

Buddha on the Practice: *Bahiya Sutra*

“You should train yourself thus:

In reference to the seen, there will be only the seen.

In reference to the heard, only the heard.

In reference to the sensed, only the sensed.

In reference to the cognized, only the cognized.

That is how you should train yourself.

When for you there will be only the seen in reference to the seen,

Only the heard in reference to the heard,

Only the sensed in reference to the sensed,

Only the cognized in reference to the cognized,

Then there is no **you** in connection with that.

When there is no **you** in connection with that, there is no you there....

This, just this, is the end of stress.”

The Practice: The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, *Satipatthana Sutra*

The four foundations of mindfulness practice are:

The body (especially the breath)

The basic feelings (painful, pleasant and neutral)

The mind (states such as attachment, desire, aversion, delusion, concentration, distraction or quiet.)

The mental contents (hindrances like anger, sloth, worry and agitation, the dharma - the natural law, e.g. the “four noble truths”).

Mindfulness of Feelings, from the *Satipatthana Sutra*

“Bhikkhus, how does a practitioner remain established in the observation of the feelings in the feelings?”

“Whenever the practitioner has a pleasant feeling, she is aware, ‘I am experiencing a pleasant feeling.’ The practitioner practices like this for all the feelings, whether they are pleasant, painful, or neutral, observing when they belong to the body and when they belong to the mind.

“This is how the practitioner remains established in the observation of the feelings in the feelings, observation of the feelings from within or from without, or observation of the feelings both from within and from without.

She remains established in the observation of the process of coming-to-be in the feelings or the process of dissolution in the feelings or both in the process of coming-to-be and the process of dissolution. Or she is mindful of the fact, ‘There is feeling here,’ until understanding and full awareness come about. She remains established in the observation, free, not caught in any worldly consideration. That is how to practice observation of the feelings in the feelings, O bhikkhus.”

Quotes that do not describe a method:

Amit Ray: Vipassana meditation is an ongoing creative purification process. Observation of the moment-to-moment experience cleanses the mental layers, one after another.

S.N. Goenka: Vipassana, which means to see things as they really are, is one of India's most ancient techniques of meditation. It was rediscovered by Gotama Buddha more than 2500 years ago and was taught by him as a universal remedy for universal ills.

The Problem and the Practice:

Bhante Gunaratana: The mind cannot be purified without seeing things as they really are. "Seeing things as they really are" is such a heavily loaded and ambiguous phrase....

Although there are many subjects of meditation, we strongly recommend you start with focusing your total undivided attention on your breathing to gain some degree of *shallow concentration*....

You want to cultivate mindfulness culminating in insight and wisdom to realize the truth as it is. You want to know the *working of your body-mind complex* exactly as it is. You want to get rid of psychological annoyance....

Psychological Annoyance:

Toni Packer while giving a talk: The value of a talk is to find out from moment to moment what is actually true. There is no value in giving special importance to the person who is giving the talk. In doing that, we switch from listening and looking within to thinking about the person who is talking, and making that the most important thing. Creating that image of Toni and reacting to that image with reverence or rebellion, approval or disapproval, blocks immediate listening and questioning.

Practice vs. Metaphysics:

Bahiya Sutta: As they were sitting there, the monks said to the Buddha, "Bāhiya's body has been cremated, and his memorial has been built. What is his destination? What is his future state?"

"Monks, Bāhiya of the Bark-cloth was wise. He practiced the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma and did not pester me with issues related to the Dhamma.

Bāhiya of the Bark-cloth, monks, is totally unbound."

Advice for assessing one's ideas from the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali:

The mind's fluctuations are of four kinds. These are: Correct Ideas, Incorrect Ideas, Mental Constructs/Verbal Delusions, Memory, and Sleep