

## Mindfulness with Breathing (Ānāpānasati), Part 3 of 8

### ĀNĀPĀNASATI : TETRAD I (Steps 3 & 4)

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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. All Ajahn's teachings are now available on:*

[www.suanmokkh.org](http://www.suanmokkh.org),

<https://soundcloud.com/buddhadasa> and

<https://www.youtube.com/@buddhadasabhikkhu7829>.

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Today we'll be speaking about the third and fourth steps of the first tetrad or the first part of the practice, which is the part of the practice that is dealing with the *kāya*, the body. In this step three, there will be the awareness or feeling of all bodies. Within the mind, there will be the feeling and awareness of all bodies while breathing in and breathing out. In the first two steps which were discussed yesterday, when we practice these steps, it will become evident that the breath conditions the body, that the different kinds of breath have a very powerful and direct influence upon the body. We begin to become aware of this in step one and two even though this is not the direct object of our attention. This isn't what we're specifically trying to do but nonetheless we begin to become aware of it. In step three which we're now discussing, we take that awareness that has already been developing and we start to note upon this fact of conditioning, the fact that the different kinds of breath condition the body. So in step three we note this specific interrelationship, the influence of the breath upon the body. This has been happening all along but now we focus on and take this as our direct object of meditation. In doing so we need to be clear that there are two kinds of body involved in this.

Remember the word '*kāya*' which we're translating to be 'body' but *kāya* literally means 'group'. Here we have two groups of body that are very important, the breath body and the flesh body. We need to see that these are two different kinds of bodies, the breathing and the flesh physical body of muscle, gristle, sinus, blood, skin and all that, particularly the flesh. There're these two bodies and we need to see them distinctly and then to see the interrelationship between them, the fact that they condition each other. These two bodies – the flesh bodies and the breath bodies – are interrelated and they condition each other. This is the fact. This is the secret of nature which must be noted in step three.

Now when you hear this word, ‘body,’ always remember that it has the meaning of ‘group’ as well. The original word the Buddha used was ‘*kāya*’ and this word also occurs in Thai and it’s pronounced ‘guy (ก๊วย).’ Both ‘*kāya*’ and ‘guy’ have the meaning of group. So when we’re talking about the body or bodies, we’re talking about groups of things or group of compounded components which have been gathered together. The word ‘body’ or ‘group’ or ‘*kāya*’ does not only apply to the physical human form which we carry around or which walks around, and we identify with it.

This word, ‘*kāya*’ or ‘body’ can apply to other things. For example, the word in Pāli for the infantry, for the part of the army which attacks is ‘*kāya*.’ It’s another kind of *kāya* and this word for body used for also a group of soldiers and it can be used in different ways. So in this step three which is described by the Buddha as “*sabba kāya patisamvedī*” which means experiencing all bodies. To understand what experiencing all bodies means, we have to have the correct understanding of what we mean by the word ‘body’ or by ‘*kāya*.’ The body or bodies that most specifically must be experienced in this part of the practice are the breath body and the flesh body. The specific meaning, the real point of this step is not only to be aware of these two kinds of body but to first be aware that there are these two kinds of body – the breath body and the flesh body – and then to see that one of these bodies conditions, influences the other body. This kind of knowledge has been happening since the beginning of the practice. We’ve been aware of these two bodies in some way all along and we’ve also noticed the influence between the breath body and the flesh body. For instance, as the breathing becomes more long and peaceful, then the flesh body will relax and there will be less stiffness and pain. This is something that we should have become aware of in the first couple steps but in step three here we make this very clear. We study this fact very closely. We focus upon it until it is absolutely clear and then we will definitely have experienced the truth that there’re the breath body and the flesh body and the breath body conditions, influences the flesh body.

Now when there are these two bodies, we can give a special name to the first kind of body that is the breathing. We call it the ‘*kāyasāṅkhāra*’. The word ‘*sāṅkhāra*’ means to condition in this case. So ‘*kāyasāṅkhāra*’ means the body conditioner. We give this special name to the breathing that it is the body conditioner. The breathing conditions the body. The body itself is something which is conditioned. It is the object of the conditioning. So we have these three important aspects of the cause and effect relationship of conditioning. There is; the breathing, the body conditioner – the body that which is conditioned, and there is the process of conditioning that interrelates the two of them. As this is seen very clearly and deeply or we can say it experiences in the mind, this is taken as an object of the mind. The mind makes this awareness become very clear of it within itself and then we see that the flesh body is dependent upon the body conditioner that is the breathing. This is seen on a material level, the truth of *anattā* – not soul, not self. Because in seeing this interrelationship that there is nothing but this process of conditioning, then there is the beginning of the realization of the truth, of *anattā*. However, the understanding of this truth of *anattā* is not the specific object of this step. We’re just pointing out that even at this point, there begins to be some understanding of this deep universal truth, but the essential thing is to realize the interrelationship of dependence in conditioning between the body conditioner – the breathing, and the flesh body.

We will take this opportunity to discuss the word ‘*sāṅkhāra*’ a bit. This is a very common and important word in the Pāli scripture, and many people have a lot of problems with it because it has a few different meanings – very closely related meanings, but still quite different. So we will

explain this to you now in hope that there will be of use to you. This has to do with the vagueness of the Pāli language and there is nothing we can do about that.

This word ‘*saṅkhāra*,’ has three basic meanings. The first meaning is conditioner that which conditions. Second meaning is the thing which is conditioned – the conditioned thing that which receives the act of conditioning. And the third meaning is the act or process of conditioning itself. The first two meanings are noun – the thing which conditions something else and second that thing which is conditioned. The first meaning is the subject of the conditioning, and the second meaning is the object. Then the third meaning is the verb which describes the act of conditioning itself. There’re these three different meanings of the word ‘*saṅkhāra*’ and you need to be aware of all three because in spite of these three distinct processes or things, we use the same word, ‘*saṅkhāra*.’ So in summary ‘*saṅkhāra*’ means: one – the conditioner; two – that which is conditioned; and three – the act of conditioning.

Now for this word, ‘*saṅkhāra*,’ you don’t have to study it in any books or in a theoretical way. That’s completely unnecessary. You can study the word ‘*saṅkhāra*’ within this body, right here. You don’t have to look outside of yourself in any way to study the word ‘*saṅkhāra*.’ By studying the body itself, we will see that the body is a *saṅkhāra*. The body is something which has been conditioned. A variety of causes have led to this result which we call the ‘body.’ So in this way we can see that the body is a *saṅkhāra* because it has been conditioned by various things such as our parents or the food we eat. Then we can also see that this body conditions other things such as thoughts, feelings, sensations which are conditioned because of the body. Without the body, these thoughts, feelings, sensations and whatever will not happen. We can see that these thoughts, feelings and sensations are also *saṅkhāra* in the meaning of things that are conditioned and then the body itself is the conditioner of those things. So we can see the body in one way, and that which is conditioned, and then we can also see the body as that which conditions other things. The body is both a conditioned thing and a conditioner. These are the first two meanings of the word ‘*saṅkhāra*.’ And then as for the third meaning, by watching the body, by studying it, then we will see that there is a constant process of conditioning going on within the body – this is the third meaning of the word ‘*saṅkhāra*.’ Please learn the meaning of this word ‘*saṅkhāra*,’ right here in this body and then you will have a profound understanding of this truth which will be very useful in helping you to understand the most profound truth about life. So use the body to study the *saṅkhāra*.

Now in step three, we can completely study the *saṅkhāra*. What have just been described, the three meanings of *saṅkhāra*, can be fully understood as they relate to physical things by fully practicing step three of mindfulness of breathing. So in step three of the practice of mindfulness of breathing, we are aware of the body, the flesh body, as something which is conditioned, a conditioned thing. And then we see the breath as the conditioner of that flesh body. There is the breath – the conditioner of the body, the conditioned thing – the object of that conditioning, and then we see that activity of conditioning which ties together the conditioner and the conditioned object of the conditioning. So in step three of mindfulness of breathing, these three meanings of the word ‘*saṅkhāra*’ can be seen completely. This will be conditioning of what we call the ‘body,’ – its conditioning seen on physical level. We haven’t yet seen it on the mental level. So this is the work that must be done in the mind. The mind has this work to do, to see the conditioner – the breathing, the conditioned object – the body, and the process or activity of conditioning. To see the three meanings of *saṅkhāra* while breathing in and breathing out – this is the work which must be done within the mind.

So in step three, there is the awareness of these three facts of the three meanings of the word ‘*sāṅkhāra*’ as they relate to the breathing and the body. These facts are clearly seen within the mind with every in-breath and every out-breath. This is the meaning of ‘fully experiencing all body.’ The Buddha said that step three of this practice is “fully experiencing all body” and this means for the mind to be completely clear of these three truths: the breath is the body conditioner, the body is conditioned, and there is the process of conditioning linking the two. These are the facts which the mind must be clear of, must fully experience with every in-breath and every out-breath. When this can be done, when the mind can note and be clear of these three facts simultaneously while breathing in and breathing out, then step three has been fulfilled.

To summarize this, when it is clearly seen within the mind, when the mind is fully aware that one body can be controlled by another body which means the flesh body can be controlled or directed or influenced in any way we want by the breath body. When this fact is completely clear, when the mind is absolutely certain about this, when this has been fully experienced, then we can say that step three has been successfully completed.

So at this point the knowledge has been developed about this interrelationship. Now there is also the knowledge that tells us it is possible to control the flesh body, to direct the flesh body, in different ways by using the breathing. So now we have that knowledge and there is the ability to do this. By completing step three, we now possess the knowledge and ability to control the body in a variety of ways.

The point of step four is as the Buddha said “calming the body conditioner,” that is the breathing, calming the body conditioner, the *kāyasāṅkhāra*, while breathing in and calming *kāyasāṅkhāra*, the body conditioner, while breathing out. This is the object of the practice of step four of mindfulness of breathing. Now note this specific wording of this step, ‘calming the body conditioner’ – That means calming the breath body using a variety of techniques and methods which we have learned about already from the complete and successful practice of step one, two and three. We will have a variety of techniques to experiment with and use in order to calm the breathing. So in step four, the specific object of practice is calming the breathing, calming the body conditioner. As this is done, there will be very interesting and powerful results. First of all, by calming the breath body as we’ve already been told, the flesh body will also become very calm, relaxed and tranquil. Then as the flesh body becomes calm and relaxed, the mind will also become very calm. This is the very interesting point which will be perfected in step four that by calming the breathing, the body is calm and in addition, the mind becomes very calm. This is the first point to be considered in the practice of step four.

Now in the practice of step four, we have what can be called a ‘skilful means’ or maybe a ‘technic’ or possibly we could call it a ‘trick,’ depending on how we want to translate the word or how we want to look at it. But for doing things there are often rather crude and coarse ways of doing something, but we can also discover very fine, subtle and refined ways of doing things. Now what we’re talking about is that we have very refined and skilful techniques or tricks to use in calming the breathing.

The object of step four is to calm the breathing and we would do so using fine, very skilful and refined techniques or tricks. The first one of these is something that has been used in the previous step which is called ‘following the breath.’ The first technique or trick is to follow the breath. The second technique which can be used is to guard the breath at one point – to choose one point along the breath path and guard the breath at just that point. The third technique or trick is to give rise to

an imaginary image. We'll talk about this a little bit later. To give rise to an imaginary image, not something that you feel like you see it, but it's not caused by any external stimulant. This is the third technic – to cause this image to arise. The fourth technic is to play with that image, to manipulate it, to change it in all kinds of different ways depending on our inclination. And then the fifth technic is to direct one of those possible images and fix it in a very stable and solid condition which will allow the breath to become very calm and peaceful. These are the five technics or tricks we can use: following the breath, guarding the breath at one point, giving rise to the mental image, playing with the mental image, and then fixing the mental image. These are five tricks which can be used in step four.

The first of these tricks, we don't have to discuss in great detail because you've already heard about it. This technic of following the breath or hunting the breath, chasing the breath in and out has been used in step one, two and three. So now here at the beginning of step four, we just perfect this hunting or following of the breath. Once this can be done perfectly, then we move on to the second trick.

The second trick is to choose one point along the breath path and to watch the breath or guard it at that point. The easiest point to use for a variety of reasons is the place in the nose where you most easily feel the in-breath. When you breath in, you will feel some point in the nose, within on the inside where the air touches the skin, the physical sensation. So to do the second trick, we must identify that point. For each of us, the point will be in a different place. It depends on the physio-anatomy or the shape of the nose and lip. For people who have a hooked nose that bends down, they maybe will feel this point very high up in the nose. Some people, if they have a squashed nose, may feel that point more on the upper lip. So it's gonna be different for everyone. It's not important exactly where that point is but it's just that you find that point somewhere in your nose or maybe even on the upper lip where you feel the breathing. If you can feel this point by breathing normally, then that's fine. If you can't feel it with normal breathing, then you can identify it with a few strong breaths. Once you find this point which should always remain in about the same place unless the shape of your nose changes, then you guard that point as the breath passes in and out. The mind stays right at that point and then watches the breath go in and out, but the mind no longer follows the breath. The mind has stopped following the breath and stays at this one point. Doing so is much more relaxing. So this is a more refined trick than hunting or following the breath. When the mind follows the breath, there's still a lot of movement and so after that hunting has been perfected, then the mind can stay at this one point somewhere inside the nose. Just stays there and in doing so the mind can become very peaceful and the breath is able to become even calmer.

We can go back up a little bit to the moment we began to watch the breathing. If one has observed it, one will see that as soon as the mind begins to become aware of the breathing, the breath will begin to become peaceful. Just the act of the mind starting to be aware of the breath, calms the breath a bit, makes the breath a little more relaxed. So in following the breath, using this technic, the breathing begins to calm down. Then taking a more refined trick, such as staying at this point in the nose, the breathing calms down even more. When this has been done, then it's time to use the third trick which is even more refined than the previous two.

The third trick is called 'giving rise to the mental image' or 'creating a mental image.' By 'mental image,' we mean some object of the mind which appears to be visual, but it is not seen with the eyes. You can close the eyes and you still see it. You can open the eyes and you still see it. It's very similar to a hallucination but this is not something that comes out of who knows

where, but it's something that the mind creates by itself to use as a skilful means for calming the breathing. This mental image can have a variety of different shapes which depend on whatever the mind wants to create. It can look like a candle flame, for instance, or it can look like a drop of water or a spider web in the sunlight or a small cloud or a puff of cotton, a whiff of smoke. It can look like the sun or the moon or different kinds of things. There are a variety of images which can arise and it would depend on what the mind wants to create. In creating this, the mind will create the image at that very same point that you have been guarding the breath. So in step two of guarding the breath at one point in the nose, then as concentration deepens at a certain point, the mind can create a mental image at that very same point. Whether the eyes are open or closed, the mind sees that image. This is the kind of seeing that doesn't involve the eyeball or the optic nerve. It's a mental seeing. This is why we call it a 'mental image' and try to describe it. This image can then be used in step two, can be used to calm the breathing. This is step three – creating or giving rise to this mental image.

Once step three has been done – when this mental image or imaginary object has been created, then it is time for trick number four. The trick number four is to change or manipulate that imaginary object in a variety of ways. Since the mind created this thing in the first place, then the mind should have the ability to change it, to manipulate it, to play with it. So in step four, the mind starts to play with this and in doing so it calms the breathing. For this image to change, the breath must become steadily more and more peaceful and as the breath becomes more peaceful, the image will change. So this is involving a relationship between the mind and the breathing. In this continuing the process of step four of calming the body conditioner, calming the breathing, this image is changed in different ways, in whichever way the mind feels like it. It depends on the mind's inclination and preferences or whatever ideas occur to the mind and then the image can be changed in different ways, and this is the experiment in order to calm the breathing more and more. This image can be made bigger. Whatever the image is, it can be made very big until it is bigger than the sun. It can be shrunk down until it's very small. It can be made to float up or float down, float from one side to the other. The shape can be changed. Anything which occurs to the mind can be done through experiment and practice. In doing so the breath is calm more and more and in fact for the image to change, the breath must become more and more calm. This is trick number four in calming the breathing.

Let's consider the process of calming a bit. Remember that in step four the object of the practice is the calming of the body conditioner. Also let me point out, remember we're talking about the first four steps now, which have to do with the body. And in this fourth step there are five techniques or tricks. I hope you can keep this number straight. So in step four, we're using these five tricks. The fourth of these five tricks is manipulating the mental image. Now in the process of calming the breath which begins with becoming aware of the breath, following it, guarding it at one point, creating the mental image, and then manipulating the mental image – all of these are things that can be done and just by doing them, the breath automatically becomes more peaceful and calm. So doing these various techniques, learning how to do them and practicing them, experimenting and developing these techniques or ability, these skills are ways that will automatically calm the breathing. You don't have to be bending yourself out of shape, trying to calm the breath in a crude way. Use these subtle techniques and learn how do these various techniques, and the breath will become calm and relaxed automatically, will become more and more refined and subtle and gentle by using these various techniques. Using these techniques, the breath automatically becomes calm. As the breath becomes calm, the flesh body automatically relaxes and becomes very calm. We're not specifically concerned with this at this point. We

point out that as the body relaxes and becomes calm, there's also an effect on the mind and the mind also becomes more tranquil. This is done by performing these various tricks and then there is an automatic calming of the breath and the body. While you're doing all these, you can be aware that the breath is becoming calm, and the body is becoming calm. Because you basically learned about these already, so to be aware of it as it's happening in this part of the practice should not be difficult.

The fifth trick, we can call 'fixing the mental image.' After the fourth trick of manipulating and playing with the mental image, making it do all kinds of things, including change shape and change color, now we must choose one form or one specific mental image that is most appropriate for calming the mind. Of a variety of mental images and changes that the mind has come across, that has been able to create, we choose one of them which is relaxing and peaceful and easy to focus upon and then this image is concentrated upon in order for the mind to become very peaceful. The best kind of image for this is a very neutral type of image. Often a white sphere or a small spot of sunlight is very good for this because these are neutral things. They don't excite a lot of feelings, emotions or thoughts. If you choose an image that will lead to a lot of thinking, then you will not have much success at calming the mind or if you choose one that has a very attractive color, it may be fun to look at it, but the mind will not become very relaxed. So it is very good to choose something that is very tranquil, neutral and calming as the image. Some people like to use a Buddha image. They imagine a picture of the Buddha. They like to concentrate on this, but this tends to lead to all kinds of thinking and emotions which is not useful. So the best kind of image is something like a soft white neutral sphere, and then the mind can focus upon it and concentrate on that very neutral image. Then there won't be a tendency to get lost in thought or there won't be a lot of emotions stirred up or lots of mental associations. Then the mind can concentrate on that image, become very calm and peaceful. This is the fifth trick of step four – calming the body conditioner, the breathing.

Now in the fifth trick, the mind takes this one object which it has found and then selected as most appropriate for becoming calm and concentrated. The mind will take this object and focus upon it. You should be aware that most of the time the mind is, we could say, radiating outward. The mind is spreading outward all the time like the light coming out of a lightbulb. Now at this part of the practice, the trick number five, we need to turn all this flowing outward of the mind inward onto one point. We have chosen this image as something that is very easy to focus upon, and so now that flowing of the mind outward is directed completely at that image, at that one point. All of the mind's flowing outward, all of the mind's energy is directed at this one point. In doing so we develop what is called 'one-pointedness of mind,' when all of the mind is focused on one point or on one spot. This is done using that image. So it must be an image that is easy to concentrate on and an image that is peaceful and not disturbing. If the image is in anyway disturbing or agitating or too interesting, then the mind will not be able to direct itself and gather itself and focus itself on that one point. So in trick number five, the mind learns to turn that flowing outward all towards one point and when this is done to a completion, the mind will develop one-pointedness. The mind will have one-pointedness on that mental image to the degree that the mind only knows that object and it's aware of nothing else. It's only the awareness of that object, of that mental image which has been chosen for this purpose.

When there is this one-pointedness of mind, when the mind has turned that flow completely towards one point, so that there is no other object of the mind, so the mind is not wandering on anything else – this is one-pointedness. When the mind has developed this one-pointedness, we

can say that the mind has reached the first *jhāna*. This is the word that is translated in all kinds of different ways. Some people can translate it as the meditation, meaning that this is the first level of perfected concentration. It's also translated as absorption because the mind is fully absorbed into this object. I'll use the word 'absorption,' or I'll just use the word '*jhāna*,' the Pāli word.

In the first *jhāna* which happens when there is one-pointedness of mind on that image, there will be no thinking and no conceptualization taking place. However, there will be five activities of mind that will be happening within this first *jhāna*. These five activities of mind are still relatively coarse, and crude compared to the other *jhānas* – the second, third, fourth and so on. But compared to the mind that most of us are used to, this is a very refined mind. But in terms of the *jhāna*, the first *jhāna* is relatively coarse because there are these five activities going on. The first activity or what is usually called 'factor of *jhāna*,' the first factor of *jhāna* is called '*vitakka*.' *Vitakka* is the noting of the object, whatever the object may be – this is the first factor. The second factor is '*vicāra*' which is the experiencing of the object, the scrutinizing, the examination of the object which is in no way conceptual or involving thinking. These are the first two factors. When the mind is able to do these two things, it develops a feeling of satisfaction which is a very pleasant feeling of being successful and being satisfied in doing this. This is called '*pīti*.' *Pīti* is the third factor. When there is *pīti*, there is also the fourth factor which we call '*sukha*' or happiness, joy, bliss. And then the fifth factor of *jhāna* is one-pointedness which we've already described. So when the mind has one-pointedness on that object, at this point we're probably still using that mental image, there will be five factors of *jhāna*: *vitakka* – noting that object, *vicāra* – experiencing the object, *pīti* – satisfaction, *sukha* – joy or bliss, and *ekaggatā* – one-pointedness. These are the five factors of *jhāna*. In this case concentration has been perfected but only on the first level. There are higher levels of perfection, of concentration which may seem a bit amusing to you but at this point there is the first *jhāna*, the first level of the perfection of concentration.

I'd like to make a few comments about this word, *ekaggatā*, which has been translated one-pointedness. Literally the translation of this word should be 'when the mind has one peak or pinnacle.' The Thai word is the same word that is used either for the very top of a mountain, the peak or the pinnacle of, may be, the peak of a pyramid, also used for a growing plant, the very newest part of a plant, the very highest and newest part is the 'yod (ยอด)' and this is I've been translating as 'point' which is a common translation. But if we understand this as a point, we may think of it – it could be any point, a point over here or over there or some on a very low level. So we want to point out the proper meaning of '*ekaggatā*' or when the mind has one peak, one pinnacle that is on high level. The mind is gathered together from low levels up to one peak and this is the proper meaning of *ekaggatā* – the mind is completely gathered together on one peak, so it's something that's on a high level. Please understand that.

When there is this one peakedness or one pinnacledness of mind, this is called 'the first *jhāna*' which is a very deep level of concentration. If you can achieve this, that's very good and it can be very interesting and useful for you and it's possible to concentrate the mind even further into the second and third and fourth *jhāna* which are called the 'form *jhānas*.' And then there are also even more refined levels of concentration which are called the 'formless or non-material *jhānas*.' But regarding the practice of *ānāpānasati*, those very refined levels of concentration are not necessary. We only need to have a sufficient and appropriate level of concentration to go on in the practice of *ānāpānasati*.

So regarding step four, if step four can be developed to the point of one pointedness or one peakedness, very good and you can take it even further if you wish. But what is necessary is a sufficient level of concentration. The level of concentration that is sufficient is when there is enough concentration for the *pīti* and *sukha* to arise. I talked about the five factors of *jhāna*. Before there is a complete one-pointedness, these factors will arise to some degree. When *pīti*, contentedness or satisfaction, which is a very pleasant, exciting energetic feeling and then *sukha* which is a more subtle refined happy joyful feeling – when there are these two kinds of feelings arising, then there is sufficient concentration. When these feelings are clear enough, are strong enough for the mind to be clearly aware of them, this is a sufficient level of concentration to be able to go on to step five of mindfulness of breathing. So please very careful on this point. It's often confused. I've just told you what is enough. If you want to go further than that, you can but we've just described what is sufficient concentration.

Now we've been talking about step four. Many of you might be wondering or thinking that this will be very difficult to do. Let me point out, if you have been paying attention, listening carefully, then you will understand the proper way to do this practice. If you do the practice correctly, it will not be very difficult. However, if you do the practice incorrectly, then it may be very difficult. The point of this talks we've been giving is to clearly explain what need to be done. Most of you are still at the beginning, working on step one and you need to continue doing that until you have completed step one but that doesn't mean you don't have to pay attention to step four. Because if you don't know what to do, then it's very difficult for you to do it. So we're giving as clear instructions as we can, so you'll understand proper ways to do this practice. If you follow the instructions correctly, if you've been listening, then it will not be so difficult to do the practice. But we don't know if you are going to follow the instructions or not. So to be able to do this might take three days, three weeks, three months, three years or, who knows, how long.

Many people don't like to follow instructions. They prefer to mix everything up with their own ideas and opinions or they like to make a hotchpotch of things they read from books or heard from different places. That's your own choice. You can do what you wish but if you want to make this practice as easy for yourself and as successful as possible, then we recommend you follow the instructions that we are giving here. We're doing our best to explain the proper way to do this technic correctly and in the easiest most successful way. Whether you're doing it in this way is your own choice. So whether it is difficult or easy is essentially up to you.

So this is how to calm the breathing. The breathing is calmed by developing this one-pointedness or one-peakedness of mind. Once you have developed this one-pointedness once, then you need to practice doing this. The mind needs to become very expert in doing this, so the mind can become one-pointed very quickly. Once this is happened for the first time, then keep working on it. Perfect this ability, so the mind can go in and out of this deep level of concentration very easy or to put it another way, so the breath can be calmed very quickly. You must become very well versed in these series of these five tricks that can used to calm the breathing, become well versed in them, expert and extremely proficient in them. When you have developed this degree of expertise and proficiency, then step four will have been completed. The completion of step four is the completion of the first group of steps or the first tetrad. Tetrad means a group of four. So the tetrad that is based on the *kāya*, the body, is completed when we become proficient in calming the breathing. So we hope that you have understood the instructions, so that you will be

able to follow them and meet with the highest level of success in your practice. Time is up and so we request that today's meeting ends at this time. Thank you.

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