self,’ ego, or ‘soul’ that is *anattā*. To penetrate these three is to realize *suññatā* – the emptiness of ‘self,’ ‘I,’ ‘me,’ ‘mine,’ ‘my-self,’ of ego; the voidness of ‘soul.’ And to go even deeper is to see *tathatā* – *chen nan eng* – just this, nothing else, nothing less, nothing more, this is the way it is, just this, just thus. So this is the second opportunity which Dhamma offers us – second way to use life. Using these two opportunities, life is full. There is something to do all the time. And that using the Dhamma in these two ways – in these wise and skillful ways – then the path of defilement leading to *dukkha* where the instincts are out of control doesn’t happen. Instead, what is happening is through the realization of *suññatā*, voidness – that egoistic instinct, that self instinct that arises sometime after physical birth – this is lessened,

weakened, and begins to dissipate. It arises less often and when it arises, it's not as big and strong. And when we see this more and more, everything is begun to see as *tathatā* – *chen nan eng* – as 'just this.' And when we see it as 'just this and nothing more,' there is no more applying these egoistic labels, distinctions, identifications, attachments to things. They are seen as they really are – free of 'I,' 'me,' and 'mine.' This is to develop the instincts in the enlightened way and in a way that is free of *dukkha*, free of pain, and free of problems. There are these two opportunities which Dhamma offers us. In one, we use the four comrades developed through *ānāpānasati* to control and govern the sense contacts. And then in the other, we use *vipassanā* – which is also *ānāpānasati* – to examine reality and see things as they really are as *anicca*, *dukkha*, *anattā* and as *suññatā* (voidness) and as *tathatā* (suchness, thusness, or in Thai, *chen nan eng*).

I would like you to look at the value of *tathatā*, suchness, a little more. Whether you see *tathatā*, internally within the mind and body as you experience them from moment to moment, or whether you see *tathatā* (suchness) in the objects of nature that are external, no matter whether you see *tathatā* internally or externally, this seeing of things as they really are as 'just this,' 'just thus,' is to free oneself of dualistic thinking. Usually, the deluded mind (the egoistic selfish mind) is seeing things as this & that, as good & bad, as good & evil cutting reality up into pieces according to judgments. And this dualistic thinking can be done away with by understanding and seeing the *tathatā* (the thusness of things). It's this problem of seeing things as good or evil (this dualistic way of approaching the world), as illustrated in the first page of the Book of Genesis of the Christian Bible where it talks about the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil which God forbid Adam and Eve to eat. This fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, when Adam took the bite, that was to begin to see things in a dualistic way – to see things as good and as evil – this is the arising of all man's problems. This is original sin – this dualistic thinking, which can be done away with through the realization of *tathatā*. When one perceives everything as 'just this,' just the way they are, then there is no more judging things as good & bad, right & wrong, pleasant & unpleasant. Even to the point where there is no more judging as 'male' & 'female,' when these judgments or attachments to things as 'this' or 'that,' as good & bad, as losing & winning, as getting & giving – when all these distinctions and these dualistic ignorance is let go of – then all the problems that are caused by them disappear. This can happen through the perception and realization of thusness – *tathatā* (*chen nan eng*).

Finally, the fruit of seeing *tathatā* is in not-attaching to seeing oneself as the ‘doer’ or ‘the done-to.’ When there is an action, there is no attachment to the one who does the action or the one who is acted upon, these distinctions disappear. And in this way, there is no winning and no losing, or no profit and loss, getting and losing, taking advantage of or being taken advantage of, receiving the benefit or losing the benefit. All these dualistic distinctions disappear – this is the value of *tathatā* that allow us to see things as *tathatā* – as they are – without the problems that arise due to dualistic thinking – without the *dukkha* that are caused due to egoistic ignorance.

The last thing we would like to say is that through the realization of *tathatā*, there is nothing strange any more. There is nothing marvelous, or wonderful, or weird, or strange in this world. Everything is seen as ‘just that,’ ‘just this,’ as it is – *tathatā*. So when they go to the moon, we just see it as a children’s play, playing with toys, nothing special, and nothing strange – just *tathatā*. All the things that happen that we get excited about, agitated about, worried about, are just seen as they are, nothing strange, nothing weird – just *tathatā*. This is the way to live in a balanced and come centered in Dhamma. So this is how to live in the world or we live correctly, all the time from moment to moment, constantly. There are two kinds of time. There are the times where the moments we meet up with sense objects where the various sense objects collide with the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind – this we can call the ‘world,’ meeting the world, being in the world – this is one kind of time which we have talked about. The other kind of time which is when there is the senses are not functioning, there is a moment of respite when we are not meeting up with the world – this is the opportunity for *vipassanā*. So to use both times fully and well, is to practice Dhamma all the time and to live in a wise way which is free of *dukkha*.

So finally, to live like this, is to be free of problems and be free of *dukkha*. On the physical or bodily level, there is nothing afflicting or harming us. On the mental level, there is nothing afflicting or causing problems and on the level of mindfulness and wisdom – on the spiritual level – there is also no affliction and no *dukkha* and no problems. This is the fruit of practicing Dhamma from moment to moment. And then when it’s like this and life is lived this way, there is a kind of bliss and calmness, coolness, and peacefulness that our vocabulary cannot describe. We don’t have a word for it. We drunkenly call it ‘happiness.’ We apply this word which we usually use with cheap thrills and various coarse kinds of pleasure, we go and apply this word ‘happiness’ to something which is very subtle and sublime – the result of living according to Dhamma. So we can use this word ‘happiness’ in speaking about living on the spiritual level

according to Dhamma. But if we use it, please understand that this ‘happiness’ is not the happiness of the senses, of ordinary living. If we want to use this word, understand that it is a kind of happiness that is above happiness, beyond happiness, that transcends happiness. This is what happens when one lives according to Dhamma, when one is free of dukkha, and when dukkha has been extinguished.

Finally, I hope that all of you are benefitting from the practice of *ānāpānasati*. And that through this practice and through this development, you are building, strengthening, and increasing the four Dhamma comrades of: *sati*, mindfulness-awareness; *paññā*, wisdom or knowing; *sampajañña*, wisdom-in-action, the wisdom being used to meet a specific situation; and *samādhi*, the one-pointed unified mind. These four comrades will be used to keep the instincts within line so that whenever there is sense contact, these four comrades will enable us to deal with the problems of life which arise at sense experience. The arising of the mental defilements when the instincts are out of control can be met with through these four comrades. So I hope that you are developing these things and benefiting from this practice of *ānāpānasati*.

On this note, I request that we finish today’s talk. Thank you.

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Transcribed by Tripur Manandhar (tripur7@gmail.com) in Dec. 2015-Jan. 2016

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