Analysis of the Noble Eightfold Path

I. Right view (*sammā di**ṭṭhi*)

* understanding suffering
* understanding its origin
* understanding its cessation
* understanding the way leading to its cessation

II. Right intention (*sammā saṅkappa*)

* intention of renunciation/detachment
* intention of good will/loving-kindness
* intention of harmlessness/compassion

III. Right speech (*sammā vācā*)

* abstaining from false speech/ truthful speech
* abstaining from malicious speech/ harmonious speech
* abstaining from harsh speech/ gentle speech
* abstaining from idle chatter/ meaningful speech

IV. Right action (*sammā kammanta*)

* abstaining from taking life
* abstaining from stealing
* abstaining from sexual misconduct

V. Right livelihood (*sammā ājīva*)

giving up wrong livelihood, one earns one's living by a right livelihood

VI. Right effort (*sammā vāyāma*)

* the effort to restrain unarisen defilements
* the effort to abandon arisen defilements
* the effort to develop unarisen wholesome states
* the effort to sustain and fulfill arisen wholesome states

VII. Right mindfulness (*sammā sati*)

* mindful contemplation of the body
* mindful contemplation of feelings
* mindful contemplation of the mind
* mindful contemplation of phenomena

VIII. Right concentration (*sammā samādhi*)

* the first jhana
* the second jhana
* the third jhana
* the fourth jhana

*The sequential arising of the path factors* (SN 45.1)

“For a wise person with clear knowledge, right view arises. For one of right view, right intention arises. For one of right intention, right speech arises. For one of right speech, right action arises. For one of right action, right livelihood arises. For one of right livelihood, right effort arises. For one of right effort, right mindfulness arises. For one of right mindfulness, right concentration arises.”

*The simultaneous functioning of the path factors* (MN 149)

9. “Bhikkhus, when one knows and sees the eye as it actually is, when one knows and sees forms as they actually are, when one knows and sees eye-consciousness as it actually is, when one knows and sees eye-contact as it actually is, when one knows and sees as it actually is [the feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that arises with eye-contact as condition, then one is not inflamed by lust for the eye, for forms, for eye-consciousness, for eye-contact, for [the feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that arises with eye-contact as condition.

10. “The view of a person such as this is right view. His intention is right intention, his effort is right effort, his mindfulness is right mindfulness, his concentration is right concentration. But his bodily action, his verbal action, and his livelihood have already been well purified earlier. Thus this Noble Eightfold Path comes to fulfilment in him by development.

“When he develops this Noble Eightfold Path, the four foundations of mindfulness also come to fulfilment in him by development; the four right kinds of striving also come to fulfilment in him by development; the four bases for spiritual power also come to fulfilment in him by development; the five faculties also come to fulfilment in him by development; the five powers also come to fulfilment in him by development; the seven enlightenment factors also come to fulfilment in him by development.

“These two things—serenity and insight—occur in him yoked evenly together (*tass’ime dve dhammā yuganandhā vattanti*).

“He *fully understands* by direct knowledge those things that should be fully understood by direct knowledge. He *abandons* by direct knowledge those things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge. He *develops* by direct knowledge those things that should be developed by direct knowledge. He *realises* by direct knowledge those things that should be realised by direct knowledge.

11. “And what things *should be fully understood* by direct knowledge? The answer to that is: *the five aggregates* affected by clinging, that is, the material form aggregate affected by clinging, the feeling aggregate affected by clinging, the perception aggregate affected by clinging, the formations aggregate affected by clinging, the consciousness aggregate affected by clinging. These are the things that should be fully understood by direct knowledge.

“And what things *should be abandoned* by direct knowledge? *Ignorance and craving for existence*. These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

“And what things *should be developed* by direct knowledge? *Serenity and insight*. These are the things that should be developed by direct knowledge.

“And what things should be *realised* by direct knowledge? *Clear knowledge and liberation* (*vijjā-vimutti*) These are the things that should be realised by direct knowledge.”