

Notes from discussions with Ajahn Sujin Boriharnwanaket in Sri Lanka 1979

by Sarah Procter Abbott

- This moment cannot be lost.
- Each word of the teachings can be directly experienced.
- If one does not realise yet that one has wrong understanding, it is impossible to develop right understanding.
- Some people are afraid to watch T.V., but even now we are lost in concepts with no awareness.
- Live alone with sati and paññā, with awareness and understanding of visible object as just visible object.
- One takes subtle attachment for calmness because of lack of understanding of calmness.
- This moment is so real.
- At a moment of right considering, there is no forgetfulness.
- When there is awareness with understanding, there is no thinking of far or near objects.
- Life is so short, so fragile. See the danger of attachment!
- Always burning with lobha, dosa and moha. Renunciation can only be at moments of satipaṭṭhāna..
- Understand accumulations from moment to moment.
- Who knows the other's cittas?
- Right action is abstaining from wrong action. To be right action of the eightfold path there must be the understanding of a nāma or rūpa.
- The aim of thinking about concepts in the right way is to know more about realities.
- Life is make believe. We take it for something it isn't.
- Seeing sees visible object. What is seen is not a person. We have attachment to individuals, but individuality has no separate characteristic.
- If you think you are clever and others don't think so, you feel sorry. Attachment to self brings sorrow.
- Aversion prevents listening.
- The understanding that begins to know conditioned realities is also conditioned.
- Right understanding understands not a person or a Buddhist.
- The arising of any conditioned reality is dukkha because of its arising and falling away. If there is no arising, there is no dukkha. If there is no Understanding and awareness of the reality now, how can one understand the absolute reality of dukkha?
- Can you tell what is beyond this moment?
- If there is no thinking of this or that concept, can there be concept at this moment?
- In the game of life, taṇhā always wins.
- Understanding of sati means understanding the moment of sati as different from the moment without sati.
- You can have mettā by accumulations, but it requires paññā to see its value and develop it.
- What is experienced is hardness, not a table, but that can only be known by developed understanding.

- There is always wanting some other reality, not the dosa, rather than understanding the dosa as a conditioned reality.
- When there is dosa, there is strong lobha somewhere that has conditioned it.
- Start with the right beginning. Without right understanding, it cannot be the right beginning.
- Wrong view is the most dangerous of all.
- Right understanding and awareness can arise at any time or place.
- At a moment of right understanding, there is real rest no matter what one is doing.
- Without the development of satipaṭṭhāna, there is always clinging to Self, always wanting the best for Self, even wanting more understanding.
- We think there has been enough listening so now we need a time and place for the development, but in reality there's never enough listening.
 - We don't understand the game of taṇhā, so we follow it wherever it goes.
 - The Buddha taught us to listen to the Dhamma, not to the person.
 - Let go of desire and attachment for objects that do not appear now. When there's understanding and awareness, there's letting go.
 - The Buddha taught everyone the value of kusala at any moment.
- Right understanding brings detachment. If there is even a little attachment, it hinders the progress of right understanding.
- As understanding grows, it knows the difference between paramattha sacca and sammuti sacca, instead of clinging to sammuti sacca and taking it for self.
- While day dreaming, we are lost in concepts and thinking, thinking of concepts of past rūpas through the sense doors.
- We must be brave enough to study any reality with paññā. We need to be brave to begin to study visible object as visible object.
 - One doorway is not enough. Each doorway should be understood.
 - It is a kindness to others if we don't cling to them or encourage them to be attached to us.
 - The test is at this moment. Visual object now is the test of whether there is understanding or not.
 - With awareness and understanding of calmness, calmness grows.
 - The world of paramattha sacca is the world of understanding reality as it is.
 - One is burnt by one's desire all the time. In reality one is attached to one's own feeling, not really to the person.
 - Attachment is only a conditioned moment. Attachment is like a trap or a bait.
 - One kills oneself and one's heart by one's attachment and ignorance. We are trapped, lured by attachment all the time. It's truly poisonous.
 - There are different conditions for different nāmas and rūpas. With more understanding of different conditions you will see that there is no self.
 - It needs right understanding to know whether this moment is kusala or akusala.
 - We can see that in a day there are more moments of akusala than kusala.
 - The truth is not in the texts, but is now at the moment of right understanding.
 - When one thinks "I am aware", it is not right awareness.
 - When it is not right awareness, it cannot be accompanied by right understanding.

- Whenever right awareness with right understanding arises, it is aware before there is time to think “I am aware”.
- When one says it is hearing, does one know anything about hearing?
- When there is no awareness, right understanding cannot grow.
- When there is no awareness, no understanding and no learning, there is no development of seeing realities as they are.
- The teachings of the Buddha are very natural in daily life,
- One cannot get away from thinking of people, so in many suttas the Buddha taught many people to develop the four Brahma vihāras.
- At the moment of considering someone's death, there can be conditions for calmness instead of trying to force calmness by thinking of different objects.
- Does visual object appear as just visual object now? It cannot appear as visual object to moha.
- If one is asked “what are you thinking?”, can you tell? At that moment it can be moha-mūla-citta which thinks.
- An arahat also thinks about concepts after seeing, but it is mahā -kiriya citta thinking about concepts without akusala.
- If there is thinking of “Sammā Buddho” who can know whether it is lobha-mūla-citta which thinks?
- One begins to see the difference between calmness at the moment of kusala and no calmness at the moment of akusala.
- When right understanding grows, awareness also grows.
- Right understanding is not in the text, it is at the moment of understanding what seeing is.
- Whatever arises must be some type of reality.
- Nibbāna does not arise.
- Citta arises and falls away from moment to moment. It comes and goes all the time in the way of kusala or akusala. Nibbāna does not come and go.
- The growth of understanding must begin with detachment and go the way of detachment, because attachment is very subtle and always wins when there is no understanding.
- If there is respect at this moment it is kusala.
- One knows oneself while the others cannot know one.
- The purpose of the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta is to show that any object which is real can be the object of awareness. Otherwise this moment which is real cannot be known.
- Learn to see dhammas as dhammas.
- Almost every object is an object of attachment when there is no development of understanding.
- The Buddha's teaching is for direct understanding, not just for reading or intellectual understanding.
- Right understanding knows everything correctly.
- Right understanding gradually eliminates attachment and ignorance and wrong view of self.
- At this moment of understanding reality, it is not self that understands.
- There is never enough understanding, because each moment is conditioned.
- First one has to understand what are the right objects of awareness and understanding.
- When there is the idea of self with wrong view, it conditions other akusala.

- One is so attached to oneself that one does not realise that whatever one is attached to, it is really to oneself.
- One thinks one is so attached to a person, but really one is attached to one's feeling. So one clings to one's defilements.
- No matter how much one thinks, one cannot eradicate the idea of self.
- Hearing at this moment is not the hearing of a moment ago.
- There are 3 kinds of death: Conventional death, Momentary death and the Final death for an Arahant.
- Without precise understanding of paramattha saccā and sammuti saccā there cannot be the eradication of self.
- Daily life is paramattha.
- By developing understanding of realities in one's life as they are, one sees one still has lots of akusala.
- Only right understanding can eliminate wrong understanding, gradually, at the moment right understanding arises.
- Intellectual understanding covers up the truth because there is no awareness at that moment of a characteristic as it appears.
- Intellectual understanding should be the foundation, but if one thinks that it is enough, there is no development and it hinders the development of higher understanding because one does not understand there are more levels of higher understanding.
- It's possible to have all the intellectual understanding but no direct understanding, like a blind man carrying a torch.
- One does not see the value of the eradication of self because one clings to oneself all the time.
- When there is less the idea of self, one develops more pure kusala.
- When there is less clinging to self, the weak points are detected.
- Craftiness lures cittas to different objects.
- Dukkha in the absolute sense is the arising and falling away of each reality because it cannot stay.
- Whatever is real can be proved.
- In the beginning sati is slow and awkward.
- Any intellectual understanding cannot be clear.
- Do we hope for a result for "me"?
- One begins with detachment from the very beginning.
- Better to be a nobody than a somebody. Better to be a good friend than a teacher.
- One is attached to oneself, to one's feeling when one cares what the other thinks.
- Akusala is so ugly.
- We all want to be the object of attachment. We think of self and we think the world collapses with the idea of being a nobody. There is no seeing the value of no attachment, the real freedom when there is no enslavement.
- Lack of confidence in what sati and paññā can and cannot do is not helpful.
- Wrong view guides one's taṇhā - taṇhā for one's wrong ideas.
- Getting to know oneself better is the only way to really help others. If one develops more mettā, karuṇā, more understanding and more consideration of other people, one will see that what has been most helpful to oneself will be what is most helpful to others also.

- Sound is obviously what it is when one's understanding grows. One does not have to call it by any name.
- It is because sound appears that we can think about it in different ways.
- Cannot whatever happens in daily life be a subject for teaching dhamma?
- Whatever happens to us in this life has its cause in some deed in this life or in a previous life.
- If mettā is strong enough one will be concerned to help.
- If sati is not experienced, understanding cannot know which are the moments of sati and which are the moments without sati.
- The purpose should be right understanding.
- Be an island. Depend on oneself, one's own understanding which can eradicate one's defilements.
- Wanting to have conditions for the arising of satipaṭṭhāna or waiting for the arising of satipaṭṭhāna is not the understanding of the development of sati. The moment of thinking is not the moment of direct awareness.
- Intellectual understanding is useful, but don't think that one has to think and think and think so that satipaṭṭhāna will arise.
- To know the difference between thinking and sati, there has to be sati.
- Paññā which performs the function of detachment is the highest meaning of upakkha.
- Sati is not forgetful to be kusala, not forgetful to think about the object in the right way. If you forget, can there be studying?
- Mettā is seeing the loveableness in all beings.
- The intention to do harm brings harm to the place where harm originated.
- Whenever there are results, we know that those are the results of causes.
- We have the idea that we can run away from vipāka.
- We never know when vipāka will come.
- We have an idea of cause and result but it's wrong.
- There must be right understanding, precisely, at this moment.
- One can think of one's kusala with lobha.
- When there are conditions for sati, sati will arise.
- Attachment likes calmness so much that it clings immediately.
- If one is not courageous enough, one clings to calmness for sure.
- At this moment of thinking one begins to see whether one thinks with kusala or akusala.
- There is always clinging to kusala, clinging to self and being upset about akusala.
- Life is like a dream. When one knows the citta that dreams one is awake.
- One wakes up for one short moment of sati and then the dream takes over.
- The sound that is heard now does not hear anything.
- One cannot afford not to be interested in reality.
- At the moment of seeing visible object as visible object, there is no attractiveness in visible object.
- The way to know the present moment is to begin to know this moment now.
- Learn to give without strings attached.

- We have bad opinions of others, but do we like others to have bad opinions of us?
- With developed right understanding, one knows everything one knew before, but one knows something one didn't know before. One will understand more about hearing and thinking in addition to hearing and thinking.
- It's very easy to have misunderstanding about what one thinks to be oneself.
- When one gossips, one doesn't think about the other or the person one is gossiping to. Would one like to think he or she is gossiping about us?
- The words may be right, but still there is no right understanding.
- The citta which solves the problem arises and falls away. The solution to life is not to be born.
- We cannot develop paññā if we don't see the value of dāna and sīla.
- Even though lay people lead busy lives, they can get to know their busy lives better.
- The taking away of anything from anyone is not wholesome.
- Even if you look through a microscope you still only see visible object.
- If one always wants to be right, how will one deal with situations where one is wrong?
- We overlook the obvious all the time, especially nāma, the experience which makes it possible to experience colour right now.
- Colour arises but doesn't appear if there is no seeing.
- Does one have any understanding of the present reality? If so there must be awareness.
- Lobha creeps in all the time.
- It's always good to teach people to understand what brings happiness.
- Dosa can't help.
- Waiting doesn't bring kusala of any kind.
- On and on and on we have this idea of self and we don't know it.
- When sati is developed one becomes more resigned to the truth.
- Satipatṭhāna is indispensable.
- When one studies more, one sees more and more ignorance.
- It takes time and patience to develop sati and paññā.
- We have to know what is not known to know what ignorance is.
- One can't help the other to understand without words, but the words are not the understanding. The realities of our life are not words.
- Begin again to know this moment which has not been known yet.
- The arahat has given up the struggle by understanding realities.
- We always take refuge in that which is not safe or secure. Ultimately, the only refuge is nibbāna.
- Having forgotten, there can be remembering, beginning again.

.....