

Using Dhamma Advantageously

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In the late 80s and early 90s, until his health deteriorated too much, Ajahn Buddhadāsa 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 Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives in Bangkok (suanmokkhbkk@gmail.com).

Today we're going to speak about 'how to use Dhamma successfully or beneficially.' The first time we talked about 'having Dhamma or the benefits of having Dhamma,' and yesterday[']s talk] was 'how to have Dhamma.' Today is how to use it. We can compare this with money. We have to know how to acquire money; and then how to have it; and then how to use it. We need to understand these three aspects in order for money to have any benefit for us. It works the same way with Dhamma.

I'd like to point out to you four duties that we all have in life, four duties which tend to be a problem or a challenge for all of us. The first duty is to prevent the arising of unskillful evil wicked states of mind. The second is to abandon or get rid of unskillful evil acts, thoughts, and words that may already exist within us. The third duty is to develop skillful and beneficial things within our lives. And the fourth is to protect and develop further skillful useful beneficial things that have already arisen, that are already at work within us. So these four duties are four things that we need to work on and which Dhamma can help us. So when we talk about how to use Dhamma we can speak about using Dhamma to accomplish these four duties which are necessary for all human beings.

Yesterday we gave the definition of 'Dhamma' that Dhamma is the system of practice that is correct according to our humanity, according to all stages and

levels of human evolution, that is beneficial both for ourselves and for others. Dhamma as defined in this way can help us, or is what we need in order to deal with all the situations and problems which arise in our lives. All these various situations can be described as these four duties or problems that we've just mentioned.

Let me talk about the things that we all need. The first thing that all of us are in need of – and Dhamma can help us to realize these things that we need – the first needs that I'd like to talk about are survival. We all need to survive. We can talk about three kinds of survival at the beginning. We can talk about material survival, physical survival or bodily survival, and we can talk about social survival. Dhamma can help, can give us what we need to solve the problems inherent in these three types of survival. So there's the material survival where, using Dhamma, we can take care of all the problems we have related to the material necessities of life, such as food and clothing. Then there is the physical survival – the things we need to do to keep the body going. And then social survival, using Dhamma we can solve the problems that arise between ourselves and the other members of society. So Dhamma can work on these three levels: the material, the physical or bodily, and the social levels – in order to solve problems and bring about our survival. This is the first way that we can use Dhamma.

When we speak about material survival, we're talking about all the various material things that are necessary to maintain life. So we're talking about the food, our clothing, housing, medicine, various other material things that we need to find and use in our lives. If we use these things without Dhamma, there will be problems. If there's no understanding in application of Dhamma, these food or clothing or shelter can be used in foolish ways, or the way we go about getting them can be dangerous to ourselves and others; and so this can lead to all sorts of problems. But when we use Dhamma regarding these material things, then no problems arise in our obtaining and using the necessities of life, the physical necessities of life. So eliminating the problems from this aspect or sphere of life is what we mean by 'material survival.'

Now we come to physical or bodily survival. (Let me correct what I've just said. With the material things let's just say that is the acquiring of necessities of life). Now when we come to talking about physical survival, it is the using and maintaining of the body. So once food has been obtained, it must be used properly. Shelter and clothes must be used properly so as to ensure a healthy life. So the way we go about living, the way we practice our lives must have Dhamma so that the various things we do are done in balance and in ways that

do not cause problems. Things as how we bathe, how we eat, how we sleep, how we go to the toilet, the way we exercise and take care of the body – these all must be done with Dhamma. If they aren't, if there is no Dhamma in these, then we will make mistakes and cause ourselves all kinds of physical, bodily problems. So the second kind of survival also depends on Dhamma.

So now we come to social survival. I'd like to ask you all to pay attention to and remember the Buddhist's way of approaching society. It's traditional in Buddhism that when we talk about society, to see it in six directions. We can view society as six directions. The first direction is that which in front of us which is the east, and behind us the west. The direction to our left is the north and the direction on our right is the south. Then there's the direction above us and the direction below us. So when we talk about 'society' or *saṅgāma* [??] in Pāli we're talking about these six directions, and we must use Dhamma in relation to all six of these directions so that they are correct. It probably isn't necessary to go into all the details of each of these six directions. We just mention each of them by name.

The first direction, the direction in front of us, or the east, represents our parents or whoever in life has acted as our parents, our mother and father. So the first direction is how to properly carry out one's duty for one's parents so there are no problems arising. The direction behind us, the west, are our husbands, wives, and children. We must also have those relationships in order. To the left are our friends and on our right are our teachers, the people through life who have taught us useful things about living in society. And then above us are the *buddhas*, the gods, the saints, the perfected ones, all the way down to the kings and people who have more power than we do. So we can summarize as our superiors, those who are above us. And then below us would be those who have less power than us. If we own a business the people who work for us; or if we have servants at our house, these people, so workers, laborers, who work for us, or anyone who is under our authority, in short our inferiors – this is the sixth direction.

With Dhamma it is possible to prevent and eliminate all problems in regard to each of these six directions. So, by using Dhamma properly, it is possible to have no social problems, to live in a way where one's relationships are in order so that no problems arise. This can be done by using Dhamma. So Dhamma means 'to practice correctly towards each and everything.' It is the practice of Dhamma to act and live correctly in the various relationships with others and with things around us. This is the practice of Dhamma. So, by doing so, we live correctly in relationship to each of these six directions. No problems arise. And

in this way we have no problems with all the world. It's possible to live correctly and properly with all the things around us in the six directions. This is through the practice of Dhamma.

What we've been talking about so far is fundamental or a foundation of survival. There is material survival, physical-bodily survival, and then social survival. Together this takes care of the basic fundamental survival that is necessary for life. When Dhamma helps us to do all these things correctly, then we have established a foundation for survival.

So that was the first kind of survival. Now we move on a second kind of survival. The second kind is mental survival. This means solving all the problems that arise with the mind. We can do this by having control over the mind, having trained and developed the mind so that it has control. So when the mind has some feelings or in a state that is harmful and destructive, the mind can remove itself from that state and put itself in a state that is useful, that isn't *dukkha*. So the mind learns to develop this control, especially in steps 9, 10, 11, and 12 of *ānāpānasati*. The mind develops this kind of control and power to remove itself or to eliminate harmful state of mind so that it can enter into useful states of mind which are free of *dukkha*. To be able to do so is to be able to survive mentally, to have control over any mental problems that might arise so that they can be dealt with and eliminated. This is the second kind of survival – mental survival.

So if we look at the third tetrad or the third grouping within mindfulness of breathing (steps 9, 10, 11, and 12), we'll see that this is how the mind develops the ability, has the power to control itself so that it can have complete mastering over mental states. For example, step 10 – when the mind can enter into states of satisfaction, happiness, gladness, enjoyment at will, it can move in and out of these different kinds of states in order to gladden itself; or step 11 – the mind can concentrate itself to be steadfast, firm, concentrated at will on anything; or step 12 – the mind is able to be released, to let go of all the attachments, of any attachment that is present, to let go of the defilements in order to be calm, tranquil, and at peace. So this is the way to mental survival, for the mind to have this kind of control. If you want, the mind can also enter into all kinds of states. If we speak the way traditional villagers would speak, we can say that we can enter into the mind states or we can become celestial beings. These are called *devas*. So we can become celestial beings and having the kind of enjoyment of very fine sensual pleasures as the celestial beings are reported to experience. Or to go above that and to be *Brahmas*. Brahmas are gods living in realms where there is [fine material] non-material pleasure – it's not sensual pleasure, but it's

fine material being, high states of concentration. (Excuse me, it's 'fine material' not 'non-material.') Or we can go into even higher states than that. This can be done because of the mind's ability to control itself. If we want we can also enter into wicked defiled states of mind if there was some reason we would want to do such a thing. So this is what happens in the third tetrad, the third grouping of four steps in mindfulness of breathing. And this is the meaning of 'mental survival' – to be able to have this kind of control over the mind so that all problems, all *dukkha* can be avoided, as far as applies to the mind.

In order to make this point clear I'd like to explain another Dhamma word for you. This word is *opapātika* which is often translated 'spontaneous birth' or 'immediate mental birth.' That may not make much sense to you, so we explain it a little bit. *Opapātika* is a spontaneous kind of birth where there are no mothers and fathers involved. It's a mental birth; it's not birth from a mother. It's an immediate spontaneous kind of thing that doesn't involve the long biological process of physical birth. This is an immediate kind of mental birth that happens all the time. For example, if you think like a dog, then you are born as a dog. That is *opapātika* as a dog. When you think like a pig, then that is *opapātika* as a pig. You think as a criminal, that is spontaneous birth as a criminal. Thinking as a gentleman or a wise man or whatever, it's spontaneous birth in those ways. This all happens within the same body. It's the same body but when the mind thinks in this way, it's born this way; and when it thinks that way, it's born that way. So in this way, within the same body there can be birth as animals, as good people, bad people; as celestial beings, Brahma gods, higher Brahma gods; or as the hungry ghosts and the cowardly titans and all the other denizens of hell. *Opapātika* can be birth immediately and spontaneously in any of these different realms even though it's still the same body. This is something very useful to understand. If you understand it, then you will be very careful about being born as a dog, or as a pig, or as a cowardly titan, or a hungry ravenous ghost. If you understand this, then you will see that mental survival means having the control over the mind so the mind does not *opapātika* in realms that are *dukkha*; but will only *opapātika* in realms that we need, that are beneficial to us, and that are not *dukkha*. So try your best to understand what we mean by *opapātika* – spontaneous immediate mental birth, all within the same body.

So by having Dhamma in this second way brings about mental survival. Having complete control over the mental states, over the states of mind, or we can call them the 'states or levels of consciousness' so that the mind never falls into lower states of mind (the states of fear, cowardice, worry, greed, anger,

hatred), and avoids all these low defiled debilitating states of mind which are all dukkha. Instead the mind has the control to enter into higher states of mind, and in this way is able to survive. A mind that must dwell in the lower states of mind is under great torment and torture. This is why the lower states of mind are often depicted as being ‘hell’ and how it’s a place of great torment and torture. This happens spontaneously within this very body when the mind *opapātika* in hellish realms of anger, greed, worry, fear, etc. But a mind that has Dhamma is able to survive mentally, and avoid the realms of hell, and can be born in the higher realms (the various heavens and celestial realms) or at least in a proper human realm so that it is free of dukkha. This is the second kind of survival, mental survival.

Now we come to the third and last kind of survival, spiritual survival. First kinds of survival are worldly relative kinds of survival. They’re still caught in the world, either the world around in material-physical survival, social survival; or the world within as mental survival. But both of these kinds are caught up in the conditioning and the relative truth of the world. When we come to the third kind of survival, it’s a kind of survival that is freedom from the world. It’s to transcend and be above the world. So we can also call it ‘super-mundane’ or ‘ultra-mundane’ survival (beyond the world, to be free of the world). The first two kinds of survival deal with using Dhamma to establish relationships properly to the things around us, or to have control over the mind states so that these things no longer cause problems. But when we come to spiritual survival, we’re talking about something that eliminates all problems whatsoever. Spiritual survival involves the understanding and realization that what’s been going on in the first two kinds of survival is straightening out the situations both physical and mental that we find ourselves in so that these situations are not dukkha. So in general it’s a movement from *dukkha* to *sukha* – *sukha* is happiness – getting ourselves out of painful situations into happy ones. But in doing so there’s always an ‘I,’ some ‘self’ that either experiences the dukkha or experiences the happiness. And so this ‘self’ is always subject to these changing conditions. Spiritual survival is to be free of that ‘self.’ By being free of that ‘self,’ then there’s no longer anything to experience all the different problems we’ve been talking about. So spiritual survival is the final cure for all our problems. It’s the realization that there is no ‘I,’ there is no ‘myself’ that experiences these various problems. And in this way, we are able to transcend this worldly existence of I & mine, of possessiveness & identification, and to be above all these conditionings by no longer having an ‘I,’ a ‘self,’ a ‘me,’ a ‘soul’ or anything belonging to the ‘I & me,’ the ‘self,’ the ‘soul.’ So we are completely free of I & mine, of me & myself. This is spiritual survival.

This is the highest and final goal of Buddhist practice. We don't settle for just the first two kinds of survival because those are limited, conditioned, and impermanent. For true survival we need to have this third kind, spiritual survival, to transcend the 'self' and the limitations and conditions of the 'self' and of the world that 'belongs to the self.' This is spiritual survival, the highest goal of Buddhism. Those who have survived on the spiritual level, who have achieved this kind of survival, we call *arahanta* which can be translated as 'perfected human beings' – those who have completely reached the perfection of humanity. We can call this a kind of *opapātika*, spontaneous immediate mental rebirth as an arahanta. But notice, this kind of mental birth is much different than the mental birth into the various worldly realms – and by 'worldly' we mean those that which includes both heaven and hell in addition to the human world (human realms). This kind of *opapātika* as an arahanta is not a rebirth into any of those realms, a rebirth into the world. It is a birth, spontaneous mental birth into this body that is above the world, free of the world, that has survived all the problems, conditions, and limitations of the world. This happens by transcending, by eliminating, by getting rid of all ideas of 'I, me, self, soul.' This is the third kind of survival, the highest most sublime kind of survival – spiritual survival.

So if we come to step 13 of mindfulness of breathing which is the contemplation of *anicca*, of impermanence while breathing in and breathing out – this is called *aniccatā-nupassanā*... So in this step of the practice, the mind is now studying Dhamma completely and begins to focus on and note the *anicca* – the impermanence, the perpetual change and flux that is in all conditioned things. And as this is contemplated, it begins to be seen more and more completely. And as *anicca* is seen completely, then there is the seeing of *anattā* (not-self), that in all that perpetual change, in all that impermanence, there is no permanent essential individual entities which we would say, call a 'self' or 'soul.' In all that change there are no 'self' and no 'soul.' There's just change. This is to see *anattā*. And as *anattā* is seen, it will lead to the seeing of *suññatā*. *Suññatā* means the voidness of any meaning, of 'I' or 'mine.' So in all that change, nothing has the meaning, nothing can be rightly called 'I' or 'mine.' If we use these words, we're using them incorrectly or not truthfully because there's nothing that is rightfully 'I' or 'mine,' that has the meaning of the words 'I' and 'mine.' This is *suññatā*.

From seeing *suññatā* then there's the seeing of *idappaccayatā* (the law of nature, of cause and effect). And as *idappaccayatā* is seen, then there is the seeing that it's all 'just this.' There's just this change, just this *suññatā* and then

this *idappaccayatā*. None of it is ‘self,’ just what it is, ‘just thus’ – this we call *tathatā* (such-ness or thus-ness). It’s all ‘just this,’ ‘just thus,’ just the way it is, no other way. So this is very very useful because the realization of *tathatā* can solve all of our problems. When everything is just seen as *tathatā*, then nothing can ever be a problem again.

So it begins with seeing impermanence, seeing *anicca*. And this develops into seeing *anattā*, non-self or not-self, and *suññatā*, the voidness of any meaning of ‘I’ or ‘me’ or ‘mine’, *idappaccayatā*, the law of cause and effect that governs all this change, all this selfless impersonal change that is going on, which is all *tathatā*, ‘just thus,’ ‘only this.’ When there is the realization, the spiritual realization of *tathatā*, then nothing is a problem. Even if the body gets sick, if there is illness and pain, it is just seen as *tathatā*, ‘just thus’. It’s not ‘me,’ it’s not ‘mine’; just the working out of cause and effect. So those pains are not *dukkha*. There’s just the physical phenomena of illness but there is no *dukkha*. Because of that, there is no suffering or pain experienced in the mind. Because it’s just seen as *tathatā*, it’s not identified with or clung to. And when some illness is seen as *tathatā*, then one takes the necessary medical treatment. And if the illness goes away, if it passes away, and one is cured, that’s *tathatā*. Or if the illness doesn’t go away and gets worse, and the body dies, that’s *tathatā* too. The cure of the illness or the death, these all follow according to *anicca*, *anattā*, *suññatā*, *idappaccayatā*. So it’s all just *tathatā*, and neither the cure nor the death disturbs the mind that has survived spiritually.

So the important key to spiritual survival is to see impermanence, and then to keep looking more and more deeply into that impermanence to realize *anattā*, *suññatā*, *idappaccayatā*, and finally *tathatā*, such-ness, thus-ness. And this is the way out. This is the way of spiritual survival.

So *tathatā*, the realization of *tathatā* destroys the meaning of all dualities, of all the various pairs of opposites that are swirling around in our world. *Tathatā* cuts through all these distinctions between ‘this’ & ‘that’ to reveal thus-ness or such-ness. And in cutting through this, then we no longer attach to either side of a duality. We no longer get caught up in these discriminations, are no longer enslaved by them. So by realizing *tathatā* there is no longer enslavement to good or evil, or to winning & losing, to happiness & unhappiness. *Tathatā* cuts through all these distinctions and realizes that there’s only ‘thus,’ it’s ‘just this,’ the way it is, the way it is right now. When there is the realization of *tathatā*, there is no clinging to an advantage or a disadvantage, or profit and debt. The mind is freed from these dualistic pairs of opposites. This is the power of *tathatā*. This can free the mind from all the spinning around in worldly

existence.

So when we talk about using Dhamma in the highest sense, the highest level of using Dhamma is to use *tathatā*, use *tathatā* to transcend these limitations of conditioned dualistic experience. We can use *tathatā* to free the mind of all these. This is the use of Dhamma on the highest level. This is how to use the highest Dhamma that is *tathatā*, in order to survive spiritually.

Now please don't go and misunderstand and think that *tathatā* is some big high word that can't be used in ordinary life. We can apply this Dhamma of *tathatā* in even the most basic and simple of life's experiences. For example, if a young child has a doll or some toy, and plays with the doll, and it falls and breaks. The child begins to cry. Then the grandmother or someone who is taking care of the child (this is used to be very common in Thailand) will say to the child, '*Chen nan eng, chen nan eng.*' (It's just such and such; it's the way it is). 'Don't cry about it, don't laugh about it.' 'It's just *tathatā*.' So it's possible to use the Dhamma of *tathatā* with children in very basic situations so that we just see things as they are – as 'just such,' it's no other way, just this way. There's nothing to cry about, there's nothing to laugh about. Just see it as it is. So in this way *tathatā* can be applied to everything that happens. So we don't get lost in happiness or in sadness, but just see it for what it is. And when there is this realization of *tathatā*, there is no way that we see things as different, or that we discriminate and distinguish between this & that, between good & bad, and all those other things.

So *tathatā* is a *dhamma* that you can all use throughout your lives in each moment of every day. Become familiar with *tathatā* and learn how to use it in all situations in order to solve or to free yourselves of the problems of life. So whether our dolls break or not, it's still *tathatā*. Now, this matter of *tathatā* which we can use throughout our lives, this is taught in the Christian scriptures in the very first pages of the Bible. There's the story of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and how God forbade Adam and Eve to eat the fruit of that tree. This is about *tathatā*. This is all about how when Adam and Eve ate that fruit; then they came to know good & evil, which meant they attached, they clung to this discrimination of good & evil. So they no longer had the realization of *tathatā*. Without realizing that it's all just the way it is, it's 'just this,' neither good nor evil, Adam and Eve got themselves and the rest of us into all kinds of problems. So this is taught, this matter of *tathatā* is taught in the very first pages of the Bible. It's the same thing; however, many many of the Christian teachers talk about it in a different way. They give a completely different meaning to it and so they miss the opportunity to apply *tathatā* in order

to solve and deal with the problems of life.

In Thailand, for many many years, this has been taught, *tathatā* has been taught to children, to babies, small infants in their cribs. When something happens, the grandmother or whoever looks after them says, *chen nan eng*, *chen nan eng* or ‘just that.’ ‘That’s all it is, ‘just thus, just such’; and this is the meaning of *tathatā*. Unfortunately this very wise teaching which is given to infants and very very small children isn’t continued as the child grows and becomes a teenager. But it is possible to begin teaching this to very very young infants when they’re still in the crib. And it’s taught in the first pages of the Bible. And the use of this dhamma of *tathatā* in our lives can bring great benefits and free us from our conditioned *dukkha*.

There are three aspects or phases to our practice. The first phase is to give up evil, to abandon evil deeds in body, speech, and thought. This is the first phase. The second phase is to do good, to do good deeds in body, speech, and thought. The third phase, the final phase, is to purify the mind. This stage of purifying the mind is to realize *tathatā*; and then purify the mind of both good & evil, to free the mind of this discrimination between good & evil.

Now we begin with the elimination of evil, work on those really crude things, and then we begin to develop good qualities. But that’s not the highest thing there is because there is still this discrimination between good & evil. And that discrimination itself leads to all sorts of problems. So then it’s necessary to keep on with the practice in order to purify the mind, to finish with all these distinctions, to abandon good and to abandon evil, to transcend them both, to be above them both. This is the realization of *tathatā*. So for complete practice there needs to be this movement always towards the purification of the mind. Don’t settle just for the abandoning or the giving up of the evil things and the development of good things, but also liberate the mind from all these discriminations, free the mind from both good & evil by realizing *tathatā*.

Now I’d like to go back to the point we began with of how to use Dhamma. We need to explain that this word ‘Dhamma’ means many many things. It means ‘everything,’ everything, all phenomena, all noumena also. Everything is Dhamma. There’s nothing excluded from Dhamma – nothing anywhere in the universe, in the cosmos. So Dhamma is everything. We can break out Dhamma or the *dhammas* into three categories. We can talk about the dhamma[s] that are tools or instruments. Then there are the dhamma[s] which are the activity itself. And then there are the dhamma[s] which are the results or fruit of the activity. So there’re all these dhammas and we can see them in these three categories of

the instrument, the activity or practice itself, and then the fruit of that practice.

What we mean when we're talking about *kon chai thamma* [Thai] or 'using Dhamma,' we're talking about the first group of Dhamma (the Dhamma as tools or instruments), we're talking about how to use these tools in a beneficial way. The highest, the most sublime, the most powerful of these tools is the understanding and realization of this matter we call *tathatā*. So we're talking about Dhamma as a tool, as tools; and the most powerful tool is *tathatā*.

Now if we look at *tathatā*, this tool, this Dhamma tool of *tathatā* more closely, we'll see that it's not just the tool but it's also a result. The result of correct practice is the realization of *tathatā*. And then that realization of *tathatā* can be applied as a tool leading to further realization, and then that newer realization can also be applied. If we look more closely, we can see *tathatā* is both a result of correct practice and also a tool for further deepening practice. And then *tathatā* as both a result and as a tool can progress successively in this way: first progress as a realization applied as a tool, further progress as a realization applied as a tool to help us go on and on further and deeper into the understanding of *tathatā*. So this tool of *tathatā* works in this way until the final fruit of *tathatā* which is to cut through all problems, to eliminate all *dukkha* from existence or from life. So this is how to use this tool of *tathatā* in order to eliminate all the problems that arise. This happens in the 13th step of *ānāpānasati* where the realization of *tathatā* begins; and then is applied as a tool for the rest of the practice in order to complete the practice of mindfulness of breathing, in order to free the mind. This *tathatā* is the highest most powerful tool available in our practice of Dhamma but there are many many many other tools which can be used. *Tathāta* is a tool that is developed through correct practice.

So now we'd like to talk about some other tools which are used in Dhamma practice, which help, lead up to the development of the tool of *tathatā*. So now we'd like to talk about some other tools or instruments that can be applied in our general practice of Dhamma. These can be applied on all sorts of levels and in all sorts of situations; and they can also be applied specifically to the practice of *ānāpānasati*. So I'd like to talk now about five tools that can be used in general.

The first of this tool is *saddhā*. *Saddhā* is faith, confidence, or certainty in what one's doing – it's the confidence that this practice if done correctly will free one from *dukkha*. So this is the beginning point of the practice: it's to have the faith and confidence that when this practice is done that it will lead to

freedom from dukkha. So for this first one of *saddhā* – without any *saddhā* you won't even come here to learn about *ānāpānasati*. You've come here with some faith that *ānāpānasati* may be of some use to you, of some help in dealing with problems of life. And then this faith grows into confidence and certainty that *ānāpānasati* definitely, absolutely – when practiced correctly – will lead to the solution of the problem of dukkha. This is the first one of these five.

The second one is called *virīya*. *Virīya* (energy). This is a sufficient amount of energy necessary to carry out the practice. Notice the word 'sufficient.' It's not boundless energy. It's sufficient energy both physical and mental, sufficient energy of all the kinds that are needed in order to carry out the practice. This is effort, the trying, the putting of effort into the practice in order that it may progress. This is the second of these general all-purpose dhammas.

The third tool is *sati* which we heard out already – mindfulness. Without mindfulness the practice from the beginning will have no chance of being correct. There must be mindfulness present from the start in order to keep the practice balance and correct. So *sati* is absolutely necessary. To help you understand what is meant by 'mindfulness,' one of the synonyms for it is 'heedfulness' which is the opposite of heedlessness or carelessness. So mindfulness has the synonym of heedfulness or carefulness. This is the third of very important all-purpose tool.

The fourth of these is *samādhi* which we heard a lot about in the first talk. This is the steadiness and focused concentrated mind which is best described as one-pointedness of mind that has Nibbāna as its object, that has the object of Nibbāna – this is *samādhi*. This is necessary for sufficient *samādhi* in the practice so that it stays focused on its goal, on the aim in order to progress in that direction.

The fifth of these is *paññā* (wisdom) or the knowledge of everything that needs to be known – so the things that need to be known; what needs to be known; how to use it; when to use it; where to use it; how much of all these things? This is *paññā*. This wisdom about the things we need to understand; how much of each of these things must be used, at what time, what place, in what way. This is *paññā* – the fifth of these all-purpose Dhamma tools.

These five tools are most important and necessary tools. These are five necessary tools of Dhamma. Now for all of you who are practicing *ānāpānasati*, if you reach a point in your practice where it doesn't go any further, or you get stuck at a certain point and there is no practice, then what you need to do is to examine yourself and see what shape these five tools are in. Look at them. Is the

power of faith and confidence strong enough? Is the power of energy strong enough? Is the power and force of mindfulness strong enough? The power of concentration, *samādhi*, and the power of wisdom? If you reach an impasse or a block in your practice, then you need to examine yourself and see what shape these five tools are in. If they are too little, then you need to find a way to boost them up, to strengthen them up and bring them up, or whichever one of them might be too weak or lacking. But also be careful that some of them might be too much. You don't want to overdo them either. But examine these five tools to see that they're strong enough so that they have the right amount of power, neither too much nor too little. But you want a balance between them.

So when we talk about *ānāpānasati* which is what we're emphasizing here in these ten days, then we use these five tools in our practice of *ānāpānasati*; and you need to have them at the right levels, at sufficient levels for your practice to continue. But these five tools are used in all sorts of practices, and so you can also apply them to your other activities. So these five tools of confidence or faith, belief, and then energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom – these must be used sufficiently throughout the practice of *ānāpānasati*. When these five are present, then the practice will continue and develop. So we use them through steps 1, 2, 3, and onwards of the practice of *ānāpānasati* until we come to step 13. In step 13 we use these five tools at the sufficient and appropriate level and degree in order to develop the tool of realization of *anicca*. Then as we begin to realize the impermanence this is the tool to realize not-self, *anattā*. It takes us onto seeing the voidness of any meaning of 'I' or 'mine,' *suññatā*; and then *idappaccayatā*, the law of cause and effect, until the tool of *tathatā* is developed.

We use the first five tools throughout the beginning stages of the practice; and then eventually use them to create the tool or develop the tool of *tathatā*. And then the tool of *tathatā* is used to finish things off, to cut through attachment so there is a fading away of attachment, the ending of attachment, and then the relinquishment of all the things that have been attached to. These five things can be used or this is how these five things are used in *ānāpānasati*. We use these general tools in order to develop the tool of *tathatā*. These five Dhamma tools are not restricted to just *ānāpānasati*. They can also be used in all the activities and business of your life. If you have any duty, task, work, or responsibility that you must carry out, then if you use these five tools of Dhamma, you'll be able to do that thing correctly and successfully. So these five are used in whatever aspect of our life when we must do something. Specifically we can use them in *ānāpānasati* in order to develop the tool, the

Dhamma tool of *tathatā*.

So we can summarize today's talk by saying that the practice of Dhamma is the use of these tools. To practice Dhamma is to use these tools. So get to know these tools in order to use them. Get to know them and understand what they are; and then begin to use them. As you use them, that is the practice of Dhamma. Use them in a way that is scientific, not superstitious. The word in Thai for 'scientific' or for 'science' is *witthayasat* ('the knowledge of knowing'), and the word for 'superstition' is *saiyasat* ('the knowledge of those who are asleep'). So as you use these tools, apply them in a scientific way. That means apply them by being wide-awake. Use them wisely, experiment with them, explore them. Use them and see what benefits they bring. Don't do this with your eyes closed. Don't do it while sleeping but do it while wide-awake. This is how to use these tools – use them scientifically. To do that is to be what we can call a 'Buddhist.' Now, we're not telling you to convert to some religion. We're using this word, 'Buddhist,' in a very special sense. It doesn't mean someone who has signed up or registered themselves under a certain category. When we use the word 'Buddhist' here, what we mean is someone who knows, someone who is awake, someone who has blossomed into truth, into the Dhamma. The word 'Buddha' means the one who knows, the knowing one, the awakened one who awakes others, and the one who has blossomed like a lotus and is perpetually fresh fragrant and open to the Dhamma. So to be a 'Buddhist' is to be one who knows, who is awake, who is fresh and open to the Dhamma. The way to do this is to practice Dhamma by using these five tools to do so for the benefit of oneself and for others, and to carry on this practice, and develop further and further into knowledge, into being awake, and into opening up to truth and reality. So on this point we will end today's talk.

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