

# DHAMMA ROUTE

Throughout the time that we spend together here, may you determine to train yourself depending on the postures of walking meditation and rhythmic meditation while sitting.

Move your hands and arms as has been instructed and see and be aware of getting up, walking, sitting and other movements of the body in the various postures.

Fix on awareness, build up awareness and stay with awareness a lot. Be aware when your mind thinks of this and that and goes to other objects because it will abandon the watching and seeing of the present, existing posture.

Know how to put down thoughts and moods, pull yourself away and come back to watch and see the movements of the body.

Train yourself to be skilled at this point. Establish awareness properly.

Take this way of practicing to be your work, depending on this body as the base. See **RUPA** moving and see **NAMA** moving.

These actions (of body and mind) are **KAMMA** (intentional).

Train to see the basics of life.

The first aspect of life that we will really see is **RUPA** and **NAMA**.

See it like this. Know which part is **RUPA** and which part is **NAMA**.

**RUPA** is this body of ours that moves to and fro in the various postures, such as walking and sitting.

**NAMA** is feeling and thought, that which orders the body to move this way and that, it orders one to love, to be angry, to be delighted and to be sad. It orders one to go here and there.

All of that is the state of **NAMA**. all of it is a movement of the mind.

This is called **NAMA** acting.

In reality, to get to see **RUPA-NAMA** and to be able to differentiate between them, takes rather a long time.

This is because our minds are used to thinking, they are used to being carried away by moods.

Whatever object arises, completely takes one in; a thought of anger arises and one becomes angry; whatever one indulges in, one gets overwhelmed by.

But as soon as we fix on being within limits and establish awareness, those moods that used to be so powerful now express a reaction.

Some people do walking meditation for a little while and get sleepy.

Some people practice the rhythmic meditation and become restless, their minds go all over the place. They struggle hard and feel uncomfortable, burdened, they have headaches and tight feelings in the chest. There are these troublesome things that come up all the time, they are obstacles.

Understand this to be ordinary.

Don't be annoyed, uncomfortable and burdened by those various manifestations.

Establish awareness, hold on to awareness well.

Whatever states or conditions arise during the practice of meditation, recognize them, see them.

Have crystal-clear awareness. Recollect what your main duty is.

It is to cultivate awareness and to see the body as it is moving in its present posture. This is the foundation.

As for thought or any moods that come to interfere:

regard that as ordinary, take that to be objects that change according to the habits of the mind that hasn't yet been trained.

Alright, when it arises, it arises, but our main duty is to establish **SATI**

Be aware, arouse awareness in order to see the body, always see the states, conditions and whereabouts of the body as it is moving about as clearly as possible.

Know how to put down thoughts and moods

that are (continuously) changing, don't let them be obstacles.

This point right here, might be a big issue for some and not a big deal for others. Characteristics and conditionings tend to vary according to previously accumulated habits.

Sometimes the thoughts and moods that interfere are quite powerful.

They might make one's mind think in line with them

until one is fooled and forgets oneself.

The mind wanders away, it gets really fascinated with those things.

NEVER MIND. When we realize it and are newly aware: be careful.

Come back to fix on awareness and keep on practicing.

The state of the mind wandering off and lacking awareness, the mind feeling uncomfortable and burdened, arises a lot when we first set out to train ourselves to develop awareness.

It is the same for everyone. Because, originally, we are used to thinking all sorts of things according to our own (untrained) minds. Therefore it is going against the stream of our old habits to try and establish and arouse awareness.

So, it is ordinary that there are various obstacles.

In the beginning, we must depend on devotion and put forth a lot of effort to train and establish awareness so that one gains awareness. Be determined to make effort with walking meditation and sitting, doing the rhythmic meditation.

Make movements with the body and train a lot to be aware.

Never mind if the mind loses awareness and thinks of this and that **100** or **1000** times.

Regard yourself as somebody who is still new at the training.

Inspire yourself. Try and do the best you can.

Keep establishing awareness consistently.

When you lose it, you start again;

you lose it again and you start once more.

The state of delusion and forgetting often, and then being able to re-establish awareness, makes one begin to be able to differentiate and one gets to know what one's heart and one's real character are like. One begins to understand how to adjust one's own mind to be aware. One knows how to put down changing thoughts and moods.

These experiences teach one to re-establish **SATI** faster and clearer. Awareness becomes more and more prominent as long as one tries and puts forth effort.

We now begin to really discern our states of mind: the states that are conditioned by thoughts and moods, and the state that is governed by awareness.

We have more ability to know our own moods in time.

And there is more awareness as well as 'awakeness'.

The conditions – of feeling uncomfortable and oppressed, of doubt and confusion, of restlessness and giddiness and of feeling fed up – (that used to be there) gradually begin to fade out with each moment that our **SATI-SAMPAJANYA** begins to awaken more and more.

Until finally, when we really have aroused awareness and a sense of 'being awake' firmly, we see the existing **RUPA** and **NAMA** clearly. That's it! We now get to know about life! We get to know suffering (**DUKKHA**), the suffering of **RUPA** and **NAMA**.

We will understand that **RUPA** or the body is a lump of suffering. It consists of parts that are always moving and changing. One really sees the unfolding of the various states, conditionings and processes of the body clearly.

Breathing is suffering: it is a conditioning, it is **DUKKHAM**, it is an ordinary state that happens by itself.

Swallowing saliva, blinking the eyes, opening the mouth, eating, lying down, taking a shower, putting on clothes and so on, is all **DUKKHAM**: they are ordinary conditionings of the body that happen by themselves.

Most people have never seen the states of the body and the course that it takes, according to reality, like this.

And then, through ignorance, we create another kind of suffering to mess up our lives, namely **NAMA-DUKKHA**.

**NAMA** that we have not trained yet, **NAMA** that thinks according to what one likes, wants and desires, **NAMA** that is still full of attachment, concocting up thoughts and views based on a self: this is another kind of suffering that we don't know about yet. This is a kind of suffering that is something unfortunate in our lives, that we have never studied or tried to understand.

This **NAMA** has never been trained, has never treated **RUPA** nor one's own life fairly.

But as soon as we see, train and refine ourselves and we know how to arouse and establish awareness, waking ourselves up, the very quality of **SATI** acts as 'the judge'.

It is the most honest court.

The kind of suffering that doesn't arise from **DUKKHAM**, from the natural state of the body: awareness discerns it. Awareness brings it to a halt.

Nobody can stop **DUKKHAM**, the ways of the body and of life.

Those states just happen, we have to be aware of those conditions, to acknowledge, deal with them and look after them so that there is a state of normality and happiness for as far as conditions allow. But the suffering that is due to thought, that is due to **NAMA**, that is due to all kinds of wants and desires, is a state that is something untoward: it arises because of our thinking and our beliefs. This is what awareness sees.

It stops and pacifies (that kind of thinking). Awareness knows how to put down and pull oneself away from thoughts in those circumstances. Awareness really acts as the judge because when one is aware and awakened, it really treats **RUPA** and **NAMA**, and one's mind, fairly. One's life begins to be different from how it used to be.

Before, one used to be a slave of moods and desires, and one used to 'fall in the trap of thought' all the time. Thoughts, speech and all actions used to be dictated by moods, by one's own character, every moment, every time. But now the time has come to wake up and establish awareness!

Our body then has more freedom: one doesn't have to be under the power of desire anymore. Like if one was addicted to cigarettes and betel nut and used to roam around and booze. One has been a slave all the time of desires to have and be on the sensual plane. As soon as one is awakened through **SATI**, one abandons that sort of behavior at once.

Awareness knows how to differentiate and it knows how to properly reflect, it really sees things. 'Oh, this clearly is suffering! How could I indulge in those things and be such a fool?' The things that one used to wallow in and be intoxicated with, really drop off our minds. There is no more desire for cigarettes, betel nuts and booze. One completely does away with those things.

For example, myself: I used to be someone who believed in superstition and I trained myself until I was an occult healer. I used to calculate auspicious occasions. I had all sorts of amulets and what not: a complete mess! Before I could go to sleep I had to recite all kinds of verses and chants. My room was full with 'sacred and holy' objects. Flowers, incense, 'blessed' water and so on. I used to chant incantations for at least an hour. Whenever I traveled somewhere I had to figure out the omens. What time to set out, in what direction etc. Going to the forest, I first protected myself from fierce animals with spells. There was really a lot of stuff!

And then I met *LOO-ANG POR TEE-AN*.

I trained to develop awareness with him at the **BUDDHAYANA** forest, Ler-y province, in 1966. For a full month I trained and strove, before I was able to establish awareness and arouse a state of being 'awake'. The various things that I used to think about, believed in and practiced by way of different ceremonies dropped off. They really dropped off me! **SATI** was crystal-clear and I realized: 'Oh, it really is because of thought and my own firm belief that I indulged in those kind of views for many years'. I was really going over the top at that time. Now I knew how to be aware, how to train and strive: doing walking meditation and rhythmic meditation. I practiced in the same way as you are doing here now. I trained in awareness, I trained and trained. From being carried away through thoughts and moods, I gradually became more aware and awake; awareness became more clear by itself. After there had been an upsurge of being aware and awake, I felt that my life had revived and strengthened, it was really more dynamic! I felt that my mind was happy and at ease. Many conditions certainly were more distinct than before.

It felt like a mountain or a heavy weight that had been weighing down my mind for ages had been lifted off my life, almost completely.

I understood what old people meant when they said:

‘Heaven is in the heart, hell is in your own mind’.

This took on a profound meaning for me.

Awareness stood out. It felt as if being aware and awake happened by itself. I didn’t have to support it as much as when I first started out.

Whatever I thought, said, did, the movements of the body, doing walking meditation: I really did all of it with awareness.

I saw states, processes and the proceedings of the things

I thought and did, in a refined way.

Regarding the thoughts and beliefs that I used to cling to, moods of love, like, anger and delusion: in fact, they didn’t disappear from the mind in one go. It just felt that they had diminished a lot. They were not powerful, they were no longer the boss like before, when I couldn’t establish awareness yet.

Desire and ambition were still there, latent. They still showed their faces, once in a long time. Sometimes I would still think about this and that (without awareness).

Even though I could establish awareness and was well aware and awake, I still felt that I didn’t have complete freedom from love, like, anger and delusion.

*LOO-ANG POR TEE-AN* warned to be careful of those things, to be careful of thought and to be careful of the defilements of a practitioner of insight meditation, namely, being stuck on refined states of mind, such as too much joy, too much delight, too much peace and coolness, stuck on images that would appear, stuck on knowledge of this and that.

All these things one should be careful of and not heedless, forgetting oneself and being fooled by them.

And so I had to put forth more effort but I felt that it wasn’t as difficult and burdensome as in the beginning.

This latter part of the practice could be called 'working with the mind'. For the method I still used the posture of moving the body as a base, this is the 'sign' for fixing on awareness. But now I felt more at ease. I would do the walking meditation in a leisurely fashion and I would move the hands and arms in a relaxed and agile way. I was aware and saw the existing states and conditions of the body. The movements were very clear. There was no laziness or feelings of wanting to quit. There was no boredom, no uncomfortable feelings or dissatisfaction. And there was no confusion as before, at the beginning. But there were some occasions that my mind thought about things. It would reflect and analyze certain matters. These states would arise on their own. This would complicate things. Some of the things that I would think about I felt were important.

For example, I would explain the **DHAMMA** (in my mind) to someone I cared for, such as my friends or my family. Sometimes I would investigate and try to find an answer to a **DHAMMA** question. I felt that each matter that I reflected on was important. And so, at times I would forget and just get caught up in thinking. The various thoughts that would appear at times were old habits. They were cankers flowing outward (**ASAVA**), they were manifestations of views and opinions, they were thoughts and beliefs in various forms of myself. They would spring up sometimes. Therefore, during the time that one is working with the mind and one sees the states of mind and one's own thinking, one really needs to be aware and awake and to be able to establish awareness. One has a perspective.

No matter what one is thinking about and no matter how important it may seem, always be aware clearly and see those conditions arising. When one is careless and thoughts come up, and even when one starts to think: see it and know it in time. But don't be careless and get mixed up in thinking and let it turn into an issue to the point one completely forgets oneself.

We must take awareness as our perspective, awareness should always stand out. Then, one can really let go and put down those images without grasping or paying attention to them.

**Always come back to being aware.**

Regardless of how powerful, delightful or awful thoughts may be: establish awareness and make it into a foundation.

When thoughts arise, let them be there (but) see their characteristics. Just be clearly aware and don't get mixed up (with thought).

Neither encourage nor obstruct thoughts. Do it like this.

Hold on to this (principle).

It won't be long and those thoughts will stop on their own.

They will fade and disappear by themselves.

They will turn into 'rising images'.

Just watch, see and know their temporary rising and passing.

In the end awareness will still be as stable and prominent as it originally was.

Actually, the method here is the same as when we first trained to establish awareness.

The only difference is that in the beginning of our training in the development of awareness we put emphasis on establishing awareness, on breaking through the encirclement of the various objects, and so we give emphasis to focusing on the movements of the body. We do this exclusively in order to have a foundation or 'sign' in training in the setting up of awareness.

We create awareness because in the beginning of our training, states of mind and moods still have power.

We are still accustomed to thinking, and this gives rise to some kind of mood that we are familiar with from the past.

So we are not yet interested in watching and seeing thought as we are in the later stages of 'working with the mind', because one who is not able to establish awareness is like someone without a place to stand.

One easily loses one's footing and slips.

When we watch thought or powerful moods we get drawn into feelings of like and dislike, we tend to get carried away with things that look as if they're easy to watch.

We can't yet differentiate between the object and awareness. Even though we know and see that we experience a certain condition, we are still not able to give it up and put it down. For this reason, one is taught to make effort with one aim, namely to train in order to be able to establish awareness, to be aware and awake, to be ready, including all things – this is the priority. Make use of the postures and movements of the body as signs and exercises to train in focusing on awareness.

No need to be very concerned with thought or your state of mind. When we get to the point where we have established awareness, the mind is awake and we have a perspective on life – that's it! – now we have the ability to face thought, to see thought, to see the mind, to see the stream of our own thinking in a straightforward way without our minds slipping and sliding, getting caught up in thoughts.

Therefore, only someone who knows how to set up awareness will be successful in working with the mind, someone who arouses both awareness and a sense of being **awake**.

This period is important for getting to know oneself in a straightforward manner. One comes to know how to let go and put down one's moods, thoughts, beliefs and conceited opinions, really becoming absolutely free.

What kind of character and disposition did we used to have?  
What kind of things did we think about and believe in?  
To what extent did we have moods of love, anger and delusion?  
We will really see our minds [mind-states] clearly as they occur, in a simple way.

From the conditionings of mind that come up in thoughts, turning into moods, issues and various matters – periodically or momentarily, **NYANADASSANA** [knowledge and vision] arises, one really gets to know oneself.

'Oh, this is how I think; I get angry this much; this is what I believe in'. One will see conditions one by one, according to the thoughts that appear momentarily, relying on 'the perspective of life', the main principle: knowing how to establish awareness, being in control with awareness and being awake.

The mind doesn't flow and comply with the moods and thoughts. Wisdom-knowledge will arise within us and we will be able to reflect and differentiate between desires and reality.

We will know how to let go, we will know how to put down thoughts, put down delusion, put down images and moods that proliferate.

We can pull ourselves out of thoughts and beliefs we used to cling to and were firmly convinced of.

Clinging is loosened and one returns to awareness that has never been so striking before.

Views and opinions of all sorts get 'demolished' more and more. One after the other. And in the end our minds are made smooth. Our minds don't go back to creating suffering and problems through concoction anymore. It has all been demolished!

Proliferating thoughts (**SANKHARA**), that used to be so powerful and used to create heavy suffering in our lives and our families, are finally done with, their 'poison' is really gone!  
Life is smooth!

One is able to conduct one's life with intuitive awareness (**SATI-SAMPAJANYA**) as the prominent factor.

One is able to be creative and perform one's duties and obligations as one should. One is calm, composed and endowed with discretion.

One is able to reflect and discriminate A from B.

One is really absolutely free and independent!

Well, what I've said today was an introduction and a pointing to a line of practice to train oneself.

I have made known the teachings of the **BUDDHA** and done the duty of a Buddhist, I have done what a **BHIKKHU** [monk] should do.

There is this saying of the **BUDDHA: ‘AROGAYA PARAMA LABHA’** – ‘being free from disease is the greatest gain’.

This refers to what I’ve been talking about, it refers to our lives, it refers to this method [of practice].

In the old days, the monks would go all over the country and propagate the teachings on the end of suffering in the market place or wherever many people would gather.

It is the highest gain.

It is eternal life.

I think that I have performed my duty in a complete way and have satisfied the request of the abbot of this monastery [this talk was given in a branch-monastery in the South].

May all of you who have lent an ear take up what has been said for contemplation and put the various reflections and perspectives into practice.

Determine to train and cultivate yourself, so that you will attain the paths and fruits of practice according to your aspirations.